



RESTORING LAMBETH'S GREEN HEART

This ambitious project is transforming 5.3 acres of underused land near the Garden Museum into linked green spaces, creating a major new public garden, boosting wildlife, and offering young people horticultural training.

Introduction

Founded in 1977, the Garden Museum celebrates British gardens' art, history, and design. Through exhibitions, events, and community projects, it explores gardening's role in tackling climate change, supporting wildlife, food growing, and enhancing wellbeing. The Lambeth Green project is its boldest initiative, redefining public space for the future.



SUPPORTED BY
MAYOR OF LONDON



The challenge

Lambeth has one of the lowest levels of public green space in London, with many communities lacking access to parks and nature. As the neighbourhood grows, new developments and increasing demands put pressure on the few green spaces available, limiting access to nature.

Despite London's rich history of gardening, there is limited horticultural training opportunities in Lambeth. This gap limits opportunities for young people to develop skills that could lead to careers in landscape management, conservation, and environmental protection.

Historic gardens and landscapes are increasingly vulnerable to climate change. Rising temperatures, unpredictable rainfall, and poor soil health threaten their long-term survival.



The approach

The Lambeth Green plan is a multi-phase initiative designed to restore and reimagine public spaces with a strong focus on resilience to climate change, community involvement, and horticultural education.

Transforming the Old Paradise Gardens. The first phase transformed a neglected space into a vibrant, healing community garden. This green oasis provides a refuge for visitors while improving local food growing and wildlife by selecting plants suited to a changing climate, pollinator-friendly species, and improved soil health.



The approach (cont.)

Greening underused spaces with Lambeth Bridge Junction. This phase is redesigning a busy road junction into a greener, safer, and more welcoming public space. The redesign makes walking easier, adds more greenery, and uses rain gardens to manage water and reduce flooding. The Garden Museum played a key role in selecting plants and designing the green spaces, making this the first time Transport for London has worked with an outside partner on a planting project. The original Transport for London design included just seven trees and no planting – the new design now includes 15 trees and 240 square metres of planting and maintenance.

Building horticultural skills at St Mary's Gardens and Pavilion. The next phase will introduce planting to the garden that is robust and will thrive in an increasingly changing climate. A new pavilion, built from recycled materials, will be a base for horticultural training, supporting two apprentices each year and encouraging local people to get involved in caring for green spaces.

Connecting the riverside walk. The final phase will restore neglected riverside areas, making them greener, more accessible, and better at preventing flooding. The planting will link these spaces with the area's history as a riverside village and walking route, strengthening both community ties and resilience to climate change.

Key learnings

Garden Museum has shown commitment to the long-term vision of the scheme, steadily raising funds through community-driven efforts such as the Sponsored Swim by the Museum Director and Friends, which brought in £181,000 for planting at Lambeth Bridge Junction. From developing a maintenance contract to securing a 10-year agreement with Transport for London, their leadership is setting a precedent for public realm collaboration.

Transforming public spaces into climate-resilient green areas is not only possible but essential for sustainable cities. By making better use of underutilised land, the initiative demonstrates how nature-based solutions can support wildlife, reduce heat in the city, and improve air quality – all while preserving cultural heritage.

Creating inclusive green spaces requires long-term vision and collaboration. Successfully balancing historical preservation with the needs of today ensures that urban green spaces remain accessible, relevant, and sustainable for future generations.

Investing in horticultural education helps create future environmental caretakers and supports London's shift to a greener, more sustainable future. By providing hands-on training in horticulture, the initiative ensures Lambeth's green spaces will continue to thrive.

Find out more

Visit the [Garden Museum](#) website to learn more about the Lambeth Green project and its progress, or to visit the museum or newly transformed Old Paradise Gardens.

Read more [here](#) about South Bank and Waterloo's action plan for a fairer, greener neighbourhood.

