

NATURAL
ENGLAND

BIG
LOTTERY
FUND

GREENING THE INNER- CITY: GREEN SPACES & LOCAL PEOPLE



Learning from six London-based
projects about involving people
in green space improvements



Supported by
The National Lottery®

GREENING THE INNER- CITY: GREEN SPACES & LOCAL PEOPLE

Learning from six London-based projects about involving people in green space improvements.



ABOUT THIS PAPER

Welcome to this Learning Paper, one of four in the third series of papers. **Here we focus on the learning from Access to Nature projects engaging people in the improvement of green spaces in challenging inner city locations.**

The third series of papers uses information gathered from well established projects and follows on from Access to Nature's early findings papers. These papers are being produced across the lifetime of Access to Nature and demonstrate what is being learnt about encouraging people who have little or no experience of the natural environment to go out into the outdoors. They also provide insights into the running of a programme such as this. This includes messages which seek to inform the continuing work of Access to Nature projects and the work of other organisations interested in or committed to this kind of work. More Learning Papers will be produced in the final phase of Access to Nature and as we build on our learning to date.

THE CURRENT CONTEXT

The current political agenda parallels the goals of many of the Access to Nature projects. The vision for a Big Society focuses on a belief that people should be empowered to improve their communities and shape the services they receive. The three core strands of the Localism agenda - promoting social action in communities; empowering communities; and opening up public services – all reflect the kinds of ambitions of many of the funded projects. Providing access to the natural environment is a core aspiration of the 2011 Natural Environment White Paper, a landmark document that emphasises the huge value of a resilient natural environment and the vital role it plays in improving people's lives as well as in supporting economic growth. Within Natural England, the commitments to reconnect people with nature; protect natural assets; and maximise the opportunities offered by a greener economy are all priorities that underpin and complement Access to Nature.



Benefits of green spaces

We know that good quality green spaces have a big impact on our lives. They provide people with important opportunities for recreation, relaxation and exercise, whilst also offering communities a safe space for social interaction, social integration and the strengthening of neighbourhood ties¹. We also know that people are most likely to visit green spaces close to their home². Yet the availability of quality green spaces varies considerably and is particularly poor in the inner-city³ where sites have suffered from years of neglect and disinvestment and are often associated with crime and anti-social behaviour⁴.

Improving green spaces

With evidence showing a strong linkage between the quality of green spaces and their usage, there is now a policy commitment to improve sites, particularly in areas of high deprivation where access is often poor⁵. At the same time there have been calls to ensure that local people have opportunities to get involved at every stage of the process⁶. These aspirations reflect the thinking of many of the projects that have been funded through Access to Nature. A wide range of organisations, from local authorities and schools to social housing providers and community groups, have sought, through Access to Nature, to involve local people in natural environment improvements.

Six inner city London projects

London is one of the world's greenest major cities but, whilst it has some of the finest parks of any capital city in the world, there are many areas that lack green spaces, or where the quality of local green spaces is poor. Recent years have seen increasing pressures on London's green spaces and waterways, owing to a decline in national funding for public parks combined with extensive housing development – in the three years to 2007, over 1,500 housing developments were built on gardens in London⁷. A commitment to address this trend and improve the quality and accessibility of London's green space is now clearly articulated in The London Plan (2011)⁸.

In this paper we reflect on the experiences of six projects that have been working in inner-city London. The areas that they have been working in display the typical characteristics of the inner-city: dense and low cost housing with limited garden space; high levels of social housing and derelict land; and high concentrations of people from low income groups and Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities who are typically associated with low levels of engagement with the natural environment. Engaging people in the improvement of green spaces can be challenging in these circumstances, yet the six London projects cited in this report show that it is possible. What's more they reveal how to harness the assets of the inner-city (the people, the places and the partners) and create spaces that are cared for and valued by local communities.



SIX PROJECTS AT A GLANCE

Access To West London's Nature, led by *Groundwork London*, involved residents in improvement work across **16 under-utilised sites in West London**. Nature conservation activities were designed to engage large numbers of people from the local communities in maintenance and conservation work and included hedge laying, creation of wildflower meadows, scything, wildlife recording and nature walks and talks.

Finding Nature Through Play, led by *Islington Play Association* supported families and play workers to make natural play enhancements to 12 different play sites in Islington. Alongside the practical activities, the project provided training and support to play workers and volunteers so that they would have the skills and confidence to encourage children to enjoy and maintain the improvements made.

Get Out There!, delivered by *Hammersmith Community Garden Association*, involved people who are **long term unemployed or at risk of homelessness** in the creation and maintenance of local natural spaces. Delivered through a 12-week training course, the project combined practical experience on community garden sites and other green spaces with inspirational visits to nature reserves and wildlife gardens.

Natural Estates, led by *London Wildlife Trust*, aimed to put into practice the ideas and aspirations of the Neighbourhood Green Initiative by working with **8 social landlords** and local residents across **9 inner-city estates** in London⁹. It delivered an engagement programme of environmental activities for residents and provided a capacity building and skills training programme for social landlord staff.

Wild London Inclusive London, led by *London Wildlife Trust*, trained **40 'Wild London' Champions** to engage local people in the improvement of 17 designated green spaces in and around the built up areas of **Camden, Hackney and Southwark**. Working across these large and diverse boroughs, the project supported and encouraged community groups to contribute to their local green spaces.

Wild Places, led by *Octopus Communities*, was delivered through **4 Community Centres** in **Islington**. One of the main goals of the project was to equip local people with the skills and confidence to develop their own unique biodiversity habitats in and around each community centre.



THE PEOPLE

key messages about engaging people in inner-city green space improvements

1

Local relationships based on trust are critical to engaging people in inner-city green space improvements

About half the population of Inner London belongs to an ethnic group other than White British, compared to about one in ten of the population outside London. In areas where a large proportion of residents are Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (BAME), there is 11 times less green space than where residents are almost entirely white ¹⁰. It is not surprising then that improving access to quality green space for BAME residents has been a priority for some of the London-based Access to Nature projects. This has not been straightforward, particularly given the projects' ambitions to ensure that local people are at the heart of green space changes. What we've learnt is that, as with all community engagement work, it is respectful relationships based on trust that make all the difference. These relationships don't form overnight – they take time to develop, require face-to-face communication and benefit from sensitive negotiation, particularly where people are reticent about getting involved.



Going beyond the 'wildlife bubble'

Project Officers from *Wild London Inclusive London* were keen to ensure that they weren't always waving the 'environment' flag in their communications with residents. They recognised that this wasn't necessarily conducive to building a good local relationship. Instead, they got involved in all kinds of activities, beyond those that were immediately relevant to wildlife. The Project Officer based in Hackney described his reasons for working in this way:

"I'm happy to do this because it helps me to get to know a broader group of people, and hopefully demonstrate that those of us interested in wildlife aren't remote obsessives but can relate to them in other ways too. The interest in wildlife needs to be integrated into people's broader lives rather than being confined in a wildlife bubble."

Wild London Inclusive Project Officer

This kind of approach is resource intensive. *Wild London Inclusive London* found a way to manage this by taking on voluntary interns for three days per week to help support the project delivery.

From postal surveys and posters to two-way conversations

Officers at *Natural Estates* wanted to learn more about local people and find out what ideas they had for the green spaces located within the estates. They soon discovered that on the estates where they used a postal survey, the response rates were very poor so they adapted their approach to allow for more two-way conversations on people's doorsteps.



“Postal surveys, whilst delivering information about the project to every household generally had a poor response rate of between 2-10%. Door to door interviews, though more time consuming, were more effective, with over 30% feeding back.”

Project interim evaluation report

2

In inner-cities, where people have little experience of the benefits of green space, tap into the enthusiasm of a few and build from there

Because the projects encountered varying levels of enthusiasm for the idea of improving green spaces they found that tapping into the enthusiasm of a few was more effective than trying to change the attitudes and behaviour of large numbers of people. They have shown that an informal and fairly 'light touch' approach can be very effective because it means people can get involved in the way that they want to and they are not being tied to any long term 'volunteering' commitments. Children proved to be very enthusiastic and many of the projects capitalised on the energy and ideas that they bring. Whilst this is very positive there is a danger, as noted by one project, of being perceived as a 'children's project', particularly in areas where there are low levels of adult engagement.



Making green space improvements an every day occurrence

“Lots of people will think this is a good idea but when it comes to it, they won't have time to get involved”.

“Make sure you will somehow secure these hanging baskets, otherwise they'll be nicked”.

“I don't care about anyone down that end: they don't do anything for me and I don't do anything for them.”



These are just some of the comments that Project Officers from *Natural Estates* received when they talked to residents about improving green spaces on the estates. They found that some people were supportive of the idea of doing things but couldn't see themselves getting involved; some were sceptical that any intervention or activity would last; and some had concerns about mixing or working alongside others.

The Project Officers' response was to identify a core group of local people who were keen to get involved and empower them to play a lead role in the practical care of green spaces on their estate. In practice this entailed a very sensitive approach:

“Rather than making every volunteering activity a high profile event, the intention was to make this kind of participation an every day occurrence. Slowly it has become part of the lives of a small number of residents who nevertheless are demonstrating to themselves, their neighbours and their landlords what can be done.”

Project interim evaluation report

Over time, this approach proved to be effective. Those taking part reported a new appreciation of their natural spaces and residents began to comment on the potential of the project to make a difference:

“This is the first time in my life when I planted something. I can't wait to see how the flowers will grow.”

“Slowly things will get better here. You've already made a few gardens look nicer, and I hope that more people will help out so things will really pick up next year.”

Growing Local Champions

Building on the work of the Campaign for National Parks, whose Mosaic project¹¹ has established itself as a beacon of good practice in promoting environment leadership within BAME communities, *Wild London Inclusive London* aimed to recruit and train Wild London Champions to engage local people in the improvement of green spaces. Some Champions were recruited because they were leaders of local community groups, others were identified because they represented a particular part of the community. Although some people did not grow fully into their role (because they were concerned about taking on too much responsibility or feeling they don't have the expertise to lead others), there was a general sense that this approach to building local leadership has much potential:



"The champion scheme is working well, with 32 champions currently active and benefitting from the scheme. 20 of the champions are playing leading roles in the management of their community green space or independently running educational/volunteering sessions. 12 champions are taking on advocacy roles or leading behaviour change activities at public events."

Project interim evaluation report

3

People need inspiration and support to get involved in improving inner-city green space

Previous Access to Nature Learning Papers have emphasised how important it is to ensure that people involved in site improvements are well supported¹². This message is reinforced by the experience of the six London projects cited in this paper, all of which have incorporated an element of training and skill-building into their delivery. In some cases the training has been informal – delivered 'on the job' by project officers doing things alongside local residents. In other cases, there have been opportunities for people to access courses or visit other inner city sites in order to expand and extend their knowledge and skills. Some projects deliberately underplayed any reference to formal training, aware that this might have presented challenges for some individuals with concerns about gaps in their knowledge, education and literacy.



A 12-week course to build environmental management skills

Hammersmith Community Gardens provided opportunities for people who were long term unemployed or at risk of homelessness to attend a 12-week training course in environmental management. Their course combined practical conservation experience on community garden sites and other green spaces London wide with inspirational visits to nature reserves and wildlife gardens. During the course trainees developed skills ranging from creating and maintaining wildlife gardens, composting, and willow coppicing to scrub clearance on chalk grassland, step building, and river bank and pond maintenance. The courses provided a good balance of practical skills and increasing their knowledge of environmental issues and local wildlife through site visits and hands on learning. The courses were relaxed, open and accessible with each trainee working at his or her own pace. One of the positive outcomes of this approach is that course participants grew in confidence, and went on to provide support and encouragement to others:

“Since I completed the course, I’ve been lucky enough to be asked back, first as a mentor and now as a volunteer assistant to the course leader. This in turn has continued to boost my self confidence.”

Course participant

Learning through doing

All 335 activities provided by *Access to West London’s Nature* provided opportunities for learning. Participants gained practical skills such as hedge laying, scything and the use of specific tools. They also learnt more about ecology, biodiversity and the local environment.

“These types of activities are of great personal benefit to the volunteers, not just because they allow them to participate in enjoyable outdoor activities but they also deliver training and learning on a range of issues.”

Project final evaluation report

THE PLACES

key messages about the sites of green space enhancements in inner-cities

1

There is huge potential to enhance access to quality green space sites in urbanised environments by working at a very local level

Whilst there is much potential to enhance inner-city sites, it can be difficult to involve people in these improvements if they don't live nearby. Some Access to Nature projects responded to this by designing activities in and around community buildings or on small patches of shared use open space.

Four legacy projects that will provide lasting benefits

Through *Wild Places*, four community centres in Islington provided locations for local people to get involved in creating new wildlife habitats. Users of the centres were inspired and supported to develop their own green space designs and schools, youth groups and community groups were encouraged to get involved in building and maintaining the sites.

The approach worked very well. Each centre now has its own legacy project which users of the centre and neighbouring schools and community organisations can benefit from well into the future.

"We now have a forest garden at Holloway Neighbourhood Group, a pond and bog garden at Hilldrop Community Centre, a sensory garden at Caxton House Community Centre and insect attracting raised beds and green roof at Whittington Park Community Association."

Project final evaluation report



From four sites to sixteen – making the most of community based sites

Based initially at four sites, one of the main aims of *Access to West London's Nature* was to get local people involved in maintenance and conservation work in under-utilised green spaces in West London. This approach evolved over the life time of the project so that by the time the project ended sixteen sites had benefited from conservation efforts, many of them located in and around community buildings. Amongst the sixteen were three schools, two colleges, two community centres and a theatre.



"The conservation activities on these sites included, but were not limited to, hedge laying, wildflower meadows, scything, wildflower recording, nature walks and talks."

Project final evaluation report

2

Inner-city sites vary considerably in the potential they offer for engagement and green space enhancement

Projects have reported that the degree to which they were able to involve people in green space enhancements varied considerably from site to site. In some cases small sites presented the greatest difficulty because they offered limited opportunities for creativity and multiple activities. In other cases, any uncertainties about access or ownership of a site deterred people from getting involved. The tight control of some sites by green space managers also proved to be an obstacle in some areas, but some projects have shown that this can be addressed through partnership working and a structured education programme for managers (see below for description of Natural Estates' work with social landlords).



Having the freedom to transform play sites

Finding Nature Through Play engaged Islington's 12 staffed adventure playgrounds in the task of enhancing children's access to, knowledge of and enjoyment of the natural outdoors. A key strand of the project was the practical transformation of play sites into natural play environments through partnership work with the Local Authority and voluntary organisations. Generally, the project found that adventure playgrounds are excellent settings because they have the space, scope and flexibility to accommodate green space enhancements. However, whilst on some sites the impact of the project has been substantial, on others the physical impact was marginal. They attributed this partly to size and partly to the site management arrangements:

"On some sites there has been a tendency to intensively manage spaces so that nature is delegated to a small part of the playground... Other sites have been much more hospitable, especially those managed by community/voluntary groups, in part because they can't afford to tightly manage the sites so this creates opportunities for the project... The project has worked well on the larger sites where there are undesignated corners and perimeters ideal for planting."

Project final evaluation report

Adapting and responding to the limitations and potential of different sites

Delivered across nine housing estates, *Natural Estates* encountered sites of varying shapes and sizes. They observed the advantages associated with having a single predominant communal green space rather than a series of fragmented spaces – most residents could see activities from their windows and they could easily get involved in improving the space if they want to. When working on the larger more dispersed estates, the Project Officers had to adapt their approach:

"Two of the housing estates are fairly fragmented and lack large areas of communal green space on which to found a larger programme of activity... The focus of the project officers has been to take the project more to individuals, working on private spaces and running smaller events for localised residents in order to achieve a more visible impact."

Project interim evaluation report



3

Local people can make a significant contribution to the biodiversity of inner-city green spaces

The list of habitat and site enhancements achieved by the six London based projects was extensive. Activities such as pond creations, hedge laying, bulb planting, shrub clearance, tree planting, weed pulling, scything, pruning, coppicing, path building and litter picking are just a sample of the many activities that have been undertaken by residents living in and around the identified sites.

The story of one site enhancement

Wild London Inclusive London engaged people in habitat improvements and species monitoring on 21 green spaces. They have provided case studies to illustrate the work that has been undertaken:

“On the Lissington and Longmore estate, we have assisted with wild meadow planting and have surveyed much of the site for birds and invertebrates. The artificial pond supports the three common amphibian species but there is no evidence of breeding dragonflies, although we do have at least one dragonfly record for the site....Invertebrates are regularly recorded with school and children’s groups, as are birds.”

Project interim evaluation report

Early signs of biodiversity improvements

Access to West London’s Nature undertook 109 nature conservation activities over the lifetime of the project and practical work took place on 16 different sites. This included over 250m of new hedge laying, providing nesting and feeding areas for birds, the creation of shelter belts for invertebrates and small mammals, and the planting of over 3000 bulbs to provide spring colour and nectar for pollinating insects. Already local surveys are revealing the biodiversity impacts of their enhancement activities:

“Surveying work done on some of these sites has added to the body of knowledge that can be used to assess biodiversity gains. Common lizards have been shown to have prospered on Wormwood Scrubs, thanks to the work that has been done by the Access to Nature volunteers.”

Project final evaluation report



THE PARTNERS

key messages about who needs to be involved in green space enhancements in inner-cities

1

Partners bring the relationships, skills and resources needed to deliver and sustain inner-city green space improvements

We've learnt from the Access to Nature programme that partnerships are critical to the successful engagement of a wide range of people in the natural environment¹³. Our learning from London based projects is that the potential to work with partners from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors is considerable within inner-cities. Partnerships have been forged with social landlords, local authorities, environment charities, schools, voluntary organisations and community groups. Partners have made different types of contribution: some have been important for the identification of sites for green space enhancement; others have helped the projects to reach people that are typically difficult to engage; and a number of organisations have contributed their environment / conservation expertise and provided valuable training and learning experiences.

Service providers, charities and housing associations provide the links to vulnerable adults

By working with local housing associations, homelessness charities, local drug and alcohol services and mental health services *Get Out There* has been able to reach and work with those who will benefit the most from their environmental management training programme; and because of their strong links with environment charities in and around London they've been able to offer course content and site visits that have been interesting and varied, introducing participants to a wide range of habitats and wildlife.

"Establishing links with the staff and key workers who refer interested clients onto the course, works well. It is sometimes possible for key workers to attend the first session with their clients, and this has proved effective."

Project interim evaluation report



Capitalising on rich and diverse community and voluntary sector networks

Wild Places was embedded within the community and voluntary sector networks of Islington. Whilst they relied on Islington Council's Nature Conservation Team, the Ecology Centre and the Wildlife Trust to deliver most of their activities, the success of their approach hinged on their ability to appeal to all sectors of the local community and get them involved in the creation of new habitats. This has meant that they built strong relationships with local centres and a number of Islington based community groups and forums such as those representing the interests of older people or BAME communities. They also capitalised on the motivational abilities of local leaders who have been able to capture the interest and imagination of young people in particular. One example of this is their alliance with The Zone Youth Club:

"Last August, young people from The Zone Youth Club designed and constructed a pond in the barren area beside the community centre. As part of the learning programme, local resident and arctic explorer Dwaine Fields provided a motivational talk to inspire the young people and awarded them with certificates at the pond's opening ceremony. The garden has gone on to achieve the RHS It's Your Neighbourhood Award and the young people have since been involved in the construction of a dry stone wall in the garden space."

Project final evaluation report

2

Capacity building activities provide a vehicle to embed inner-city green space improvements both strategically and operationally

Not all the organisations partnering in Access to Nature projects have had previous experience of involving people in green space improvements, so resources have been committed to building their capacity to support and maintain this work. Arrangements have been fairly informal in some cases, with staff or volunteers from local groups and organisations being invited to join in with practical site activities and learn by 'getting their hands dirty'. In contrast to this, a number of the projects have adopted a more structured approach to building the capacity of key partners. Sometimes their motivations have been strategic – they want to ensure that there is a commitment at the highest levels to involving residents in the creation of good quality green and open spaces. For other projects, the focus has been operational and there has been a desire to ensure that staff teams have the appropriate skills and knowledge to enable others to create and benefit from green spaces.



Increasing the capacity and skills of social landlord staff

The roots of *Natural Estates* lie in Neighbourhood Green, a national partnership initiative that is championing the importance of social housing greenspace and helping social landlords and communities to raise the quality of their design, management and safe use¹⁴. One of the ways in which *Natural Estates* put into practice the ideas and aspirations of the Neighbourhood Green Initiative is by providing a capacity building and skills training programme for social landlord staff to support the management of their green spaces for people and nature. The training programme was developed by Groundwork London in close consultation with housing partners. It draws on the knowledge and expertise of each partner and incorporates a national perspective on good practice among housing providers in green space management.



“We want to ensure that the learning from both the project activity on the ground and the training programme are embedded strategically and operationally within each of the partner organisations.”

Project interim evaluation report

Ensuring young people get the most out of improved natural play environments

As well as enhancing play sites to promote biodiversity and encourage natural play, *Finding Nature Through Play* offered training and support to play workers so that they felt equipped to help children to create, maintain and benefit from the sites. Under the guidance of Islington Play Association, play workers had opportunities for the first time to lead food growing, willow weaving and bulb planting sessions. This approach was not embraced on all sites with some staff voicing concerns about health and safety and site maintenance. However, overall there was a sense that the project enabled staff and volunteers to make a positive contribution to natural play opportunities.

“At one park, where the play worker had more expertise, the project boosted her confidence and provided resources so that she could take the lead in starting a bog garden with the children.”

Project final evaluation report

THE LEARNING AT A GLANCE

As this paper shows, the learning from London based Access to Nature projects is rich and varied. We present eight key messages which we believe are relevant to a wide audience: from organisations that are responsible for the management of under-utilised green spaces within inner-cities, to the community groups and networks that can get involved in site enhancements and realise the social, therapeutic and educational benefits that they bring. Behind these key messages are some practical strategies that organisations can employ to ensure this kind of work is effective. We know from our work across Access to Nature that some of these points will be common to green space engagement work in places other than inner-cities and as a result will also be relevant in different contexts.



People

1 Trusting relationships are critical for involving people in inner city green space improvements.

- Get to know people by getting involved in general community life.
- Find out what people care about and what they can offer through one to one conversations.
- Acknowledge that this is resource intensive work and find ways to manage this, for example by involving volunteers.

2 In inner-cities, where people have little experience of the benefits of green space, it can help to tap into the enthusiasm of a few and build from there.

- Focus efforts on people who are keen to do things.
- Develop activities that build on people's ideas rather than imposing activities on them.
- Create lots of opportunities for people to make a visible contribution to their local green spaces so that they can be a source of inspiration for others.
- Don't be put off by initial negativity or resistance to getting involved.

3 People need inspiration and support to get involved in improving inner-city green space.

- Provide support to local enthusiasts so that they can grow their skills and confidence over time.
- Offer varied activities so people can develop a range of skills related to green space enhancements.
- Encourage some people to take a lead role in the management of small green space sites.

Places

4 There is huge potential to enhance access to quality green space sites in urbanised environments by working at a very local level.

- Look for opportunities to involve people in the creation and enhancement of green space sites in and around schools, community centres, colleges and other community buildings.
- Create spaces that have the potential to engage different parts of the community.

5 Inner-city sites vary considerably in the potential they offer for engagement and green space enhancement.

- Focus efforts on communal spaces that are visible, flexible and not under tight management.
- Educate managers to encourage them to be more flexible about their land management regimes.
- Adapt and respond to the limitations and potential of different sites.
- If there is a shortage of shared communal space, then get people involved in improving their own private spaces.

6 Local people can make a significant contribution to the biodiversity value of inner-city green spaces.

- Involve people in a wide range of activities to improve sites in ways that encourage biodiversity and improve access such as pond creations, hedge laying, shrub clearance, tree planting, weed pulling, pruning, coppicing and path building.
- Get people involved in survey work to monitor sites for biodiversity improvements over time.



Partners



Partners bring the relationships, skills and resources needed to deliver and sustain inner-city green space improvements.

- Build relationships with potential partners, such as social landlords, local authorities, environment charities, businesses, schools, voluntary organisations and community groups.
- Capitalise on the ability of partners to reach different parts of the community, provide sites for green space enhancements and support skills development.



Capacity building activities provide a vehicle to embed inner-city green space improvements both strategically and operationally.

- Develop capacity building programmes that create opportunities to share experience and expertise in the creation, management and enhancement of green spaces.
- Involve organisations that have the potential to expand and extend opportunities for this kind of work, such as social landlords and local authorities.
- Build the skills of staff and volunteers that have opportunities to help people create, maintain and benefit from green spaces.



PROJECT FACT FILE

Project Fact File

Name	Lead	Website
Access to West London's Nature	Groundwork London	www.london.groundwork.org.uk
Finding Nature Through Play	Islington Play Association	www.islingtonplay.org.uk
Get out there!	Hammersmith Community Gardens Association	www.hcga.org.uk
Natural Estates	London Wildlife Trust	www.wildlondon.org.uk
Wild London Inclusive London	London Wildlife Trust	www.wildlondon.org.uk
Wild Places	Octopus Community Network	www.octopuscommunities.org.uk

ABOUT ACCESS TO NATURE

Access to Nature is a scheme run by Natural England and funded by the Big Lottery Fund. Natural England works on behalf of a consortium of eleven other major environmental organisations and distributes £28.75 million Lottery funding under the scheme, which has been developed to encourage more people to enjoy the outdoors, particularly those with little or no previous contact with the natural environment. Funded projects range from local community based schemes through to national initiatives from large organisations. Diversity in scale is mirrored by a diversity and richness of projects, from equipment to allow people with disabilities to access the natural environment; supporting disadvantaged groups and those who ordinarily face barriers to visiting the countryside; as well as many projects which are providing a range of volunteering and educational opportunities for local communities and young people.



FOOTNOTES

- 1 National Housing Federation, 2011. *Greener Neighbourhoods*. London
- 2 Research suggests that around two thirds of visits are taken within two miles of people's homes: Natural England, 2012. *Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment: The national survey on people and the natural environment - Annual Report from the 2011-12 survey* (online). Available from <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/1712385?category=47018>
- 3 Cabe Space, 2010. *Urban Green Nation, Building the Evidence Base*. London
- 4 Cabe Space and the National Housing Federation, 2005. *Decent Homes, Decent Spaces*. London
- 5 Cabe Space, 2010. *Urban Green Nation, Building the Evidence Base*. London
- 6 National Housing Federation, 2011. *Greener Neighbourhoods*. London
- 7 Greater London Authority, 2009. *Leading to a Greener London* (online). Available from <http://www.london.gov.uk/priorities/environment/vision-strategy/leading-to-a-greener-london>
- 8 Greater London Authority, 2011. *The London Plan* (online). Available from <http://www.london.gov.uk/priorities/planning/publications/the-london-plan>
- 9 National Housing Federation, 2011. *Greener Neighbourhoods*. London: NHF
- 10 London's Poverty Profile (online). Available at <http://www.londonspovertyprofile.org.uk/london/londons-diverse-population-1/>
- 11 Bovey, H., 2011. *The Mosaic Model*. UK: Natural England. Available from Natural England Publications and Products - Access to Nature (A2N) publications
- 12 Bovey, H., 2011. *Volunteering in Nature*. UK: Natural England. Available from Natural England Publications and Products - Access to Nature (A2N) publications
- 13 Bovey, H., 2012. *New Directions and Making Partnerships Work*. UK: Natural England. Available from Natural England Publications and Products - Access to Nature (A2N) publications
- 14 *Neighbourhoods Green* (online). Available from <http://www.neighbourhoodsgreen.org.uk/home>
- 14ⁱ *Neighbourhoods Green* (online). Available from <http://www.neighbourhoodsgreen.org.uk/home> (Accessed 28th June 2013)



ALTERNATIVE FORMATS

Our documents are available as pdf downloads from our website, suitable for text reader technology. We may be able to provide other formats (e.g. Braille, a minority language, or large print) for specific documents where there is a proven communication need.

Please contact:

Natural England Enquiry Service

Tel: 0845 6003078 (local rate)

Email: enquiries@naturalengland.org.uk

Address: Enquiries, Natural England, Block B, Government Buildings, Whittington Road, Worcester WR5 2LQ.

PHOTO CREDITS

The pictures used in this publication have been kindly provided by Access to West London's Nature, Get Out There! and Wild Places.

ISBN

978-1-78354-022-8

