LONDON ASSEMBLY

Environment Committee

A Lot to Lose: London's disappearing allotments

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Greater London Authority
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RAPPORTEUR'S FOREWORD

Beyond the clamour of a London street there is a copse of willow, a wooden fence, the giveaway roof of a ramshackle shed. You may have walked past it, or never noticed that it was there at all. Because an allotment is, by its nature, a hidden treasure.

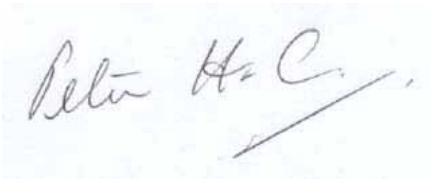
It is a treasure that is fast disappearing. The relentless pressure on land in the capital, the need to build at high densities, and, in some cases, neglect and disuse, mean that allotments are slowly but surely being eroded. A few cases are high profile: the patch of clayey land from which four generations have coaxed a living harvest, fallen victim to the bulldozers of the Olympic development. Others die quietly, starved of attention, labelled an eyesore, abandoned by gardeners who know closure is only a matter of time.

And yet, paradoxically, while sites close across London, demand has never been higher. The unprecedented interest in organic food has led to a renaissance in allotment gardening, particularly among women and young families. Apply in some boroughs and you will find a ten-year waiting list with 400 people ahead of you. Many popular sites have closed their waiting lists altogether.

The purpose of this report is to set out a sustainable future for London's allotments. We believe the first step to protecting allotments is to have a proper understanding of how many currently exist and where exactly they are. As a result, our report is based on the most comprehensive survey of allotment land ever carried out in the capital. Secondly, we examine the benefits – some well known, others much less obvious – that allotments bring to the individual and the wider community. We then look in detail at the particular idiosyncrasies of supply and demand in London. Finally, we turn to the legislative and regulatory protection framework and the ways in which existing allotments can most effectively be protected.

Among our key recommendations is that information must be shared more effectively among local authorities to ensure existing supply is put to good use. We also believe that boroughs that have identified unmet demand for allotments should consider using s106 agreements to compel the developers of high density housing to allocate a portion of land for use as allotments.

We would like to thank the many allotment holders, associations, and professional organisations that took the time to contribute to our inquiry. In particular, we would like to thank the Manor Gardening Society, Low Hall Farm, Kidbrooke Park Allotment Association, Creighton Avenue Allotments and Bromyard Allotments who made us so welcome on their allotment sites. We hope this report will form the basis of a new and better-informed approach to the provision of allotments in London.



Peter Hulme Cross AM
Member, Environment Committee

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

- Geographical information on London's allotments be made available on the Your London portal, allowing Londoners to locate the sites nearest to them. This can be done by GLA officers in the next six months. Links to this tool should be included in the allotments pages of borough websites, as well as those of the London Allotments Network, the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners, the Allotment Regeneration Initiative and the Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens.

- Information on vacancies and waiting lists is shared more effectively between boroughs to meet demand and minimise the number of sites lost through disuse, particularly in outer London. For example, contact details for allotment officers in boroughs with substantial numbers of vacant plots should be made available to people on waiting lists in other parts of London. We encourage allotment officers to devise a mechanism for taking this forward in the next 12 months.

- Boroughs should, as from now, include allotment associations on their lists of statutory consultees and ensure they are informed of, and given the opportunity to respond to, any planning application that may impact on their sites.

- We will now be monitoring allotment provision in London, with a view to issuing a follow-up report in two years' time. To ensure provision is maintained, boroughs that have identified unmet demand for allotments should consider using s106 agreements to compel the developers of high density housing to allocate a portion of land for use as allotments. Where allotment land not owned by the local authority is wholly or partially threatened by sale for development, the new owner should as a matter of corporate social responsibility offer a comparable area of allotment land to compensate plotholders for the loss.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 Definition of allotment

An allotment, at its simplest, is a piece of land, usually around 250 square metres (299 square yards), which can be rented by an individual for growing fruit and vegetables. Most, but by no means all, are owned by local authorities. The rent paid by allotment gardeners across London varies enormously across the city, but the average is around £50-£60[1] annually.

It is up to each borough in London to decide for itself how much of its resources to devote to allotments. If an outer London borough believes there is a demand, it has a statutory duty to provide a sufficient quantity of plots and to lease them to people living in its area. If local people feel there is a need for allotments which is not being met, they can get together a group of any six residents who are registered on the electoral roll and put their case to the local authority. For an inner London borough, the provision of allotments on demand is discretionary, not mandatory[2].

1.2 Types of allotment

Some local authority owned sites are classified as **statutory**, which means the land was acquired or appropriated by the local authority specifically for use as allotments. These sites cannot be sold or used for other purposes without the consent of the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

Before consent is given, the Secretary of State will first want to be satisfied of certain conditions. These are that:

- the allotment is either not necessary and is surplus to requirements;
- the council will give displaced plot holders adequate alternative sites, unless this is not necessary or is not practicable;
- the council has taken the number of people on the waiting list into account; and
- the council has actively promoted and publicised the availability of allotment sites and has consulted the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners.

Government guidance also requires allotment authorities to consult with plot holders before they apply for disposal. If an application goes ahead for disposal of a site in the capital, it will be dealt with by the Government Office for London.

If the application is successful, and allotment holders are displaced, the allotment authority is expected to provide one or more suitable alternative sites which should not normally be more than three-quarters of a mile from the centre of demand.

The position of **temporary** allotments is much more precarious. These are allotments situated on land which is allocated for other uses but leased or rented by an allotments authority. Temporary allotments are not protected from disposal in the same way that statutory allotments are. The Secretary of State's consent is not required for the

[1] Allotments Regeneration Initiative
[2] London Government Act 1963, s55.4

disposal of non-statutory allotment sites, but the allotment authority will usually be required to give plot holders 12 months notice to quit before the land can be used for any other purpose.

Privately owned land can also be let for use as allotments. These plots have the same legal status as temporary allotment sites, but the local council has no control over them.

1.3 Recent developments

The last major survey of allotments was carried out on behalf of the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners in 1997[3]. It revealed that plots across England were disappearing at a rate of 9,400 per year. It also found that the number of people waiting for an allotment site had more than doubled since 1970. Within London, the survey identified over 36,000 allotment plots, of which almost 31,000 were in outer London, and a waiting list of 1,330.

The trends identified in the survey went on to inform a report by the Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs select committee into the future of allotments[4]. The committee called for an overhaul of the legislation surrounding allotments, as well as the introduction of more explicit planning guidance and the automatic conferral of statutory status to any site which had been in continuous use as allotments for thirty years or more.

In its response to the select committee's report[5], the Government said legislative reform was unlikely to feature in its programme of work in the near future, and pointed out that allotment gardening already benefited from greater legal protection than 'other worthwhile leisure activities'. However, it said it would work with councils to produce best practice guidance to help remedy the variation in performance between local authorities in terms of allotment provision.

This guidance, "Growing in the Community", was produced in 2001 for the Department of the Environment, Transport and Regions, the Greater London Authority and the Local Government Association. It highlights best practice from a number of London boroughs, including Bromley, Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham and Sutton.

Current planning guidance on allotments as open space is set out in Planning Policy Guidance 17, published in 2002. The guidance indicates that open space should not be built on unless an assessment has been undertaken that has clearly shown that the open space is surplus to requirements. Allotments are included in the typology of open spaces to which the guidance applies.

[3] 'English Allotments Survey: Report of the Joint Survey of Allotments in England', National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners and Anglia Polytechnic University, November 1997
[4] 'The Future for Allotments', Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs Committee, June 1998
[5] The Government's Response to the Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs Committee's Report, 'The Future for Allotments', September 1998

2. LONDON'S ALLOTMENTS

2.1 Methodology

This report is based on the most complete and up to date information available on the provision of allotments in London.

We contacted all 33 London councils and asked them to tell us how many sites (both council and privately owned) existed in their borough, how many individual plots there were, and the area covered by allotment land. We also asked them about allotment provision ten years ago as a means of backing up figures contained in the English allotments survey. We asked whether the council owned sites were statutory or temporary, and how many people were on the waiting list. Finally, we asked for geographical information on the location of sites.

Where councils were unable to supply specific responses, we used information from their websites or from allotment associations in the borough.

In this chapter we analyse this data to show where London's allotments are to be found – and how that picture has changed in the last ten years.

2.2 How provision has changed

Over the last ten years, the number of allotments in London has decreased at three different levels.

Firstly, the number of sites has diminished. A decade ago, there were 769 sites in London. Now, data from all 33 councils suggests there are 737 – a net loss of 32 sites, or 4.2%, across the city. The majority of these were in outer London in boroughs like Bexley and Hounslow, which our map shows are fairly rich in allotments per head of population. However, provision has also decreased in inner London, with for example Lambeth losing three sites.

It is important to note that this is a net loss: we identified 39 sites that have disappeared over the last ten years while seven new sites have been established in the same period. However, these new sites tend to be considerably smaller than those they have replaced, for example a single two plot site in Tower Hamlets.

Statutory sites are among those being lost. In the twelve months to February 2006, five applications were made to the Secretary of State for disposal of sites in London – two in Croydon, two in Harrow and one in Bromley. The first four were to be sold, and the last retained as open space. All five disposals were approved.[6]

[6] Hansard, 15th February 2006

Secondly, the number of individual plots has shrunk. Within the 20 councils for whom complete data was available, there are 20,786 plots, compared to 22,319 in 1996 – a reduction of 1,534. In percentage terms, the loss of plots (6.9%) has been significantly greater than the loss of sites. At first glance, this may appear puzzling. However, it reflects our finding that allotment sites, instead of being done away with in their entirety, are often chipped away, a handful of plots at a time. It is this insidious loss – five plots shaved off at the periphery to allow a new road to be built – that is the real threat to allotment provision in London.

The apparent disappearance of plots is especially worrying when set against a backdrop of diminishing plot sizes. In sites where there is high demand, it is increasingly common to split newly vacant plots in order to get two people off the waiting list – perhaps two new gardeners who would find a full-sized plot too much to cope with[7]. This suggests that the amount of allotment land which has disappeared is greater than the reduction of individual plots would suggest.

It is at this third level, land area, that the disappearance of allotments is most difficult to measure, as many boroughs were unable to provide accurate and up to date information. However, we estimate that the 1,534 plots to have disappeared over the last decade are equivalent to over 87 acres of allotment land[8] - equivalent to 54 football pitches. Among the boroughs for whom information was available, the largest areas were lost in Barking and Dagenham (over 13 acres) and Merton (over 15 acres).

2.3 Current provision

London's 737 allotment sites are spread across 30 boroughs, with only the Corporation of London, Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster having none. The largest number of sites in pure numerical terms are to be found in the outer London boroughs of Brent, Bromley and Ealing.

However, the picture varies enormously from borough to borough in terms of provision per head of population and per square metre, as demonstrated by the attached maps.

By head of population, the areas richest in allotments are Barnet, Bexley, Bromley, Ealing, Sutton, and Waltham Forest. The boroughs with the smallest numbers of allotments per head of population are, unsurprisingly, to be found in inner London, though Croydon also fares badly in this regard.

Allotment provision measured by square kilometre presents a slightly different picture, with Haringey and Lewisham, both inner London boroughs, among those with the highest concentrations of sites. Among those with a very small number of sites per square kilometre are Croydon, Hammersmith and Fulham, Havering and Newham.

2.4 Conclusion

Until now, there has been a complete lack of publicly available up to date information on London's allotments. As well as being an obvious impediment to anyone looking for a plot, this oversight has significant policy implications – for any resource to be

[7] This practice is followed in a number of London boroughs, for example Wandsworth and Greenwich
[8] Based on the loss of 1,534 plots each measuring an average of 0.057 acres

managed and preserved, it is essential that provision is accurately measured and monitored over time.

Our data addresses that problem by putting allotments literally on the map. However, having the data is not enough – it must be kept up to date and updated as changes occur. Most importantly, it must be made easily available by anyone who wants to see it.

2.5 Recommendation

That geographical information on London's allotments be made available on the Your London portal (www.yourlondon.gov.uk), allowing Londoners to locate the sites nearest to them. This should be done by officers at the Greater London Authority in the next six months. Links to this tool should be included in the allotments pages of borough websites, as well as those of the London Allotments Network, the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners, the Allotments Regeneration Initiative and the Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens.

3. THE BENEFITS OF ALLOTMENTS

3.1 Social

A garden gives the body the dignity of working in its own support. It is a way of rejoining the human race – Wendell Berry

London is a city of seven million people. Living here, for many, creates a sense of isolation because the size of the city makes social networks difficult to establish. Allotment gardening is an antidote to the alienation of urban living.

One allotment association in Greenwich, whose site has 150 regular users, told us:

> *Many firm friendships have originated here…the first question to any new allotment neighbour is not 'What do you do?' but 'What are you planning to grow?' and 'Would you like some spare tomato plants?'*[9]

A site association in Barnet, which rents plots to around 140 individuals, said:

> *A site provides an additional circle of friends and a support network for those who need them…others living in flats also value having access to open space with a leisure garden to visit and work in*[10].

In Ealing, one partially sighted gardener told us he had taken on a site when he had been forced to give up work eleven years ago:

> *For me it's a lifeline… I come here seven days a week, otherwise I'd be sitting at home looking at my four walls. There are plenty of people around to help when I come unstuck. I get a world of benefit from coming here.*

The social benefits of an allotment need not be restricted to those who work the plots. We heard examples of sites acting as the focal point for much wider networks. One plotholder described links between gardeners as "the tip of the iceberg", with family, friends and neighbours extended members of the allotment community.

The point is emphasised by an allotment society in Croydon which estimates that about a third of its thousand paid-up members are not plotholders, but nearby residents who use the site as a social centre, supplier of plants or horticultural materials, or merely as a source of gardening knowledge. Indeed, the facilities provided on the site reflect the diversity of its appeal:

> *We have a large general-purpose room with a kitchen alongside it which is used most of the time by members and local community organisations as a committee*

[9] Kidbrooke Park Allotment Association
[10] East Finchley Allotment Holders Association

room or for social events. It is also used as a classroom for horticultural training and for teaching about renewable energy.[11]

3.2 Health

A garden is the best alternative therapy – Germaine Greer

One of the most frequently cited benefits of allotment gardening is health improvement. The impact of activity in the great outdoors – or 'green exercise' – on physical and mental health is of increasing interest to medical professionals.

Research[12] has shown a "synergistic benefit" in adopting physical activities while being directly exposed to nature. There are important public and environmental health implications to green exercise, as a fitter and more emotionally content population costs the economy less.

The health benefits of allotment gardening were also recognised by the Government in its response to the Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs Committee's report *The Future of Allotments.*[13] The health argument is made all the more compelling by government predictions that over twelve million people in England will be obese by 2010[14].

There is a host of anecdotal evidence to back up the suggestion that allotments have a therapeutic effect on both mental and physical health. Firstly, there is the direct benefit of physical exercise. An 81 year old plotholder told us:

> *I go swimming but not to the gym - I don't need to - I exercise every day at the allotment.*[15]

One 360 plot site in Croydon said people recovering from strokes and from deep vein thromboses had been sent to it by GPs who believed the exercise involved was an excellent physiotherapy.[16] An association in Barnet said it provided essential therapeutic service for people with terminal illnesses:

> *At any one time there are up to a dozen plotholders on our site who are chronically ill, often with cancer, for whom the allotments are a positive lifeline, a source of physical and spiritual refreshment that helps to keeps them going from day to day.*[17]

People with disabilities report significant benefits:

> *As a person living with disability, the allotment has enabled me to manage my condition both physically and mentally. The allotment gives me exercise, a sense*

[11] Spa Hill Allotment Society
[12] Green Exercise: Complementary Roles of Nature, Exercise and Diet in Physical and Emotional Well-Being and Implications for Public Health Policy, University of Essex, March 2003
[13] The Government's Response to the Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs Committee's Report, 'The Future for Allotments', September 1998
[14] Forecasting Obesity to 2010, Department of Health, August 2006
[15] Angelo Ghiggini, Goldsmith Close Allotments, Acton
[16] Spa Hill Allotment Society
[17] East Finchley Allotment Holders Association

of achievement and a fulfilment and control over my life that my disability at times prevents me from getting elsewhere. The rhythm of the seasons, the sociability of the plot and the continual learning process involved in cultivation are added bonuses[18].

Secondly, there are the long-term health benefits resulting from a diet containing fresh fruit and vegetables. The Mayor's Food Strategy identifies as a priority action the expansion of individual and community growing, for example in allotments, in response to demand.[19] The Soil Association told us:

The more people who understand about food production, the healthier our communities will be."[20]

Indeed, allotments are a means of educating children and young people in London about food production. The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds London told us it believed allotments had great potential to stimulate interest in healthy eating and the environment:

With so many schools now reluctant to organise out of classroom trips, allotments could offer an alternative to a nature reserve. They can help explain where food comes from, encourage healthy diets and activities and introduce children to nature…children can be shown how to grow food, how to prepare and cook it and get to taste the fruit of their labours. If done properly, the impact this would have on children's health and development is easy to imagine while the benefit to London's biodiversity and general environment is incalculable.[21]

[18] Ann Eatwell, Grove Allotments, Dulwich
[19] Healthy and Sustainable Food for London, The Mayor's Food Strategy, May 2006
[20] Soil Association
[21] Royal Society for the Protection of Birds London

3.3 Environment

Too old to plant trees for my own gratification, I shall do it for my posterity – Thomas Jefferson

People are more and more concerned about the environmental impact of what they eat – and justifiably so.

Firstly, there is the distance from the field to the plate. A government report[22] last year put the environmental, social and economic cost of food transport at £9bn annually. Ten million tonnes of carbon dioxide were emitted in the UK in 2002 as a result of food transportation. It also accounts for a quarter of all HGV vehicle miles.

Food packaging is also a major environmental issue. It is estimated that 100,000 tonnes of plastic bags are thrown away every year. UK households produce the equivalent of 245 jumbo jets a week in packaging waste[23].

The antidote provided by allotment gardening to the environmental harm caused by the transportation and packaging of food was mentioned by several allotment holders as one of the motivations for taking on a plot. One allotment officer pointed to the benefits of reducing food miles, packaging and waste:

> *Even though food from the allotments is a very small proportion of the amount of food consumed, there will be a few less lorries, fewer trees turned to cardboard and a little less going into the waste stream.*[24]

When it comes to the contribution made by allotments on biodiversity, the picture is mixed. One study in the early nineties[25] found that allotments were in fact of "little importance" to wildlife habitat creation in urban areas. However, the range of species that thrive on allotment sites suggests that they may indeed have a role to play in promoting biodiversity. The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds London told us allotments were "vital" in this regard:

> *House sparrows and starlings are among the birds disappearing from our streets but it's noticeable from our annual Big Garden/Big Schools' birdwatch campaigns that areas around allotments fare much better…to some an untended plot may be an eyesore but these wild areas are home to a wide range of birds and insects. Bramble and ivy provide both food and shelter all year round and are favoured by wrens, robins, blackbirds and song thrushes.*[26]

This argument is supported by the findings of plotholders themselves. An allotment association in Barnet said its site teemed with small mammals, bird, amphibian and insect life:

> *Over the last two years, for example, woodpigeons are no longer as great a problem to those of us growing brassicas as a female sparrowhawk regularly hunts on the site. We have set aside areas to encourage insects and other wild-*

[22] The Validity of Food Miles as an Indicator of Sustainable Development, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, July 2005
[23] Waste Online (www.wasteonline.org.uk)
[24] Stephen Cole, Allotments Manager, Ealing Council
[25] Elkin, T, 'Chapter 4: Green Space and Wildlife', in Reviving the City', Friends of the Earth, 1991
[26] Royal Society for the Protection of Birds London

life to make their home on the site. For many of us watching the wild-life on the site contributes as much to our enjoyment of our allotment as the rewards of our home grown produce.[27]

3.4 Financial

Your first job is to prepare the soil. The best tool for this is your neighbour's garden tiller. If your neighbour does not own a garden tiller, suggest that he buy one – Dave Barry

The original purpose of allotments, encapsulated in the General Inclosure Act 1845, was to provide a source of fresh fruit and vegetables for the "landless poor". Even now, the financial advantages of allotment gardening remain significant, and were mentioned by a number of plotholders as one of the biggest benefits:

The advantages of allotments: especially at my age, it is financial. My wife and I are vegetarian - we don't spend any money on vegetables. We have free vegetables and fruit all year round.[28]

Most of us could not afford to buy organic yellow vine-ripened tomatoes, even if the local supermarket stocked them, which it doesn't. But we can buy a packet of seed from a small specialist mail order business, and have enough to give our friends as well.[29]

Of course, the economic viability of the plot will also vary depending on the rent charged at each site. Annual plot rents across London vary from £10 to £140, and the picture is further complicated by the discounts offered by many sites to certain groups. However, the average across London is probably in the range of £50-60[30].

A number of plotholders warned the cost benefits should not be exaggerated. One association in East Finchley said the financial savings were in fact "probably pretty modest":

It is often said that the cost of having an allotment – including rent, seeds, fertiliser etc – is of the same order as the cost of the produce if bought from a shop. But the quality, flavour and freshness of most allotment produce is far superior.[31]

Another plotholder, in Hillingdon, described the return from an allotment in terms of economics is "minimal in the beginning", but said that as the success rate improves there is the potential for major savings on the weekly shopping bill.[32]

[27] East Barnet Allotments Association
[28] Angelo Ghiggini, Goldsmith Close Allotments, Acton
[29] Candace Gillies-Wright, Lamlash Street Allotment Association
[30] Figures from the Allotments Regeneration Initiative
[31] East Finchley Allotment Holders Association
[32] Samuel K Stanley, Nursery Lane Allotments, Hillingdon

3.5 Community

Laying out grounds may be considered a liberal art, in some sort like poetry and painting – William Wordsworth

The benefits of the allotment site do not stop at the site gates. The evidence we received from sites around London, supported by what we witnessed on our visits to sites, was that allotments have strong links with the local community from which both sides benefit.

Some sites with vacancies encourage disabled groups, physically and mentally, to take on plots.

One self-managed site in Bromley lets two plots to a teacher from a local special needs school for work with her students. It also holds regular open days to help foster links with the local community:

> *We provide a distinctive local event which builds local identity and also host other events. The fact of running a group with real responsibilities cutting across generational ethnic, social class, economic and social boundaries in a transparent, constitutional and democratic way demonstrates the possibility of building real civic values in today's diverse urban environment. We also invite classes from local schools onto the site showing children where vegetables actually come from. A well functioning allotment site can also be a reliably peopled 'public space', adding considerably to the overall safety of an area.*[33]

Links to schools and local children are an important part of many allotment sites.

The secretary of a small site in Camberwell, which lets a nearby primary school use a plot with their gardening teacher, said relationships between allotment associations and local schools should become the norm:

Unsurprisingly, city children commonly find the allotments experience hugely engaging - many urban kids have little idea about how things grow, or how you go about cultivating food plants, and this is not something it is easy to get a good sense of through classroom based study. A good case can be made that all children should have the opportunity to share an allotment as part of their education.

[33] Kent House Leisure Gardens Association

This site has ambitious plans to expand its role in the community by expanding its educational activities, for example by setting up a demonstration apiary and butterfly habitat:

> *We want to build on the allotment as a context for engaging with the environment, and evolve the site into a kind of environmental project space for the local community.*[34]

3.6 Diversity

Show me your garden and I shall tell you what you are – Alfred Austin

Far from the popular image of allotments as dominated by working class white males, often retired, London's allotments are a case study in diversity.

More and more allotment holders are women. A recent survey in a small number of West London boroughs put the proportion of women as high as 41%, with women particularly well represented among younger plotholders.[35]

Sites told us of members from every corner of the globe – a fitting reflection of London's status as one of the most ethnically diverse cities in the world.

> *We have already benefited socially from the inclusion of a diverse mix of nationalities. Currently our membership includes around 40% of non-British origin, predominantly southern European but including a number of African origin. Were it not for these 'incomers', many of whom live outside Barnet borough, we would be struggling much more than we are.*[36]

The majority of sites who contributed to our inquiry cited the diversity of plotholders as one of the main attractions of allotment gardening:

> *The diversity of our community is a wonderful benefit. We all profit by the regular exchange of horticultural practice, plants, recipes and philosophies between all members of this community.*[37]

CASE STUDY: LOW HALL FARM

> *Low Hall Farm, with 220 well-worked plots, is the biggest site in Waltham Forest and one of the most ethnically diverse. One Caribbean gardener said he had discovered relatives from his home island on the site. Amongst the vegetables flourishing at Low Hall Farm are christophene (a firm pear-shaped squash from the Caribbean) Japanese spring onions and Eastern European specialities. In another corner of the site, a group of Turkish women of all ages prepare dough and bake traditional unleavened bread on an open fire. Although this is a place where different groups prosper, there is a strong overarching sense of community reinforced by regular social outings and, of course, the passion of a shared interest.*

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[34] Grove Park Allotments, Camberwell
[35] Women (re)construct the plot: the regen(d)eration of urban food growing, Susan Buckingham, 2002
[36] Brook Farm Allotment and Horticultural Society
[37] East Barnet Allotments Association

Perhaps the most valuable benefit allotments bring a community is to bring together people with a shared interest – even those whose paths might never normally cross. One site observed:

> *I cannot think of anywhere else in London you will see a merchant banker chatting about wine with a (Portuguese) dustman, or the owner of a large house on Blackheath swapping plants with another allotment member from the Ferrier Estate.*[38]

3.7 Conclusion

The case for maintaining, promoting and protecting allotments is a strong one, on public health and environmental grounds as well a means of enhancing community cohesion.

Any policy decision on the future of allotments must have full regard to the very considerable benefits they bring to the individual and the wider community.

[38] Kidbrooke Park Allotment Association

4. SUPPLY AND DEMAND FOR ALLOTMENTS

In this chapter we examine the reasons for lengthening waiting lists and the impact of current levels of demand on allotment provision in London. We suggest ways of tackling the geographical mismatch between supply and demand in inner and outer London and, potentially, increasing supply.

4.1 The impact of increasing demand

There are now over 4,300 people waiting for allotments across the city – 3,000 more than a decade ago[39].

But for many of these people, the prospects of ever getting their own plot are bleak. Some boroughs tell prospective plotholders they face a ten year wait[40]. The London Allotments Network, which receives three or four emails every week from allotment seekers, says it the number of people in inner London who have "very little realistic chance of ever getting one" is an issue of great concern[41].

Some sites have been forced to restrict allotment allocation to those living close to the site. One site in Bromley said it had had to change its policy as a result of increasing demand, which had led to a waiting list of 25 people:

> *We have recently introduced a policy to favour people from the immediate area and we no longer make active efforts to look for new members. We estimate that most people on the list within our catchment area will get a plot within a year, although those outside are unlikely ever to get a plot.*[42]

A site in Croydon, with a waiting list of over 100 people, has adopted a similar approach:

> *We have been forced to restrict new lettings to those who live within 2km of the site although in practice we cannot see that anyone who lives more than 1km away will get a plot here in the next year.*[43]

Other sites have attempted to cope with rising demand by reducing the size of plots for new members, restricting the maximum plotholding per household, and terminating the contracts of members who are not using their plots regularly and productively.

It is likely that sites will have to continue to find ways of meeting high demand, especially in areas earmarked for high density housing developments. This was a fear expressed by a site we visited in Acton, which already had a waiting list of over 60. Over 2,000 new residents were expected to come to the area as a result of new development, of which 500 would be living directly across the road. Similarly, a site at Mudchute points to the likely impact of skyscraper blocks on the site of the old London Arena and South Quay plaza - hundreds of apartments, none with gardens.

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[39] There were 1,330 people waiting for allotments in London in 1997, according to the English Allotments Survey: Report of the Joint Survey of Allotments in England, National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners and Anglia Polytechnic University, November 1997
[40] Camden Council, http://www.camden.gov.uk
[41] London Allotments Network
[42] Kent House Leisure Gardens Association
[43] Spa Hill Allotment Society

4.2 Reasons for lengthening waiting lists

To explain this explosion in demand, some sites suggest that a large number of people who might not have at one time even considered allotment gardening are now looking for plots. The so-called embourgeoisement of allotments, fuelled by lifestyle articles in the Sunday supplements and a renewed interest in healthy eating and organic produce, has brought in a new generation of allotment holders. Many of them are women and young families:

> *Few plotholders are now old men in cloth caps and muddy boots. Many of our members are from ethnic minorities and an increasing number are women. We are also seeing an increasing number of young families coming on site, often to grow organically.*[44]

> *Almost half of applicants for plots are now women with young children who want to grow their own vegetables because of declining trust in the supermarket supplied variety and or the high premiums charged for organic produce. People are also starting to worry about food miles.*[45]

However other factors do come into play. One is that it can be difficult to get rid of gardeners who are for whatever reason neglecting their plot, and so people on the waiting list are forced to wait even longer. Or, when the plot is eventually liberated, it may be in such a bad state that new tenants are unwilling to take it on.

It is also possible that people join already lengthy waiting lists simply because they are unaware of the existence of alternative sites, some of which may have vacancies. The availability of geographical data on the location of sites, as recommended above, will go some way to addressing this problem. However, if every Londoner who wants a plot to be able to get one in a reasonable time, a fundamental issue needs to be addressed - the geographical disparity of supply and demand.

4.3 Mismatch between supply and demand

One clear conclusion of our research is that demand for allotments in London is geographically completely out of step with where the vacancies are.

As the London Allotments Network put it:

> *There are still some sites round the perimeter of Greater London with vacant plots which they are desperate to let. The unfortunates who live in the middle will have to believe in reincarnation because waiting lists there are very long indeed.*[46]

Our research confirms that waiting lists in inner London are indeed formidable. Wandsworth alone has over 820 people on its list, Camden over 580, Lewisham 420. Wandsworth has an up to date waiting list on its website, broken down by site, and tells potential applicants they can expect a wait of several years. Camden's website warns the

[44] East Finchley Allotment Holders Association
[45] Spa Hill Allotment Society
[46] London Allotments Network

waiting time is over ten years, and actively points people towards sites in neighbouring Barnet and Brent. Lewisham states estimated waiting times, as at last year, for each of its sites, ranging from one month to six and a half years. It directs people towards non council-owned sites, such as a number owned by National Rail, which it suggests may have shorter waiting lists.

In outer London, the picture is much more mixed. There are boroughs in outer London with substantial waiting lists, for example Ealing (400), Hounslow (340) and Merton (293). However, closer examination reveals that in some outer London boroughs there are short waiting lists for some sites – generally those closest to central London - and large numbers of vacancies in others. For example in Waltham Forest, sites in the south of the borough are full, while in those in the north have vacancies. We heard of a similar trend when we visited a popular site on the west side of Haringey, which had a waiting list of 60, while sites in the east of the borough had unused land. The reason for this was not known, although it was suggested that some of the sites had fallen into a cycle of neglect and vandalism which made them unattractive to potential gardeners. In some cases, we heard that there was no one individual to deal with requests from potential plotholders. Clearly, without someone to receive and coordinate such requests, the opportunity to fill long-standing vacancies will be squandered.

The logical solution is to match up those who are willing to travel from inner London with vacancies in the outer boroughs. But to do this, three major problems must be overcome. The first is that people do not know, and it is not easy to find out, where the sites are. Allotments are by nature hidden places, and someone may be unaware of a site twenty minutes' walk or a ten minute bus ride away in the next borough. We believe this can be overcome at least to some extent by the publication of our data, as recommended above.

The second difficulty is lack of coordination. Some boroughs have a policy of not accepting applications from out of borough, though non-council owned sites tend to be more flexible. But more importantly there is no formal mechanism for information about supply and demand to be shared.

The third is that, of course, not everyone will be willing to travel. Taking on a plot some distance away adds to the already considerable commitment of time and energy needed to maintain a piece of land. One gardener who has a plot near the Elephant and Castle said those working long hours were unlikely to want to spend extra time travelling to and from a site:

> *I only have this plot because it's so close to home – I'm not going to travel an hour by bus down to Dulwich in my wellies to pick my lettuce for Saturday lunch.*[47]

[47] Candace Gillies-Wright, Lamlash Street Allotment Association

But for those who might be willing to travel, one very simple way of putting them in touch with vacant plots is to publicise the outer London boroughs which have a large number of plots to let, and are happy to do so to out of borough applicants. This is already being done on an ad-hoc basis by individual boroughs such as Camden, mentioned above. However, if contact details for allotment officers in these boroughs were routinely made available to people seeking plots in London, it would at least give them the option of taking on a plot further from home right away, instead of waiting a decade or more for one a few streets away. Contact details of these allotment officers or could be published on the websites of boroughs with high demand for allotments, as well as those of the London Allotments Network, the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners, the Allotment Regeneration Initiative and the Your London portal mentioned above. Allotment officers should also be in a position to provide this information in response to phone inquiries.

Ultimately, however, the most effective way to match demand with supply is to build on existing informal networks between boroughs to provide a mechanism through which information about vacancies can be shared. The London Allotment Officers Group, which meets periodically to discuss shared issues, would be the logical starting point for such a process.

There is of course scope for sites with a large number of vacancies to do more to attract gardeners from other parts of the city. The Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens suggests the provision of toilets, secure storage and shelters to make long distance gardening a viable option.[48] An example of this working in practice was the grant paid by the Allotment Regeneration Initiative to an association in outer London, Harrow in Leaf. The money paid for promotion, disabled facilities, multicultural signage, and increased security, all of which were designed to attract a greater number of gardeners from inner London.

4.4 Increasing supply

The question of allotment size is a controversial one. Particularly in inner London, where demand is highest, it is increasingly common for newly vacant plots to be split in half so that two gardeners can share the land. Smaller pieces of land are also seen as more manageable for new gardeners who may lack the expertise needed to take on a full plot, or those whose work or family commitments prevent them from spending the time required.

The Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens said there may be benefits to this approach in terms of meeting demand, and that the arrangement to share plots is often made informally between plotholders.[49]

However, there is opposition to the idea of preventing those are able and willing to take on larger plots from doing so. The National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners said smaller plots were "better than nothing":

> *However we are keen to retain the standard 10 rod plot [the traditional size of an allotment plot, equivalent to around 250 square metres] as this is the size*

[48] The Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens
[49] The Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens

needed to produce enough fruit and vegetables for a family for most of the year.[50]

We believe that in areas with long waiting lists, boroughs should consider subdividing plots in order to accommodate demand and to meet the needs of the increasing number of gardeners who are unable for whatever reason to take on larger pieces of land. The provision of smaller plots may also address the problem of land going to waste as a result of being taken on by someone without the experience to manage it.

4.5 Conclusion

A general shortage of allotment provision in London is significantly exacerbated by the geographical mismatch in supply and demand. Unless a way is found to match potential plotholders with existing vacancies, thousands of people living in inner London will miss out on the substantial benefits of allotment gardening while plots in outer London fall into disuse and risk being lost all together.

4.6 Recommendation

That information on vacancies and waiting lists is shared more effectively between boroughs to meet demand and minimise the number of sites lost through disuse, particularly in outer London. For example, contact details for allotment officers in boroughs with substantial numbers of vacant plots should be made available to people on waiting lists in other parts of London. We encourage allotment officers to devise a mechanism for taking this forward in the next 12 months.

[50] National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners

5. THREATS AND PROTECTION

Our survey showed that there has been a net loss of 32 allotment sites across London over the last ten years. However, for every site that has vanished, dozens more live under threat. This chapter examines the risks faced by London's allotments and recommends how they might best be protected.

5.1 Threats facing allotments

One high profile example of an allotment under threat is Manor Gardens in Newham, where 83 plots are tucked at the end of a narrow lane between a bus garage and a food factory.

CASE STUDY: MANOR GARDENS

When London won the right to host the 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games, the city exploded in celebration. But in a corner of Newham, right at the heart of the proposed development, joy was quickly overcome by dismay – because an allotments site dating back over 100 years lies right in the path of the bulldozers.

For the close-knit community at Manor Gardens, the allotments are an extended family, a social club and for some, a lifeline. The people are connected to the land in a way that goes much deeper than a blade in the soil. Many expressed disbelief that the years they had invested in making their plots viable were to be sacrificed for the sake of a footpath needed for a four week sporting event.

The London Development Agency, which is responsible for assembling the land needed for the Games, has said it will be impossible for the allotments to remain. It has identified an alternative site in Waltham Forest which, subject to planning permission, plotholders can use until after the Games. Post 2012, they will then have the option of returning to a site closer to the original plots.

The fight is now on to save the site. Plotholders have produced a visionary alternative plan in which the allotments become an outdoors restaurant and centre for cultural exchange – a resource that reinforces the ethos of the Games, rather than one that stands in its way.

But all over London, where the pressure for land is intense, the threat of development hangs over allotment sites, especially those that are not well worked. The Soil Association confirmed:

> *Our experience has been that the most common threat to allotments is the value of land for developers or where allotments have become derelict. There needs to be a strategic decision at government level that will enable local authorities to protect their allotments and resources to help promote them.*[51]

Statutory sites benefit from a degree of protection against the threat of development, as ministerial consent, dependent on a list of strict conditions, is needed for disposal.

However, the future of non-statutory sites is, to a certain extent, at the vagaries of the local land market. As a result these sites are often characterised by uncertainty and a sense of helplessness:

> *Land around the Elephant and Castle is increasingly valuable and Southwark council has other priorities it would seem. Our plots have been threatened with development before and legally we have very little defence on our site if they chose to reclaim it.*[52]

Another site, in Tower Hamlets, adds:

> *We have very few needs apart from protection of our land. This is the single most important factor for our survival. Thankfully, thanks to the strong support of our local authority, our existence has been protected until now. But it is always a big worry in view of ever-increasing land prices in inner city areas, that our future is not secure. This is the most important help we would seek - formal, legally binding protection of our land, and others like it, from the risk of property development.*[53]

5.2 Protection of allotments

There is substantial confusion about the designation of sites and the protection they enjoy, which is partly due to the labyrinthine nature of allotments legislation formulated through the years. There is no doubt that the existing framework is in need of reform, at the very least to provide clarity, and potentially to set out the conditions under which a temporary site could attain statutory status. However, we would resist calls for temporary sites to gain statutory protection automatically after a certain number of years as to do so would inevitably discourage councils and other landowners from making land available for allotment use even on a temporary basis.

However, we believe there is scope to improve the protection given to allotments without recourse to legislative reform.

Firstly, allotment sites should be made aware of planning applications that are likely to impact on their land so that they are in a better position to make their case. At the moment this rarely happens and it is left to allotment associations to inform themselves

[51] Soil Association
[52] Lamlash Street Allotment Association
[53] Cable Street Community Gardens

about any proposed development, which one association describes as "complex and time-consuming"[54].

Secondly, greater use should be made of powers boroughs already possess to increase supply. Boroughs that have identified unmet demand for allotments should consider using s106 agreements[55] to compel the developers of high density housing to allocate a portion of land for use as allotments.

Where allotment land not owned by the local authority is wholly or partially threatened by sale for development, the new owner should as a matter of corporate social responsibility offer a comparable area of allotment land to compensate plotholders for the loss.

We believe there may be scope for allotment provision on an interim basis on brownfield land within the city. A recent Environment Committee report highlighted the potential of brownfield sites awaiting development to be used as a community resource, ranging from informal recreational use to the hosting of one-off events.[56] Not all brownfield land would be suitable for allotment use because of contamination or other environmental safety issues, or because the period for which it is available would be too short to make cultivation viable. However, we believe the London Development Agency should carry out an appraisal into potential short term uses, including allotment provision, of brownfield land.

Ultimately, the most important single thing allotment sites can do to protect their future is to ensure their occupancy rates are high. There is no set percentage below which sites are considered underused and ripe for disposal, but in the course of our research we heard of 'acceptable' occupancy levels ranging from 40% to 60%. Recommendations made in chapter four above relating to the matching up of demand and supply should make it likelier that plots will be properly worked and therefore protected, but the onus is on allotment officers and associations to publicise their sites as far as possible through word of mouth and the local media.

Now that up to date information is available on allotment provision in London, it can be measured on an ongoing basis to ensure this precious resource is protected over time. We intend to review provision in London in two years' time.

5.3 Conclusion

Over and above the legislative safeguards surrounding statutory sites, there is a need for temporary sites to be given greater protection against total or partial loss in order to stem the disappearance of sites – and individual plots – across London.

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[54] West Ham Allotment Association

[55] Section 106 of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act allows local authorities to enter into agreements with those applying for planning permission, which restricts either the development or use of the land, or requires some specified operations or activities to be carried out. It can also be used to secure a sum of money to be paid to the authority for some specified purpose.

[56] Dereliction of duty? A report on brownfield development in London, London Assembly Environment Committee, November 2005

5.4 Recommendations

We will now be monitoring allotment provision in London, with a view to issuing a follow-up report in two years' time.

To ensure provision is maintained, boroughs should, as from now, include allotment associations on their lists of consultees and ensure they are informed of, and given the opportunity to respond to, any planning application that may impact on their sites.

Boroughs that have identified unmet demand for allotments should consider using s106 agreements to compel the developers of high density housing to allocate a portion of land for use as allotments. Where allotment land not owned by the local authority is wholly or partially threatened by sale for development, the new owner should as a matter of corporate social responsibility offer a comparable area of allotment land to compensate plotholders for the loss.

APPENDIX ONE: ALLOTMENT SITES BY BOROUGH

Borough	**Number of sites**
Barking and Dagenham	15
Barnet	50
Bexley	37
Bromley	52
Brent	23
Camden	9
Corporation of London	0
Croydon	17
Ealing	59
Enfield	36
Greenwich	18
Hackney	9
Hammersmith and Fulham	2
Haringey	25
Harrow	32
Havering	26
Hillingdon	37
Hounslow	30
Islington	4
Kensington and Chelsea	0
Kingston upon Thames	22
Lambeth	11
Lewisham	36
Merton	19
Newham	8
Redbridge	25
Richmond upon Thames	25
Southwark	19
Sutton	37
Tower Hamlets	7
Waltham Forest	37
Wandsworth	10
Westminster	0
TOTAL	**737**

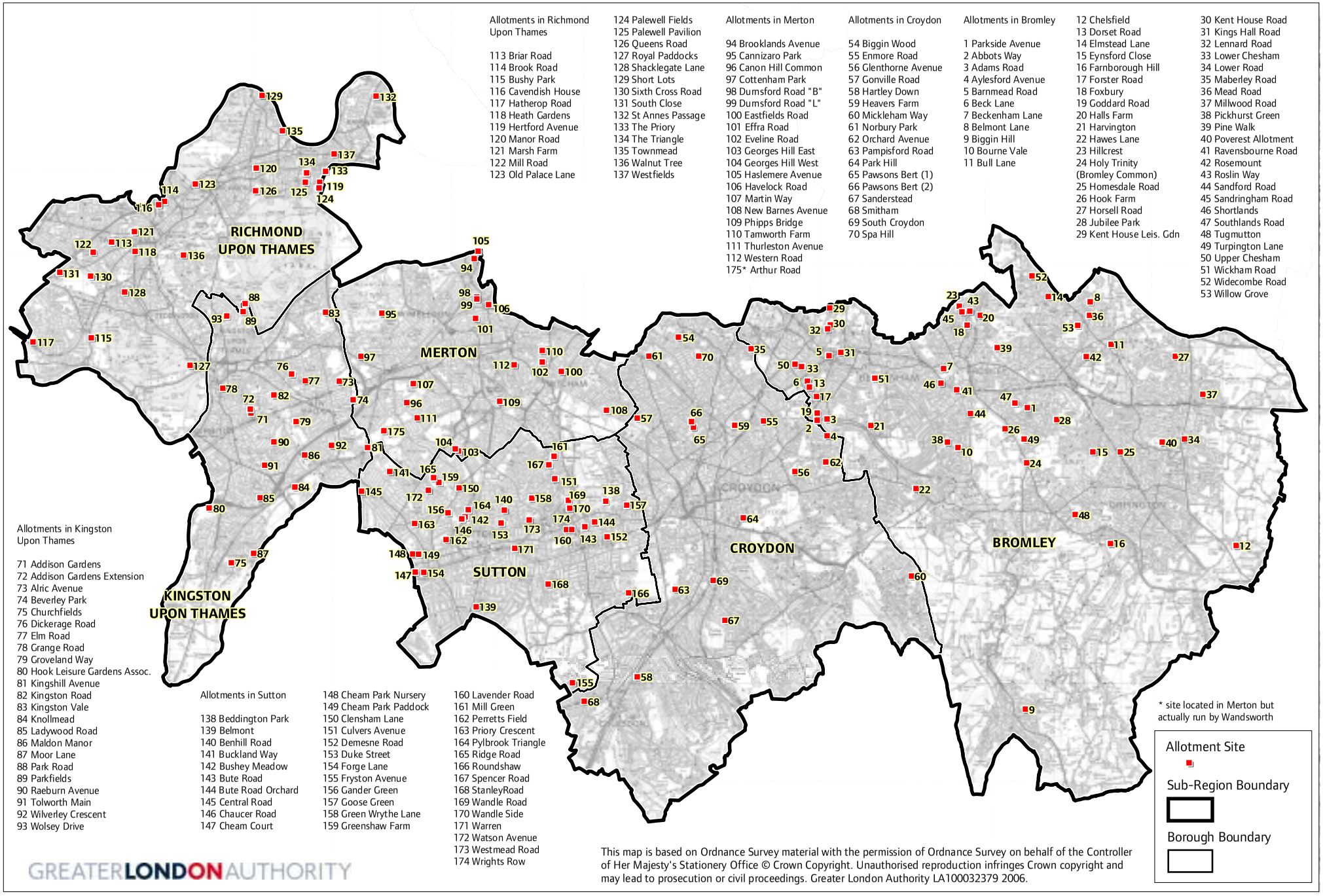
APPENDIX TWO: EVIDENCE

Written evidence was received from:

Angelo Ghiggini, Goldsmith Close Allotments
Ann Eatwell, Grove Allotments, Dulwich
Ann Fox
Ann Frearson
Annabelle Fowler
Allotments Regeneration Initiative
Belmont Allotment Association
Bill Geddes
Brian Young, Cooks Farm Allotments and Garden Society
British Sikh Women's Organisation
Bromley Ward Association for Allotments
Brook Farm Allotment and Horticultural Society
Cable Street Community Gardens
Dawn Hutcheon, Leyes Road Allotments
Department for Communities and Local Government
Downham Nutrition Partnership
East Barnet Allotments Association
East Finchley Allotment Holders Association
Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens
Federation of Hounslow Allotment Associations
Grant Smith
Grove Park Allotments, Camberwell
Harrow in Leaf
Hendon Grove Allotments
Hornchurch and District Allotments and Gardening Society
Judith Hanna
Kent House Leisure Gardens Association
Kidbrooke Park Allotment Association
Lamlash Street Allotment Association
Leytonstone Allotment Holders Association
London Food Link
National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners
Norman Verth
Norwood Green Horticultural Society
P Scopes
Paula Alderson
Paddock Allotments, Merton
Richard Phillips
Roger King and Family
Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds London
Samuel Stanley
Sheila Schubert, Greenwich Council
Soil Association
Spa Hill Allotment Society
Stephen Cole, Ealing Council
St Mary's Allotment Association
Stuart and Paula Lawrence
Theresa Giffard
Tom Douglas, Bromley Allotments and Leisure Gardens Federation
Women's Environmental Network

APPENDIX 3 – Maps

Availability of Allotments in South Sub-Region



Allotments in Richmond Upon Thames

113 Briar Road
114 Brook Road
115 Bushy Park
116 Cavendish House
117 Hatherop Road
118 Heath Gardens
119 Hertford Avenue
120 Manor Road
121 Marsh Farm
122 Mill Road
123 Old Palace Lane
124 Palewell Fields
125 Palewell Pavilion
126 Queens Road
127 Royal Paddocks
128 Shacklegate Lane
129 Short Lots
130 Sixth Cross Road
131 South Close
132 St Annes Passage
133 The Priory
134 The Triangle
135 Townmead
136 Walnut Tree
137 Westfields

Allotments in Merton

94 Brooklands Avenue
95 Cannizaro Park
96 Canon Hill Common
97 Cottenham Park
98 Dumsford Road "B"
99 Dumsford Road "L"
100 Eastfields Road
101 Effra Road
102 Eveline Road
103 Georges Hill East
104 Georges Hill West
105 Haslemere Avenue
106 Havelock Road
107 Martin Way
108 New Barnes Avenue
109 Phipps Bridge
110 Tamworth Farm
111 Thurleston Avenue
112 Western Road
175* Arthur Road

Allotments in Croydon

54 Biggin Wood
55 Enmore Road
56 Glenthorne Avenue
57 Gonville Road
58 Hartley Down
59 Heavers Farm
60 Mickleham Way
61 Norbury Park
62 Orchard Avenue
63 Pampisford Road
64 Park Hill
65 Pawsons Bert (1)
66 Pawsons Bert (2)
67 Sanderstead
68 Smitham
69 South Croydon
70 Spa Hill

Allotments in Bromley

1 Parkside Avenue
2 Abbots Way
3 Adams Road
4 Aylesford Avenue
5 Barnmead Road
6 Beck Lane
7 Beckenham Lane
8 Belmont Lane
9 Biggin Hill
10 Bourne Vale
11 Bull Lane
12 Chelsfield
13 Dorset Road
14 Elmstead Lane
15 Eynsford Close
16 Farnborough Hill
17 Forster Road
18 Foxbury
19 Goddard Road
20 Halls Farm
21 Harvington
22 Hawes Lane
23 Hillcrest
24 Holy Trinity (Bromley Common)
25 Homesdale Road
26 Hook Farm
27 Horsell Road
28 Jubilee Park
29 Kent House Leis. Gdn
30 Kent House Road
31 Kings Hall Road
32 Lennard Road
33 Lower Chesham
34 Lower Road
35 Maberley Road
36 Mead Road
37 Millwood Road
38 Pickhurst Green
39 Pine Walk
40 Poverest Allotment
41 Ravensbourne Road
42 Rosemount
43 Roslin Way
44 Sandford Road
45 Sandringham Road
46 Shortlands
47 Southlands Road
48 Tugmutton
49 Turpington Lane
50 Upper Chesham
51 Wickham Road
52 Widecombe Road
53 Willow Grove

Allotments in Kingston Upon Thames

71 Addison Gardens
72 Addison Gardens Extension
73 Alric Avenue
74 Beverley Park
75 Churchfields
76 Dickerage Road
77 Elm Road
78 Grange Road
79 Groveland Way
80 Hook Leisure Gardens Assoc.
81 Kingshill Avenue
82 Kingston Road
83 Kingston Vale
84 Knollmead
85 Ladywood Road
86 Maldon Manor
87 Moor Lane
88 Park Road
89 Parkfields
90 Raeburn Avenue
91 Tolworth Main
92 Wilverley Crescent
93 Wolsey Drive

Allotments in Sutton

138 Beddington Park
139 Belmont
140 Benhill Road
141 Buckland Way
142 Bushey Meadow
143 Bute Road
144 Bute Road Orchard
145 Central Road
146 Chaucer Road
147 Cheam Court
148 Cheam Park Nursery
149 Cheam Park Paddock
150 Clensham Lane
151 Culvers Avenue
152 Demesne Road
153 Duke Street
154 Forge Lane
155 Fryston Avenue
156 Gander Green
157 Goose Green
158 Green Wrythe Lane
159 Greenshaw Farm
160 Lavender Road
161 Mill Green
162 Perretts Field
163 Priory Crescent
164 Pylbrook Triangle
165 Ridge Road
166 Roundshaw
167 Spencer Road
168 StanleyRoad
169 Wandle Road
170 Wandle Side
171 Warren
172 Watson Avenue
173 Westmead Road
174 Wrights Row

* site located in Merton but actually run by Wandsworth

Allotment Site

Sub-Region Boundary

Borough Boundary

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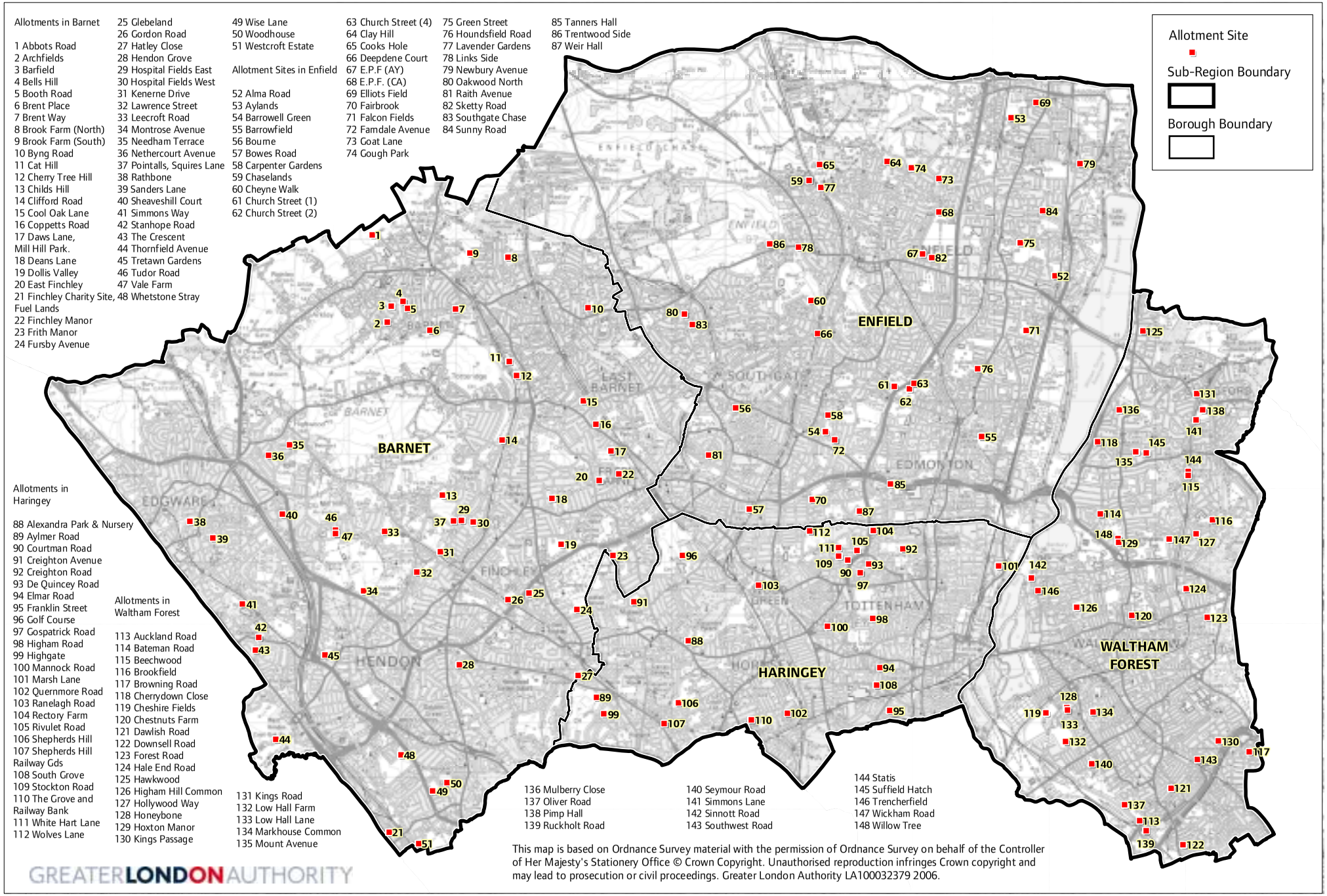
GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

Availability of Allotment Sites in North Sub-Region



Allotments in Barnet

1 Abbots Road
2 Archfields
3 Barfield
4 Bells Hill
5 Booth Road
6 Brent Place
7 Brent Way
8 Brook Farm (North)
9 Brook Farm (South)
10 Byng Road
11 Cat Hill
12 Cherry Tree Hill
13 Childs Hill
14 Clifford Road
15 Cool Oak Lane
16 Coppetts Road
17 Daws Lane, Mill Hill Park.
18 Deans Lane
19 Dollis Valley
20 East Finchley
21 Finchley Charity Site, Fuel Lands
22 Finchley Manor
23 Frith Manor
24 Fursby Avenue
25 Glebeland
26 Gordon Road
27 Hatley Close
28 Hendon Grove
29 Hospital Fields East
30 Hospital Fields West
31 Kenerne Drive
32 Lawrence Street
33 Leecroft Road
34 Montrose Avenue
35 Needham Terrace
36 Nethercourt Avenue
37 Pointalls, Squires Lane
38 Rathbone
39 Sanders Lane
40 Sheaveshill Court
41 Simmons Way
42 Stanhope Road
43 The Crescent
44 Thornfield Avenue
45 Tretawn Gardens
46 Tudor Road
47 Vale Farm
48 Whetstone Stray
49 Wise Lane
50 Woodhouse
51 Westcroft Estate

Allotment Sites in Enfield

52 Alma Road
53 Aylands
54 Barrowell Green
55 Barrowfield
56 Bourne
57 Bowes Road
58 Carpenter Gardens
59 Chaselands
60 Cheyne Walk
61 Church Street (1)
62 Church Street (2)
63 Church Street (4)
64 Clay Hill
65 Cooks Hole
66 Deepdene Court
67 E.P.F (AY)
68 E.P.F. (CA)
69 Elliots Field
70 Fairbrook
71 Falcon Fields
72 Farndale Avenue
73 Goat Lane
74 Gough Park
75 Green Street
76 Houndsfield Road
77 Lavender Gardens
78 Links Side
79 Newbury Avenue
80 Oakwood North
81 Raith Avenue
82 Sketty Road
83 Southgate Chase
84 Sunny Road
85 Tanners Hall
86 Trentwood Side
87 Weir Hall

Allotments in Haringey

88 Alexandra Park & Nursery
89 Aylmer Road
90 Courtman Road
91 Creighton Avenue
92 Creighton Road
93 De Quincey Road
94 Elmar Road
95 Franklin Street
96 Golf Course
97 Gospatrick Road
98 Higham Road
99 Highgate
100 Mannock Road
101 Marsh Lane
102 Quernmore Road
103 Ranelagh Road
104 Rectory Farm
105 Rivulet Road
106 Shepherds Hill
107 Shepherds Hill Railway Gds
108 South Grove
109 Stockton Road
110 The Grove and Railway Bank
111 White Hart Lane
112 Wolves Lane

Allotments in Waltham Forest

113 Auckland Road
114 Bateman Road
115 Beechwood
116 Brookfield
117 Browning Road
118 Cherrydown Close
119 Cheshire Fields
120 Chestnuts Farm
121 Dawlish Road
122 Downsell Road
123 Forest Road
124 Hale End Road
125 Hawkwood
126 Higham Hill Common
127 Hollywood Way
128 Honeybone
129 Hoxton Manor
130 Kings Passage
131 Kings Road
132 Low Hall Farm
133 Low Hall Lane
134 Markhouse Common
135 Mount Avenue
136 Mulberry Close
137 Oliver Road
138 Pimp Hall
139 Ruckholt Road
140 Seymour Road
141 Simmons Lane
142 Sinnott Road
143 Southwest Road
144 Statis
145 Suffield Hatch
146 Trencherfield
147 Wickham Road
148 Willow Tree

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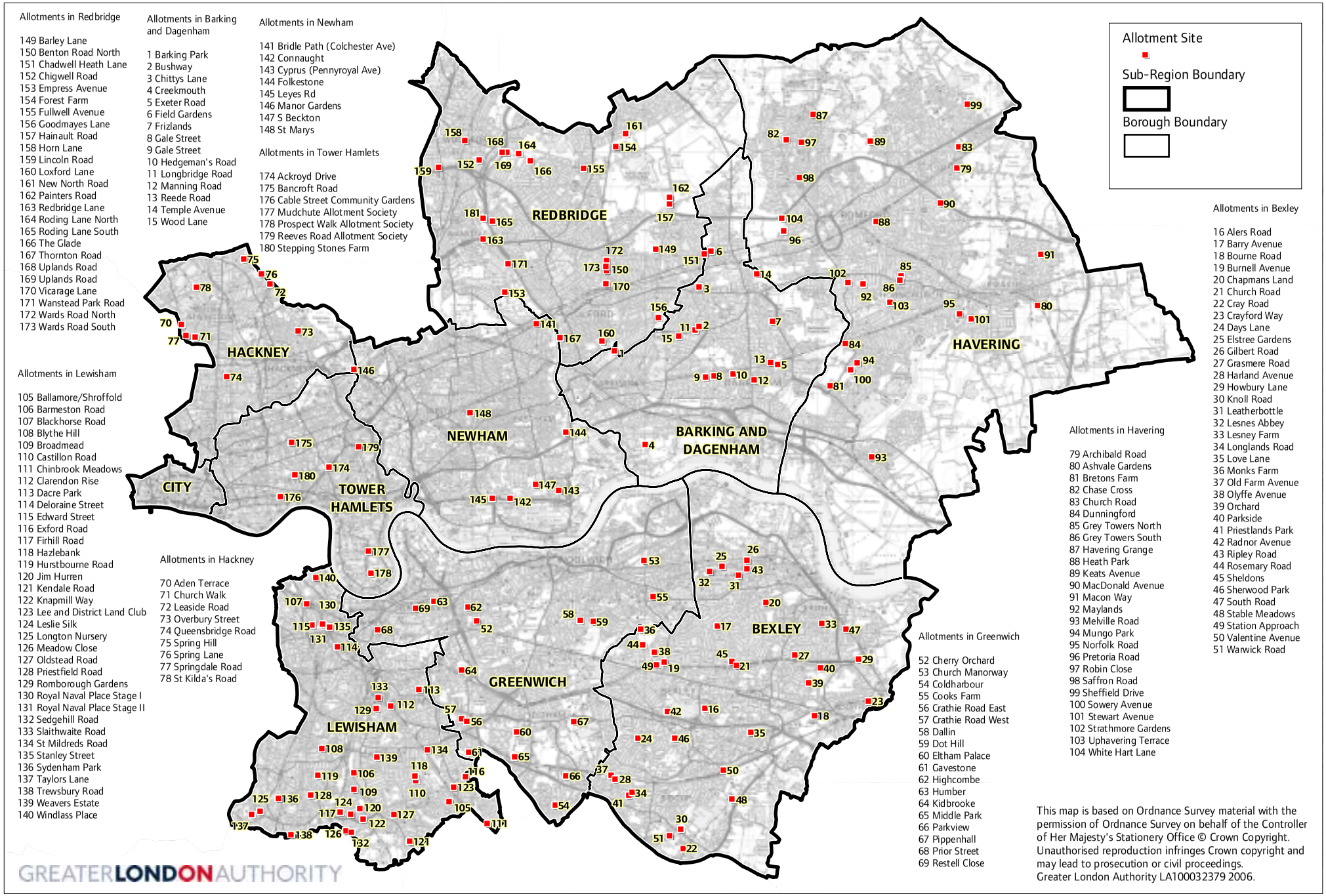
GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

Availability of Allotment Sites in East Sub-Region



Allotments in Redbridge

149 Barley Lane
150 Benton Road North
151 Chadwell Heath Lane
152 Chigwell Road
153 Empress Avenue
154 Forest Farm
155 Fullwell Avenue
156 Goodmayes Lane
157 Hainault Road
158 Horn Lane
159 Lincoln Road
160 Loxford Lane
161 New North Road
162 Painters Road
163 Redbridge Lane
164 Roding Lane North
165 Roding Lane South
166 The Glade
167 Thornton Road
168 Uplands Road
169 Uplands Road
170 Vicarage Lane
171 Wanstead Park Road
172 Wards Road North
173 Wards Road South

Allotments in Barking and Dagenham

1 Barking Park
2 Bushway
3 Chittys Lane
4 Creekmouth
5 Exeter Road
6 Field Gardens
7 Frizlands
8 Gale Street
9 Gale Street
10 Hedgeman's Road
11 Longbridge Road
12 Manning Road
13 Reede Road
14 Temple Avenue
15 Wood Lane

Allotments in Newham

141 Bridle Path (Colchester Ave)
142 Connaught
143 Cyprus (Pennyroyal Ave)
144 Folkestone
145 Leyes Rd
146 Manor Gardens
147 S Beckton
148 St Marys

Allotments in Tower Hamlets

174 Ackroyd Drive
175 Bancroft Road
176 Cable Street Community Gardens
177 Mudchute Allotment Society
178 Prospect Walk Allotment Society
179 Reeves Road Allotment Society
180 Stepping Stones Farm

Allotments in Bexley

16 Alers Road
17 Barry Avenue
18 Bourne Road
19 Burnell Avenue
20 Chapmans Land
21 Church Road
22 Cray Road
23 Crayford Way
24 Days Lane
25 Elstree Gardens
26 Gilbert Road
27 Grasmere Road
28 Harland Avenue
29 Howbury Lane
30 Knoll Road
31 Leatherbottle
32 Lesnes Abbey
33 Lesney Farm
34 Longlands Road
35 Love Lane
36 Monks Farm
37 Old Farm Avenue
38 Olyffe Avenue
39 Orchard
40 Parkside
41 Priestlands Park
42 Radnor Avenue
43 Ripley Road
44 Rosemary Road
45 Sheldons
46 Sherwood Park
47 South Road
48 Stable Meadows
49 Station Approach
50 Valentine Avenue
51 Warwick Road

Allotments in Lewisham

105 Ballamore/Shroffold
106 Barmeston Road
107 Blackhorse Road
108 Blythe Hill
109 Broadmead
110 Castillon Road
111 Chinbrook Meadows
112 Clarendon Rise
113 Dacre Park
114 Deloraine Street
115 Edward Street
116 Exford Road
117 Firhill Road
118 Hazlebank
119 Hurstbourne Road
120 Jim Hurren
121 Kendale Road
122 Knapmill Way
123 Lee and District Land Club
124 Leslie Silk
125 Longton Nursery
126 Meadow Close
127 Oldstead Road
128 Priestfield Road
129 Romborough Gardens
130 Royal Naval Place Stage I
131 Royal Naval Place Stage II
132 Sedgehill Road
133 Slaithwaite Road
134 St Mildreds Road
135 Stanley Street
136 Sydenham Park
137 Taylors Lane
138 Trewsbury Road
139 Weavers Estate
140 Windlass Place

Allotments in Hackney

70 Aden Terrace
71 Church Walk
72 Leaside Road
73 Overbury Street
74 Queensbridge Road
75 Spring Hill
76 Spring Lane
77 Springdale Road
78 St Kilda's Road

Allotments in Greenwich

52 Cherry Orchard
53 Church Manorway
54 Coldharbour
55 Cooks Farm
56 Crathie Road East
57 Crathie Road West
58 Dallin
59 Dot Hill
60 Eltham Palace
61 Gavestone
62 Highcombe
63 Humber
64 Kidbrooke
65 Middle Park
66 Parkview
67 Pippenhall
68 Prior Street
69 Restell Close

Allotments in Havering

79 Archibald Road
80 Ashvale Gardens
81 Bretons Farm
82 Chase Cross
83 Church Road
84 Dunningford
85 Grey Towers North
86 Grey Towers South
87 Havering Grange
88 Heath Park
89 Keats Avenue
90 MacDonald Avenue
91 Macon Way
92 Maylands
93 Melville Road
94 Mungo Park
95 Norfolk Road
96 Pretoria Road
97 Robin Close
98 Saffron Road
99 Sheffield Drive
100 Sowery Avenue
101 Stewart Avenue
102 Strathmore Gardens
103 Uphavering Terrace
104 White Hart Lane

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Availability of Allotment Sites in Central Sub-Region

Allotment Site

Sub-Region Boundary

Borough Boundary

Allotments in Camden

1 Adelaide Community Garden and Allotments
2 Antrim Grove
3 Augustus And Redhill (Crown Estate)
4 Branch Hill
5 Fitzroy Park
6 Kentish Town City Farm
7 Regents Park Gardening Club
8 South End Green And Mansfield Allotments Association

Allotments in Islington

9 Arvon Road
10 Evershot Road
11 Monsell Road
12 Quill Street

Allotments in Lambeth

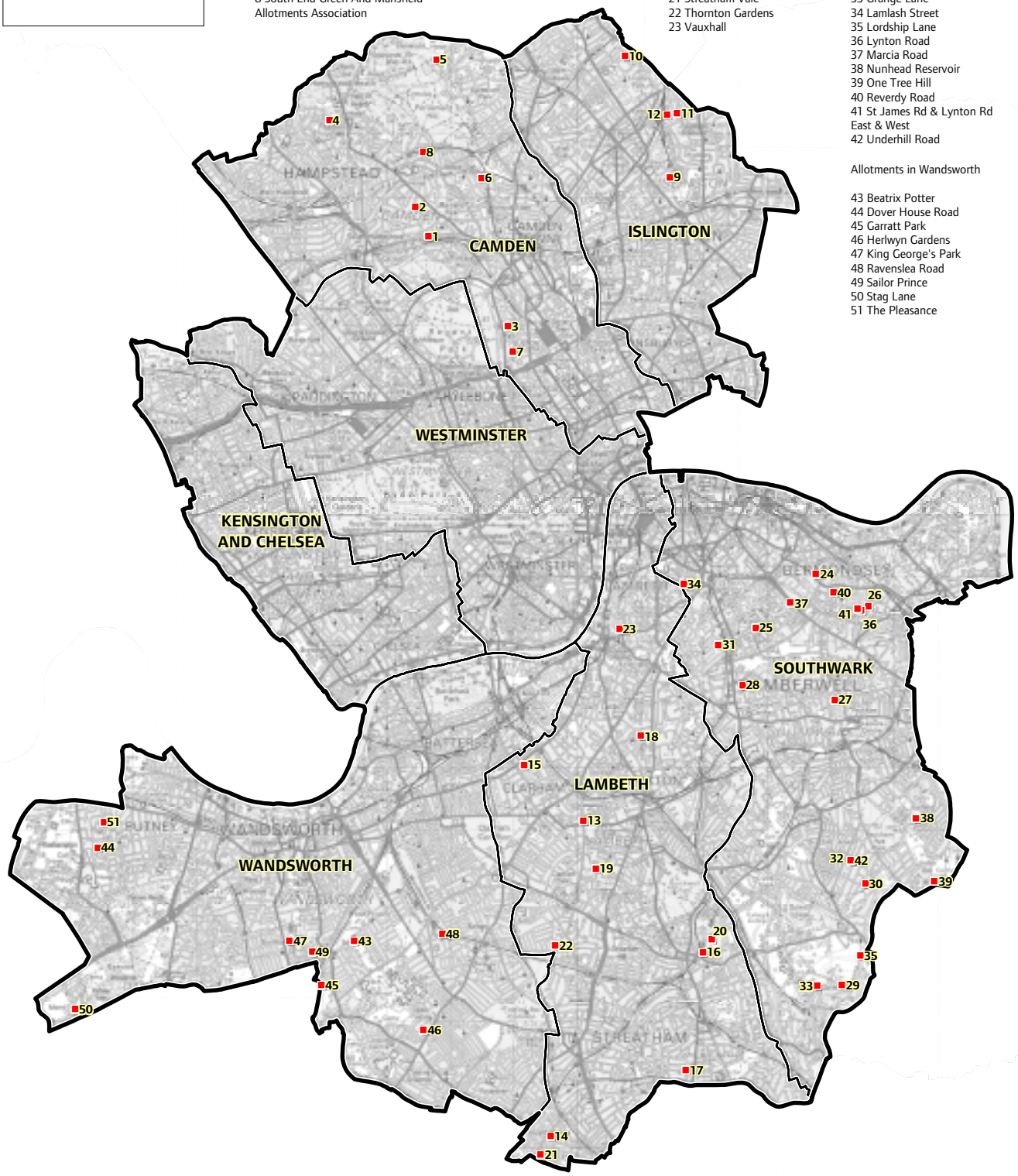
13 Bedford Road
14 Grayscroft Road
15 Iveley Road
16 Knight's Hill
17 Lakeview (Lambeth Horticultural Society)
18 Lorn Road
19 Lyham Road
20 Rosendale
21 Streatham Vale
22 Thornton Gardens
23 Vauxhall

Allotments in Southwark

24 Alscot Road
25 Aylesbury Road
26 Bermondsey
27 Bonar Road
28 Caspian Street
29 Dulwich Grove Common
30 Dunstans Road
31 Fielding Street
32 Friern Road
33 Grange Lane
34 Lamlash Street
35 Lordship Lane
36 Lynton Road
37 Marcia Road
38 Nunhead Reservoir
39 One Tree Hill
40 Reverdy Road
41 St James Rd & Lynton Rd East & West
42 Underhill Road

Allotments in Wandsworth

43 Beatrix Potter
44 Dover House Road
45 Garratt Park
46 Herlwyn Gardens
47 King George's Park
48 Ravenslea Road
49 Sailor Prince
50 Stag Lane
51 The Pleasance



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Availability of Allotment Sites in West Sub-Region

Allotments in Ealing

24-36 Private Sites
37 Ascott
38 Billets Hart
39 Bixley Fields
40 Blondin
41 Braund Avenue
42 Brent Meadow
43 Brentham
44 Brighton Drive
45 Carbury Avenue
46 Cleveley Crescent
47 Connell Crescent
48 Costons Lane
49 Dabbs Hill
50 Dormers Wells
51 Durdans Park
52 Framfield
53 Great Western
54 Greenford Hall
55 Hayes Bridge
56 High Lane
57 Horsenden
58 Jerome
59 Jubilee Road
60 Lime Trees 1
61 Lime Trees 2
62 Manor Way
63 Mansell Road
64 Oldfield
65 Perivale West
66 Pitshanger
67 Popes Lane
68 South Acton
69 South Road
70 St Andrew's
71 St Dunstan's
72 Stanhope Park
73 Stanley Avenue
74 The Crescent
75 Village Park
76 Western Avenue
77 Western Road
78 Whitton Drive
79 Whitton Place
80 Windmill Lane
81 Wolf Fields

Allotments in Harrow

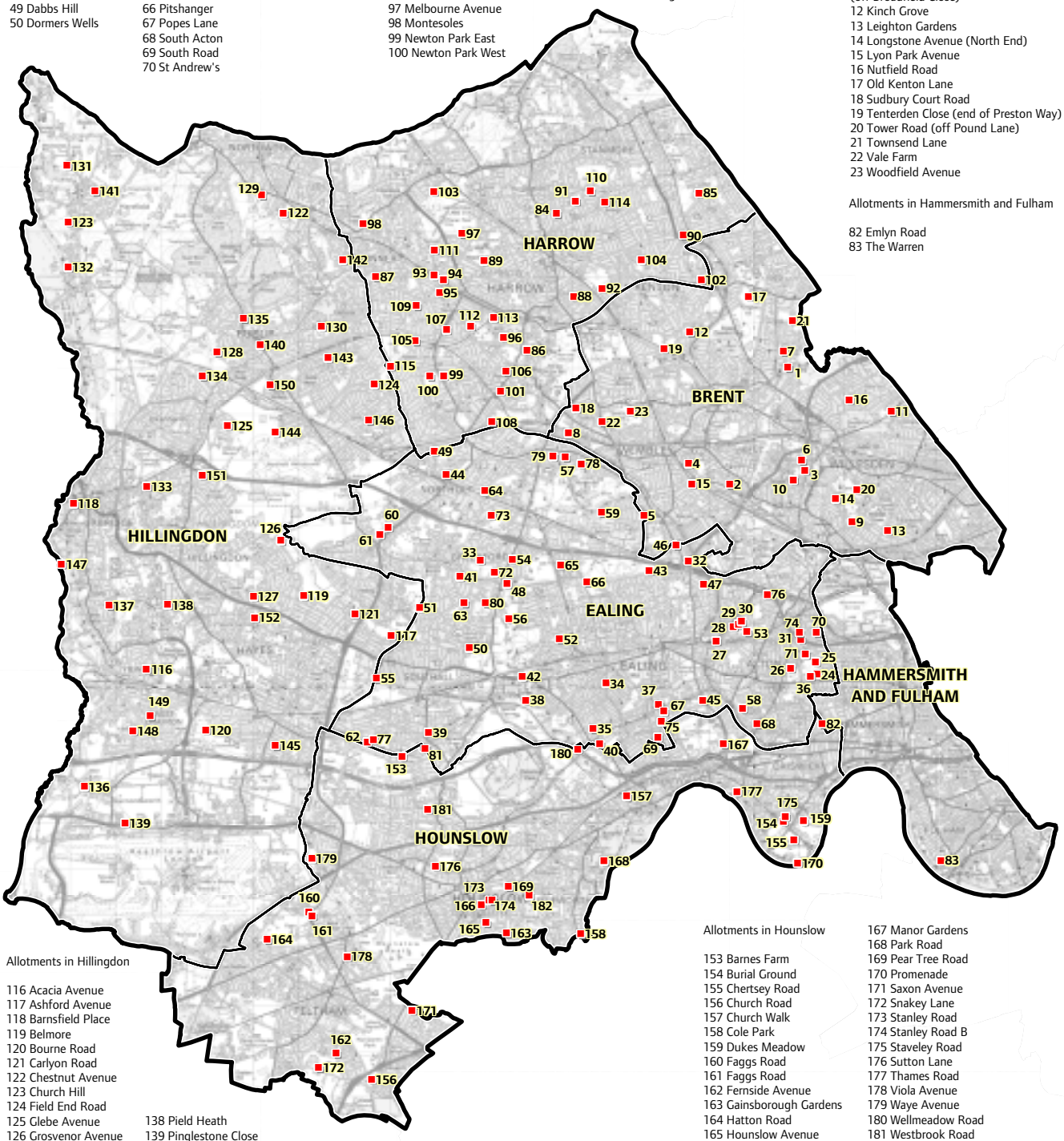
84 Bishop Ken
85 Chandos Recreation Ground
86 Church Fields - Harrow-on-the-Hill
87 Cuckoo Hill - Cranbourne Drive
88 Greenhill
89 Headstone
90 Isolation Hospital
91 Kenton Lane
92 Kenton Recreation Ground
93 Kingsley Road North
94 Kingsley Road South
95 Lincoln Road
96 Marshalls
97 Melbourne Avenue
98 Montesoles
99 Newton Park East
100 Newton Park West
101 Northolt Road
102 Orchard Grove
103 Park View
104 Paulhan Road
105 Pinner Village
106 Pleasant Place
107 Rayners Mead
108 Roxeth
109 Streamside
110 Vernon Drive
111 Wakehams Hill
112 West Harrow Large Site
113 West Harrow Small Site
114 Weston Drive
115 Yeading Avenue

Allotments in Brent

1 Birchen Grove (off Blackbird Hill)
2 Bovingdon Avenue (near Stonebridge Park Stn)
3 Bridge Road
4 Cecil Avenue (bottom of London Road)
5 Clifford Road
6 Dog Lane (Woodheyes Road)
7 Dors Close
8 Elms Gardens (off Elms Park Avenue)
9 Furness Road
10 Gibbons Road (off Bridge Road)
11 Gladstone Park Gardens (off Broadfield Close)
12 Kinch Grove
13 Leighton Gardens
14 Longstone Avenue (North End)
15 Lyon Park Avenue
16 Nutfield Road
17 Old Kenton Lane
18 Sudbury Court Road
19 Tenterden Close (end of Preston Way)
20 Tower Road (off Pound Lane)
21 Townsend Lane
22 Vale Farm
23 Woodfield Avenue

Allotments in Hammersmith and Fulham

82 Emlyn Road
83 The Warren



Allotments in Hillingdon

116 Acacia Avenue
117 Ashford Avenue
118 Barnsfield Place
119 Belmore
120 Bourne Road
121 Carlyon Road
122 Chestnut Avenue
123 Church Hill
124 Field End Road
125 Glebe Avenue
126 Grosvenor Avenue
127 Hayes End
128 Heathfield Rise
129 Highfield Crescent
130 Highgrove
131 Hill End
132 Hill House
133 Honeycroft Hill
134 Ickenham Green
135 Meadway
136 Moor Lane
137 Peachy Lane
138 Pield Heath
139 Pinglestone Close
140 Pinn Way
141 Poor Lane
142 Rodney Gardens
143 Southbourne Gardens
144 Stafford Road
145 Station Road
146 The Fairway
147 Uxbridge Industrial
148 West Drayton Cemetery
149 West Drayton Depot
150 West End Road
151 Western Avenue
152 Wood End Green

Allotments in Hounslow

153 Barnes Farm
154 Burial Ground
155 Chertsey Road
156 Church Road
157 Church Walk
158 Cole Park
159 Dukes Meadow
160 Faggs Road
161 Faggs Road
162 Fernside Avenue
163 Gainsborough Gardens
164 Hatton Road
165 Hounslow Avenue
166 Inwood Road
167 Manor Gardens
168 Park Road
169 Pear Tree Road
170 Promenade
171 Saxon Avenue
172 Snakey Lane
173 Stanley Road
174 Stanley Road B
175 Staveley Road
176 Sutton Lane
177 Thames Road
178 Viola Avenue
179 Waye Avenue
180 Wellmeadow Road
181 Westbrook Road
182 Worton Road

Allotment Site

Sub-Region Boundary

Borough Boundary

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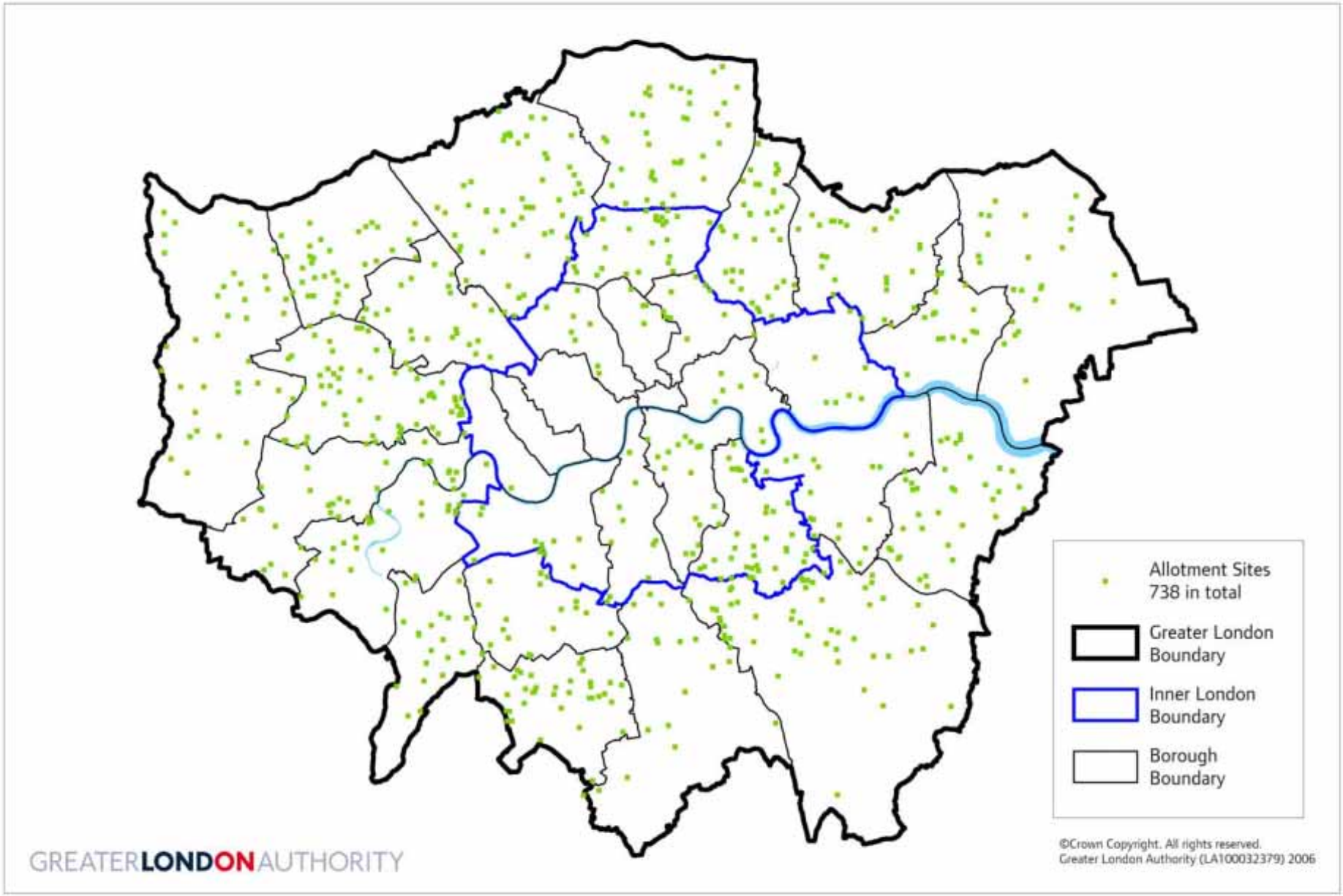
Location of Allotment Sites in Greater London

DMAG



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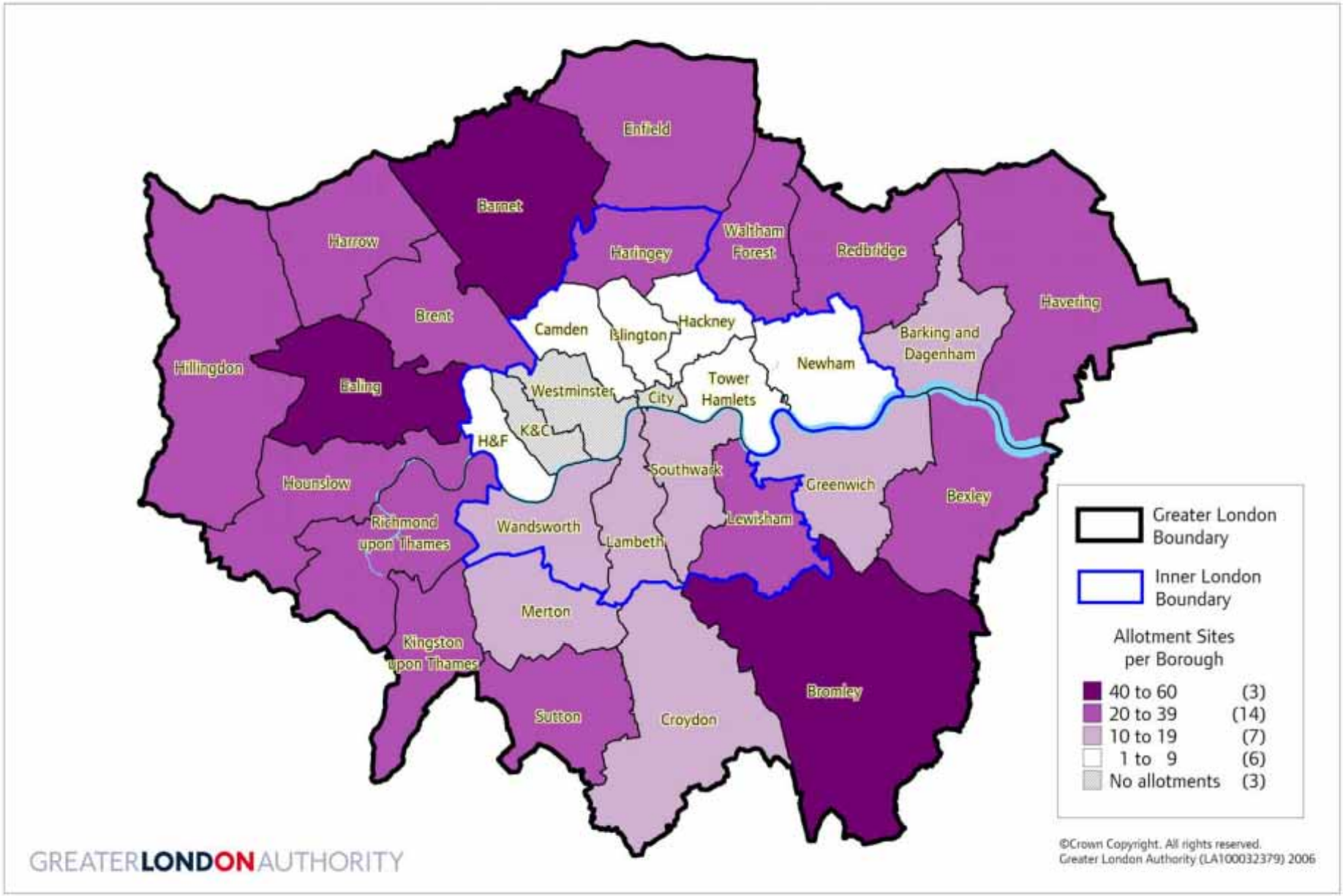
Number of Allotment Sites per London Borough



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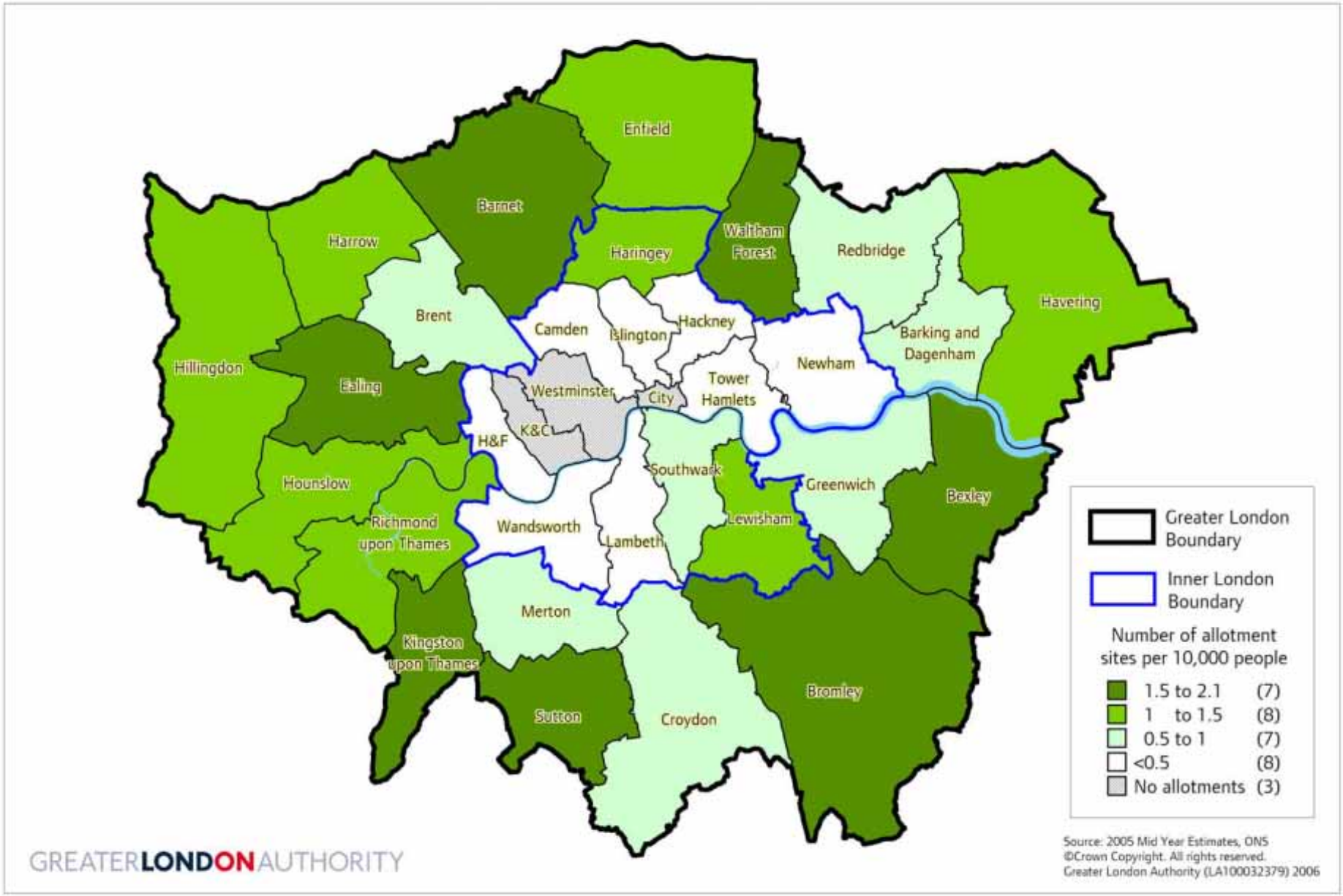
Number of Allotment Sites per 10,000 People



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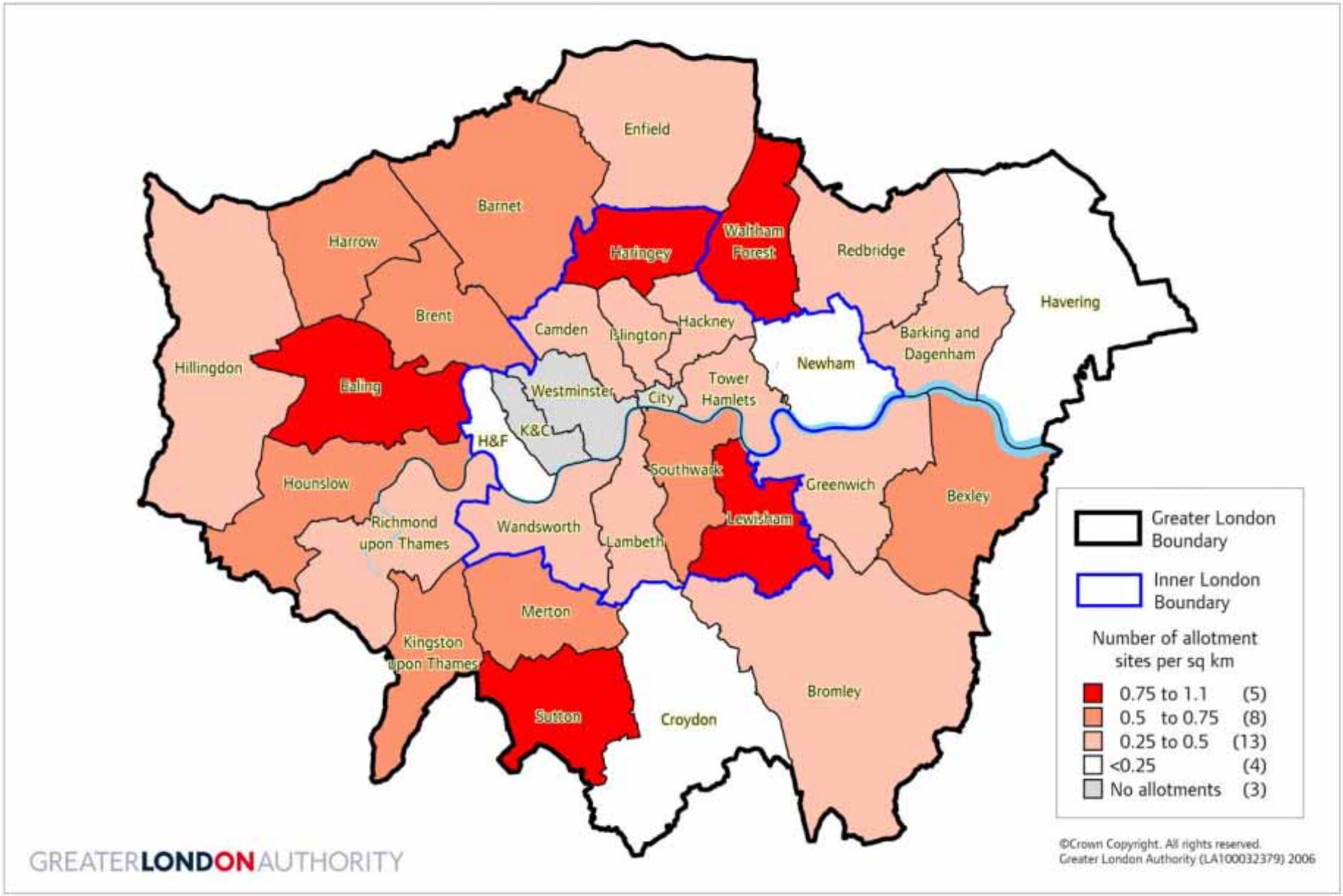
Number of Allotment Sites per Square KM



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APPENDIX FOUR: ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Darren Johnson, Chair	Green
Angie Bray	Conservative
Roger Evans	Conservative
Peter Hulme Cross	One London
Murad Qureshi, Deputy Chair	Labour
Valerie Shawcross	Labour
Mike Tuffrey	Liberal Democrat

Terms of reference:

To investigate the provision of allotments across the capital and issues relating to:

- the social and economic benefits of allotments;
- the reasons for long waiting lists;
- best practice designed to protect and make optimum use of existing allotments
- legislation and regulation affecting the provision, ownership and management of plots in London

Contact:

Kerry Lorimer
Scrutiny Manager
kerry.lorimer@london.gov.uk
020 7983 6540

APPENDIX FIVE: PRINCIPLES OF LONDON ASSEMBLY SCRUTINY

An aim for action
An Assembly scrutiny is not an end in itself. It aims for action to achieve improvement.

Independence
An Assembly scrutiny is conducted with objectivity; nothing should be done that could impair the independence of the process.

Holding the Mayor to account
The Assembly rigorously examines all aspects of the Mayor's strategies.

Inclusiveness
An Assembly scrutiny consults widely, having regard to issues of timeliness and cost.

Constructiveness
The Assembly conducts its scrutinies and investigations in a positive manner, recognising the need to work with stakeholders and the Mayor to achieve improvement.

Value for money
When conducting a scrutiny the Assembly is conscious of the need to spend public money effectively.

APPENDIX SIX: ORDERS AND TRANSLATIONS

How to Order

For further information on this report or to order a copy, please contact Richard Davies, Assistant Scrutiny Manager, on 020 7983 4199 or email Richard.davies@london.gov.uk

See it for Free on our Website

You can also view a copy of the report on the GLA website:
http://www.london.gov.uk/assembly/reports

Large Print, Braille or Translations

If you, or someone you know, needs a copy of this report in large print or Braille, or a copy of the summary and main findings in another language, then please call us on 020 7983 4100 or email to assembly.translations@london.gov.uk.

আপনি বা আপনার পরিচিত কেউ এ রিপোর্টের সারমর্ম ও প্রস্তাবের কপি বিনামুল্যে বড়ছাপা বা ব্রেইল, অথবা তাদের নিজের ভাষায় চাইলে 020 7983 4100 এ নাম্বারে ফোন করুন বা ই মেইল করুন এ ঠিকানায়:
assembly.translations@london.gov.uk

જો તમને કે તમે જાણતા હો તેવી કોઈ વ્યક્તિને, આ અહેવાલમાંથી કાર્યકારી સંક્ષેપ અને ભલામણોની નકલ મોટા અક્ષરોમાં છપાયેલી, બ્રેઈલમાં કે તેમની પોતાની ભાષામાં વિના મૂલ્યે જોઈતી હોય, તો કૃપા કરીને ફોન દ્વારા 020 7983 4100 ઉપર અમારો સંપર્ક કરો અથવા આ સરનામે ઈ-મેઈલ કરો assembly.translations@london.gov.uk

Se você, ou alguém de seu conhecimento, gostaria de ter uma cópia do sumario executivo e recomendações desse relatório em imprensa grande ou Braille, ou na sua língua, sem custo, favor nos contatar por telefone no número 020 7983 4100 ou email em assembly.translations@london.gov.uk

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਜਾਂ ਕੋਈ ਤੁਹਾਡਾ ਜਾਣ-ਪਛਾਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਇਸ ਰਿਪੋਰਟ ਦਾ ਅਗਜ਼ੈਕਟਿਵ ਖੁਲਾਸਾ ਅਤੇ ਸੁਝਾਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਨਕਲ ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ, ਬ੍ਰੇਅਲ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਂ ਆਪਣੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਮੁਫ਼ਤ ਪ੍ਰਪਤ ਕਰਨਾ ਚਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ 020 7983 4100 ਤੇ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ ਜਾਂ assembly.translations@london.gov.uk ਤੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਈ-ਮੇਲ ਕਰੋ।

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اگر آپ یا آپ کا کوئی جاننے والا اس ایگزیکٹو سمری اور اس رپورٹ میں سے سفارشات کی ایک کاپی بڑے پرنٹ میں یا بریل پر یا اپنی زبان میں بلا معاوضہ حاصل کرنا چاہیں تو براہ کرم ہم سے فون 020 7983 4100 پر رابطہ کریں یا assembly.translations@london.gov.uk پر ای میل کریں۔

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Haddii adiga, ama qof aad taqaanid, uu doonaayo inuu ku helo koobi ah warbixinta oo kooban iyo talooyinka far waaweyn ama farta qofka indhaha la' loogu talagalay, ama luuqadooda, oo bilaash u ah, fadlan nagala soo xiriir telefoonkan 020 7983 4100 ama email-ka cinwaanku yahay assembly.translations@london.gov.uk

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