

GREEN LONDON

CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England) London

Green spaces under threat

First, the good news in Ealing...After a long battle, QPR football club has finally pulled out of the arrangement for its training facility to be built on Warren Farm in Ealing - former community football pitches and part of the Brent River Park. We are keen to assist the local campaigners in pressing for the site to become a new, rejuvenated park for borough residents and one of our Ten New Parks for London.

...the bad news in Southwark...Green Dale park should be built on - so the council says. "Just unbelievable" was how our Green Spaces campaigner, Alice Roberts described the move by Southwark Council. "I am dismayed that the council has given permission for the park to be built on, particularly during the COVID-19 crisis which has shown why our green spaces are so important. London Mayor, Sadiq Khan says he will not allow our protected land to be built on and so CPRE London will be petitioning him to halt this development. The proposed stadium and flats should be built on the site of the old stadium and nearby car park."



...and the fight for Victoria Tower Gardens. The Judicial Review into the proposal to build a Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre in Victoria Tower Gardens starts 9th September. London Gardens Trust (LGT) is challenging the process and wants it overseen by an independent Planning Inspector. As it stands, the Department of Housing Communities and Local Government can decide to approve its own planning application. LGT, residents and professionals backing the challenge welcome plans for a Holocaust Memorial, but argue the location is wrong and the planning process compromised. Victoria Tower Gardens is part of the Westminster World Heritage Site. Historic England fear the development would cause serious harm to the significance of the historic Gardens, the listed Buxton Memorial, and the Westminster Abbey and Parliament Square Conservation Area.



Photo credit: Simon Turner Photography

An amazing year for Healthy Streets

The pandemic response has forced emergency improvements to our streets, but the second London Borough Healthy Streets Scorecard shows there's much more to be done.

CPRE London is proud to have coordinated the London Boroughs Healthy Streets Scorecard Coalition, which published the second Scorecard on 6th July. The coalition continues to have a huge impact on London's streets during COVID-19. The project has enabled us to campaign for emergency measures to create more space for walking and cycling, in lieu of public transport.

However, new data indicates that progress over the past year has been too slow to meet the Mayor's Transport Strategy target. One key result is that car registrations in London have reduced by just 268 over one year, falling short of the Mayor's target which calls for 12,500 fewer cars per year, every year until 2041.

Action on the indicators we were already tracking, which show the London Boroughs' progress in making our streets healthier, now feels even more urgent. In response to social-distancing measures, we recognise that the Mayor, TfL and many of our boroughs have been racing to introduce wider pavements, pop-up protected cycle lanes and "low-traffic neighbourhoods". This pace of change must continue.

The combination of spatial planning and transport strategy are integral to the health and wellbeing of our streets. We are calling for new transport infrastructure centred on walking, cycling and public transport, as well as car-share schemes, 'car-free' residential units and action to tackle green space deficiency.

The Healthy Streets Scorecard website will help boroughs compare how well they are doing and identify areas for future action. Are you interested in finding out how healthy and safe your borough's streets are? Then visit the new website www.healthystreetsscorecard.london/

Please join us at the CPRE London AGM

which will take place virtually from 6pm on

Thursday 8th October 2020 with a panel discussion on
'London after Lockdown: priorities for a green recovery.'

Please check our website for details and to sign up:

www.cprelondon.org.uk

The Magpie Project

Throughout the summer, children and mums from the Magpie Project in Ne-wham have been enjoying the plants and produce growing in the raised beds we built at Forest Lane Park, with help from Forest Gate Community Garden volunteers. While coronavirus has prevented the mums and toddlers from being as involved in the growing as we had hoped, the project has been appreciated by many of them. We look forward to celebrating the project at a special event in the park in September.



The future 'Barnet Loop'

The Barnet Ramblers are developing a Strategic Walking Network that connects the whole borough. Barnet plans to create a "Barnet Loop" for cyclists and walkers, making use of the Silk Stream and the River Brent to complete the linkage in the west of the Borough. The Ramblers are calling for the addition of the Pymmes Brook Trail and routes from Burnt Oak through Cophall to Finchley to make a Strategic Walking Network across the whole Borough. We join the Ramblers in welcoming Barnet's intention to improve facilities for walking in the Borough.

Public voice in planning

The pandemic has led to significant changes in the way London boroughs fulfill their planning responsibilities - not all of them welcome. Working with partners including Just Space and the London Forum of Amenity Societies, we have called on councils and Government to safeguard public participation in the planning process. We urged that planning applications normally considered by committee should not be decided using delegated or executive powers, and that members of the public and third party representatives should have speaking rights at virtual meetings.

New CPRE London website!

If you've visited our website recently, you will have noticed that it has a cleaner, more modern look and feel. As we continue to improve our website, we want your views. If you can spare just 5 minutes to provide feedback on the new website, we would really appreciate it! Visit our website to complete the survey or simply click [here](#).

London's green future: The Mayoral elections 2021

London's green spaces and countryside have proved their value during lockdown. We need to press this message home to Mayoral and Assembly candidates standing at the elections, postponed until May next year.

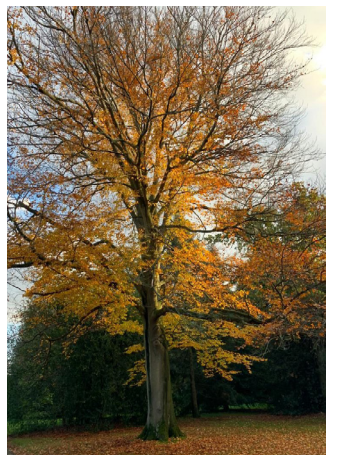
Working with representatives from over 20 London environmental groups, we have started to revise and refresh our call for *A More Natural Capital* in our agenda for the next Mayor of London. We originally set out 24 key priorities for action under four broad themes - action to reduce pollution and waste, to secure nature's recovery, to increase resilience to climate change and to improve health and wellbeing.

It is essential that London's economic recovery from the coronavirus pandemic goes hand in hand with environmental recovery and social justice. More than 75% of Londoners believe that nature should contribute to the post-pandemic recovery and nearly two thirds say that protection and enhancement of green spaces should now be a higher priority. By rebuilding the economy to be more resilient, environmentally sustainable, and socially just, we can secure a better future for all Londoners. We look forward to seeking your support in encouraging Mayoral candidates to adopt our proposals.

Guest Column: The 2020 Urban Tree Festival

Paul Wood, author and co-founder of the Urban Tree Festival, reflects on the success of 2020's virtual festival - the first of its kind.

The Urban Tree Festival has been running in London since 2018, with 2020 being our third year. In previous years, it has been a small festival focused on experiencing London's urban trees in all their forms through a series of guided walks and other participatory events.



We had plans for an expanded festival in 2020 with partners from Bell House in Dulwich, the Horniman Museum, the Hayward Gallery and King's Place all lined up to deliver events. Then the pandemic happened and we had to rethink our plans which meant planning an exciting virtual programme over 9 days in May.

The festival launched with an impressive 43 live events, dozens of online activities, and a growing compendium of resources. We were astonished by the breadth of activities delivered by a diverse group of contributors from many different perspectives and geographies. We were very pleased with CPRE London's contribution of 9 daily webinars that helped to anchor each day of the festival. The webinars alone attracted more than 20 contributors and an audience of over 1,000 to join these events covering a wide range of topics from new woodlands in the Green Belt to London's orchards.

By going virtual, we were able to provide a platform for contributors from as far afield as Canada, Belgium and Australia, and attract an audience from all corners of the world. While we hope that next year's festival will have a significant live, participatory element, our experience online has shown that we can reach a bigger, more diverse audience that takes the festival beyond London.

We are cooking up exciting plans for the 2021 festival and thinking about how it can be expanded to other towns and cities. Please keep an eye on our website and social media to find out more. urbantreefestival.org / [@urbantreefest](https://twitter.com/urbantreefest)

Last chance to enter #PictureGreenLondon

We're calling on all those with a keen eye for capturing London's diverse natural cityscape, to take part in our photography competition which closes on the 18th September 2020.

The events of 2020 have highlighted just how precious London's green spaces are for everyone. CPRE London wants to capture this heightened connection to our surroundings, by encouraging people to submit photographs that showcase the interaction of London's green spaces with the urban setting. The images will be judged by Professor Kate Jones, photographer Derek Man and Shirley Rodrigues, Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy, Greater London Authority.

Entry is **FREE** and entrants can enter up to three photographs. The winning entry will receive a **cash prize of £150** and **free membership** for CPRE London for a year. To find out how to enter, please visit our website or click [here](#).

Volunteer Profile: Matt Coulson

Our new web-site volunteer Matt gives us the inside scoop on sustainable living and his favourite green spots in the city :



Where do you like to sit and watch the world go by? Somewhere around Southbank...I'm lucky to be able to get the boat there from Greenwich. During normal times, I love going to the free classical lunchtime concerts run by Trinity Laban, it has a real community feel.

What steps are you taking to live more sustainably? Like many Londoners we don't use a car. We've been trying our hand at home cooking and use Mindful Chef, a recipe in a box offering that keeps waste to a minimum.

Favourite green space to connect to nature? I like going to Greenwich park either early morning or late evening to avoid the crowds and get some time in the green. It's a beautiful space, good for running, tennis, frisbee or just chilling.

Which CPRE London causes are close to your heart? Protecting parks is hugely important to me. Without the park, lockdown would've been unbearable.

Do you have a favourite walking route in London? Thames path or Hampstead Heath are both personal favourites and I also like the Primrose Hill area. They're all very different. But heading east on the Thames path probably edges it...



Parks mapped and appreciated during lockdown

GoParks London: all of London's publicly accessible green spaces mapped - for the very first time - thanks to an amazing partnership between CPRE London, London Friends of Green Spaces, Greenspace Information for Greater London, Revolution Consultancy and Design, and National Park City Foundation.

There are now more than 4,000 individual parks and public green spaces listed and mapped on the GoParks London website. Each listing has its own page detailing the facilities available and a map of the park.

The webpage became hugely popular during the peak of the pandemic. Physical distancing was always a high priority for all but being able to get outdoors enabled many to remain healthy and sane. GoParks London was able to share essential information with park friends' groups as the situation changed, offering guidance on best practice, and became a source of information for people seeking quieter parks near their homes.

The pandemic laid bare the fact that London needs more parks and green spaces, especially in deprived areas. The future for parks is far from secure despite the vital and nationally recognised role they have played. The cost of supporting communities through the pandemic has depleted council budgets, suggesting that children's paddling pools may close, and maintenance will be reduced.

This came as Public Health England (PHE) published what will be one of its final reports. *Improving access to greenspace: A new review 2020* which provides evidence supporting the argument for better funding of parks. To read more about the PHE report on the GoParks London website www.goparks.london or click [here](#).



Ten Peaks Challenge

On 24th October 2020, come and be part of a fundraising event to explore alternative UK 'summits' across north west London. This 42km trek will take place on the 'London Loop' footpath, journeying over a remarkable variety of terrain, with unexpected views and chance encounters with local wildlife. This will leave you with an immense sense of achievement knowing that you've made a real difference by supporting the work done by CPRE. Click [here](#) to get involved.



Get involved: Black Girls Hike London

Black Girls Hike (BGH) is a safe walking community for black women to enjoy the outdoors in and around cities. We chat to Oge Ejizu, the London Regional Leader for BGH.

Can you tell us a little bit about how BGH started? BGH was started in 2019 by Rhiane Fatinikun as a response to the lack of representation of black women in the outdoors - specifically hiking. BGH was set up to give black women the opportunity to explore the outdoors with other women they can relate to and the response since setting up the group has been inspiring! We set up the London branch as there were calls to have hikes in and around London.

What routes have already been and what's next on the agenda? We had our first (socially distanced) hike in August at Epping Forest and the response was phenomenal, beyond my expectations! We will be doing monthly walks, with the next one in September hiking the Green Chain Walk (Woolwich - Abbey Wood). Every third month will be a walk exploring somewhere outside of London, so in October we are heading to the Seven Sisters in Sussex.

How can people find out more? Whether it's your first or 100th time, we welcome all on our walks! Find out more about us via Facebook ([bgmcr](#)), Instagram ([@bg_hk](#)) and Twitter ([@UkBgH](#)). Or email us at: blackgirlshikeuk@gmail.com or visit our website.

Regenerate our countryside, regenerate ourselves

On the back of the launch of CPRE's national 'regeneration' manifesto in July, we have been exploring with partners how to improve the health benefits of our parks for all Londoners.

Many of us have become more aware of the value of green spaces to our health and wellbeing. Yet, at the same time, the pandemic has highlighted the inequalities that exist between different communities in London over access to beautiful and tranquil, nature-rich green space. We know that views of trees and wide open landscapes, the sound of water and birdsong, and absence of traffic and aircraft noise, all make a positive contribution to our experience of green spaces, but there is little systematic assessment of what matters most and how we can extend and enhance those elements. As we recover from the pandemic, we want to improve access to high quality, tranquil green spaces for disadvantaged groups so that everyone can reap the health benefits they provide.

A view from the Board as we say farewell to two Trustees

At CPRE London, we value the support of our volunteers enormously. We would like to thank Jo Clayton, Honorary Secretary, and Alex King, Honorary Treasurer, who as Trustees have both made a brilliant contribution to championing environmental issues in London. We wish them the best of luck for the future.

Jo Clayton emphasises the growing importance of our work:

"Covid-19 has brought into sharp relief the huge importance to us of every single one of our green spaces in London. We know that they are vital in connecting us to nature which is essential for our wellbeing and health, both mental and physical. To engage with the natural world: listening to nature's noises, looking up into tree branches, marvelling at a spider's web and noticing the changes in seasons are some of the many ways in which we can and do connect - and it makes us feel good.

We need - now more than ever - to ensure that we don't lose these nature connections. There needs to be strong political and policy support, together with significant funding, to resist the pressure to build on green spaces, to restore those parks which are in sad decline and to create new public green spaces to discover, in all sorts of shapes, sizes and in unexpected places!

This is why the work of CPRE London is so important - helping to protect, enhance and create green spaces for everyone, both now and in the future."

Alex King reflects on his time on the Board:

"I've thoroughly enjoyed my time working with CPRE London over the last four years. We've seen so much change and progress and it's been great to be a part of that. Staff have grown us beyond our continuing local planning work into more strategic projects that really work to benefit the citizens of this city. I look forward to seeing that continue over the years to come!"

CPRE London is grateful to all the supporters, partners and funders who enable us to carry out our important work.

To find out more about us please follow us on twitter [@cprelondon](#), visit our website

www.cprelondon.org.uk

or email us at office@cprelondon.org.uk