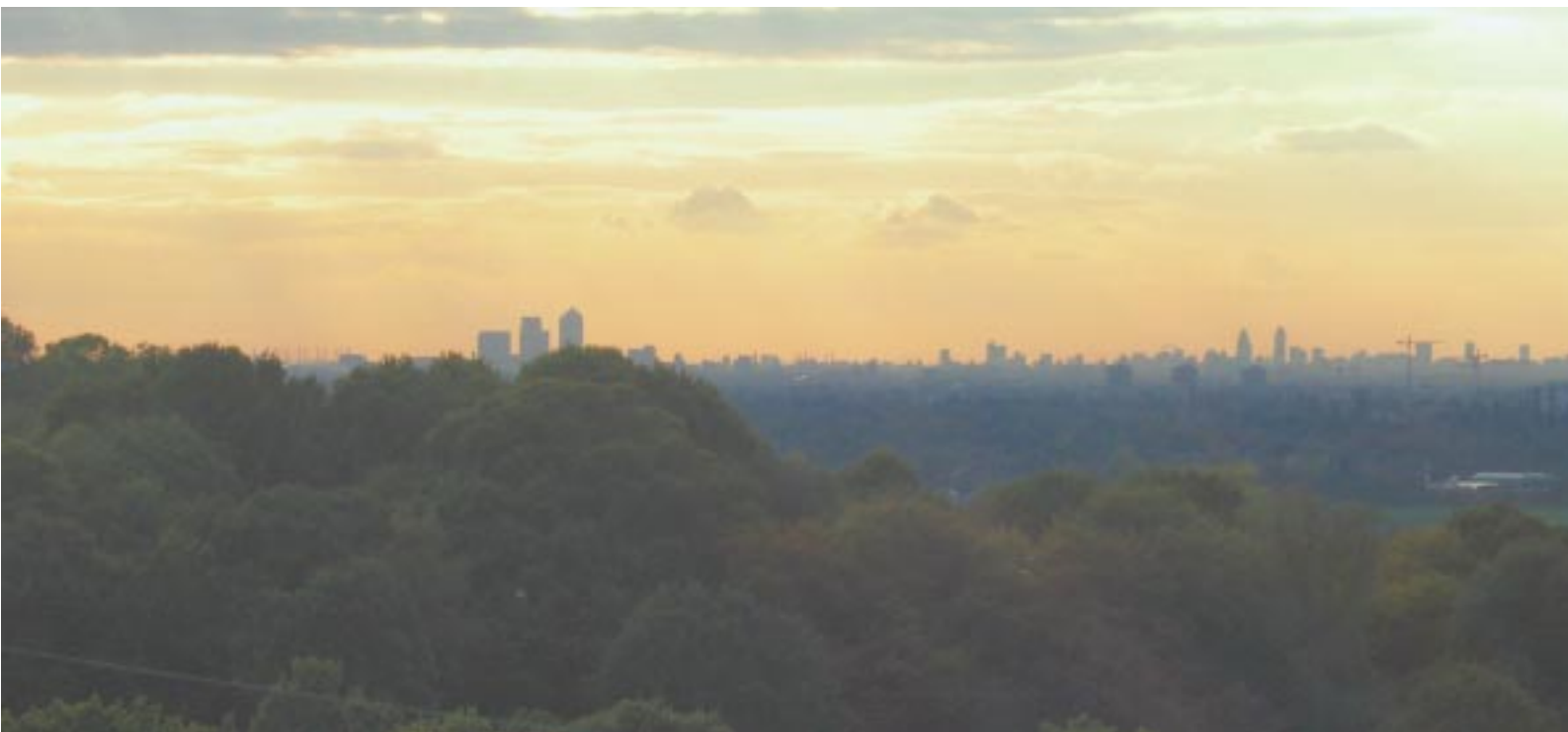




Office of the
Deputy Prime Minister
Creating sustainable communities



Creating sustainable communities: Greening the Gateway Implementation Plan





Office of the Deputy Prime Minister



Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs



Department for Culture, Media and Sport



Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment Space



Cleaner, Safer, Greener Communities



Countryside Agency



English Nature



Environment Agency



Forestry Commission



Groundwork



The Land Restoration Trust



Sport England



Thames Gateway Kent Partnership



Thames Gateway London Partnership



Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership



South Essex Green Grid Partnership

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Acknowledgements

We are grateful to all those from the public, private and voluntary sectors who have contributed ideas, time, expertise and illustrations to this document.

Photo credits

Front cover: Thames Chase Community Forest looking toward London.

Credit to the Forestry Commission.

Housing and Greenspace on St Mary's Island, Chatham, Kent.

Credit to Countryside Maritime Ltd.

Foreword

In February 2003, the Deputy Prime Minister launched *Sustainable Communities: Building for the Future*¹, which set out the Government's vision for successful communities that will stand the test of time.

Our aim is to create sustainable communities in which jobs, homes, schools, hospitals and other public services are provided together. This means providing more than just housing – people need cleaner, safer, greener places in which to live, work and relax.

The quality of the public realm – the parks, the streets, the open spaces and so on – is therefore vitally important to creating sustainable communities.

This is especially true in the Thames Gateway and the other Growth Areas. Along with London, we expect the Growth Areas to provide 1.1 million more homes by 2016. This will help meet the pressing need for more affordable housing in London and the wider South East.

We've learnt the lessons of the past when we built homes, but not communities. It's essential that we work with local people to provide high quality greenspace as an integral part of new development as well as revitalising existing towns and cities.

That's why protecting and enhancing the local environment is an essential part of our strategy to create sustainable communities in the Thames Gateway. In this way we will:

- enhance the quality of life of new and existing residents
- support and protect biodiversity, and
- create a positive image of the Gateway to maximise commercial value and the viability of development.

The Government is committed to working with our agencies and partners in local government, the voluntary sector and private businesses to make this happen. This involves, for example, unlocking new resources for the environment – and making existing resources work more effectively. It also means using the planning system as a framework at the national, regional, sub-regional and local level to help provide a better environment.

We have already set out our commitment to create Cleaner, Safer, Greener Communities² through a cross Government initiative which aims to create high quality local environments by improving the quality of our parks and green spaces, reducing litter and abandoned vehicles, and tackling

¹ *Sustainable communities: building for the future*, ODPM (February 2003)

² www.cleanersafergreener.gov.uk

anti-social behaviour. The recent 5 year strategies for Defra³ and ODPM⁴ gave further impetus to our work on “liveability” under the Sustainable Communities Plan. And in February 2005, ODPM published the new Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1⁵) which puts sustainable development at the heart of our national planning system.

More locally, we launched the joint ODPM-Defra document *Creating Sustainable Communities: Greening the Gateway, a greenspace strategy for Thames Gateway*⁶ in January 2004, setting out our vision for greenspace in the Thames Gateway.

One year on, we welcome the excellent progress that has already been made by a wide range of partners throughout Thames Gateway. It is now timely to focus on how the work of these partners fits together to deliver *Greening the Gateway’s* objectives.

In this document we take a first step by setting out how Government, its Agencies and its funding will support the delivery of greenspace. But the majority of delivery will occur at the local level and we encourage local authorities, local communities and community organisations, the private sector and the non-environmental sector to work together in Thames Gateway to ensure that the environment is at the heart of planning for growth.

Ours is a long term commitment, but right now we are investing in the future and working with local people to shape sustainable communities in the Thames Gateway. We want people to be attracted to, and proud of, the Gateway because of the quality of its environment. And we want to work with our partners to create an internationally regarded model of how to integrate the environment and development on a scale rarely achieved before.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Keith Hill".

Keith Hill
Minister for the Thames Gateway,
ODPM



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alun Michael".

Alun Michael
Minister for Rural Affairs and
Local Environmental Quality, Defra

³ *Delivering Essentials for Life*, Defra (December 2004)

⁴ *Sustainable Communities: Homes for All*, ODPM (January 2005) & *Sustainable Communities: People, Places and Prosperity*, ODPM (January 2005)

⁵ *Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development*, ODPM (February 2005)

⁶ *Creating Sustainable Communities: Greening the Gateway, a greenspace strategy for Thames Gateway*, ODPM (January 2004)

1 Introduction

1.1 *Greening the Gateway* sets out the Government's vision for the Thames Gateway as a world class model of sustainable development, with the living landscape at its heart.

1.2 *Greening the Gateway* contains two key objectives:

- that a network of varied and well-managed greenspace should be the setting for new and existing residential and commercial areas;
- that the landscape should be regarded as functional green infrastructure, recognising a wide range of potential benefits from healthy recreation, to wildlife protection and enhancement, to flood risk management.

1.3 One year on from *Greening the Gateway*, much good progress has already been made by a variety of delivery partners. To ensure that the strategy's objectives are fully realised, it is now time to focus on the overall delivery framework. While it would be inappropriate for central Government to set a rigid blueprint for the design and management of the greenspace network in Thames Gateway, there is a need to clarify how the work of the various delivery partners fits together to contribute to the overall whole.

1.4 The purpose of this *Implementation Plan* is to set out the delivery framework for *Greening the Gateway*. It clarifies how Government, its Agencies and its funding will support the delivery of greenspace. It also broadly outlines the strategic roles that we envisage for other delivery agents in the Thames Gateway and how these contribute to the overall framework. It does not seek to list all the initiatives and responsibilities of the many organisations involved in delivery, particularly at the local level.



Forestry Commission

1.5 The document outlines:

- some examples of greenspace initiatives now underway;
- the delivery framework;
- an indicative spatial framework to show where greenspace exists and where strategic greenspace is being planned;
- funding provision;
- key challenges for delivery;
- the roles of Government, its Agencies and other delivery agents;
- arrangements for monitoring delivery.

1.6 While this document is not statutory, it reflects Government policy and is intended to provide guidance to inform the more detailed strategies being prepared to deliver *Greening the Gateway*. This includes work by Government sponsored bodies, local authorities and partnerships, the Thames Gateway Partnerships (Thames Gateway London Partnership, Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership and Thames Gateway Kent Partnership), ODPM funded local regeneration partnerships, Regional Development Agencies (SEEDA, EEDA and LDA), the Mayor of London and Regional planning bodies (SEERA and EERA), developers, landowners and voluntary organisations.

2 Existing greenspace initiatives

2.1 This section sets out just some examples of work already underway to deliver *Greening the Gateway*. It focuses on the work of Government and its Agencies and does not seek to list all of the many current or planned initiatives in the region.

2.2 A variety of greenspace already exists in the Thames Gateway, from formal parks in east London to wild coastal marshes in south Essex and north Kent that are internationally important for wildlife. The region contains just under 40 Sites of Special Scientific Interest in all.

2.3 Many practical greening initiatives are already underway across the Thames Gateway. These range from:

- neighbourhood projects, such as King George's Fields in Barking and Dagenham, to
- enhancements to local and country parks, such as the London Riverside Park in Havering and Wat Tyler Country Park in Basildon, to
- strategic initiatives, such as the "green grid" projects in east London, south Essex and north Kent. The "green grids" aim to improve the physical links between areas of greenspace into a wider network and form the sub-regional strategic framework for the creation of a multi-functional green infrastructure.



Groundwork – Kent Thameside

2.4 Through ODPM Thames Gateway programme funding, the Government is providing nearly £20m for a number of major projects that will provide valuable greenspace resources for both new and existing communities in Thames Gateway. Examples include the following:

- a £4.65m package of environmental improvements in North Kent includes investment in “green grid” projects at Swanscombe Heritage Park, Darenth Valley and Shorne Woods Country Park;
- £5m of ODPM funding is supporting the development of the London Riverside Conservation Park at Rainham and Averley Marshes and the restoration of Erith, Crayford and Dartford Marshes. These projects are being delivered through partnerships of organisations including government agencies, local authorities, the RSPB and the private sector and will form flagship ecological and leisure resources on either side of the Thames;
- £2m has been provided for a 74 hectare conservation site at Nevendon Nature reserve in Basildon;
- ODPM is also providing £1m towards environmental enhancements to the River Roding at Barking, including new walkways and cycleways to provide access to the river for local communities.

2.5 We need to ensure that initiatives such as these, both now and in the future, fit within a co-ordinated framework for the delivery of *Greening the Gateway*.

3 The Delivery Framework

“Every effort should be made to establish Thames Gateway’s framework of bold structural greenspace as far ahead of built development as is practicable It will also bring tangible early environmental benefits to those local communities who are already living and working in the Thames Gateway”
(Section 5.5, *Greening the Gateway*)

Spatial planning

3.1 Sound spatial planning is required to deliver the objectives of *Greening the Gateway* alongside growth and regeneration. The statutory planning system enables planning for greenspace to be integrated with policies for the development and use of land, including housing, economic growth, transport and other community infrastructure. It also encourages a strategic approach to long-term planning for greenspace, including planning across local authority boundaries.

3.2 Integration with the planning system will be essential for the delivery of functional green infrastructure and greenspace networks in the Thames Gateway as a setting for development. The planning system provides the framework within which delivery agents can work together to strategically plan for greenspace, co-ordinate and prioritise activity, and attract additional resources.

3.3 The integration of planning for greenspace within the statutory planning system needs to occur at a number of spatial levels across the Thames Gateway.

The Statutory Planning System

Planning Greenspace in the Thames Gateway

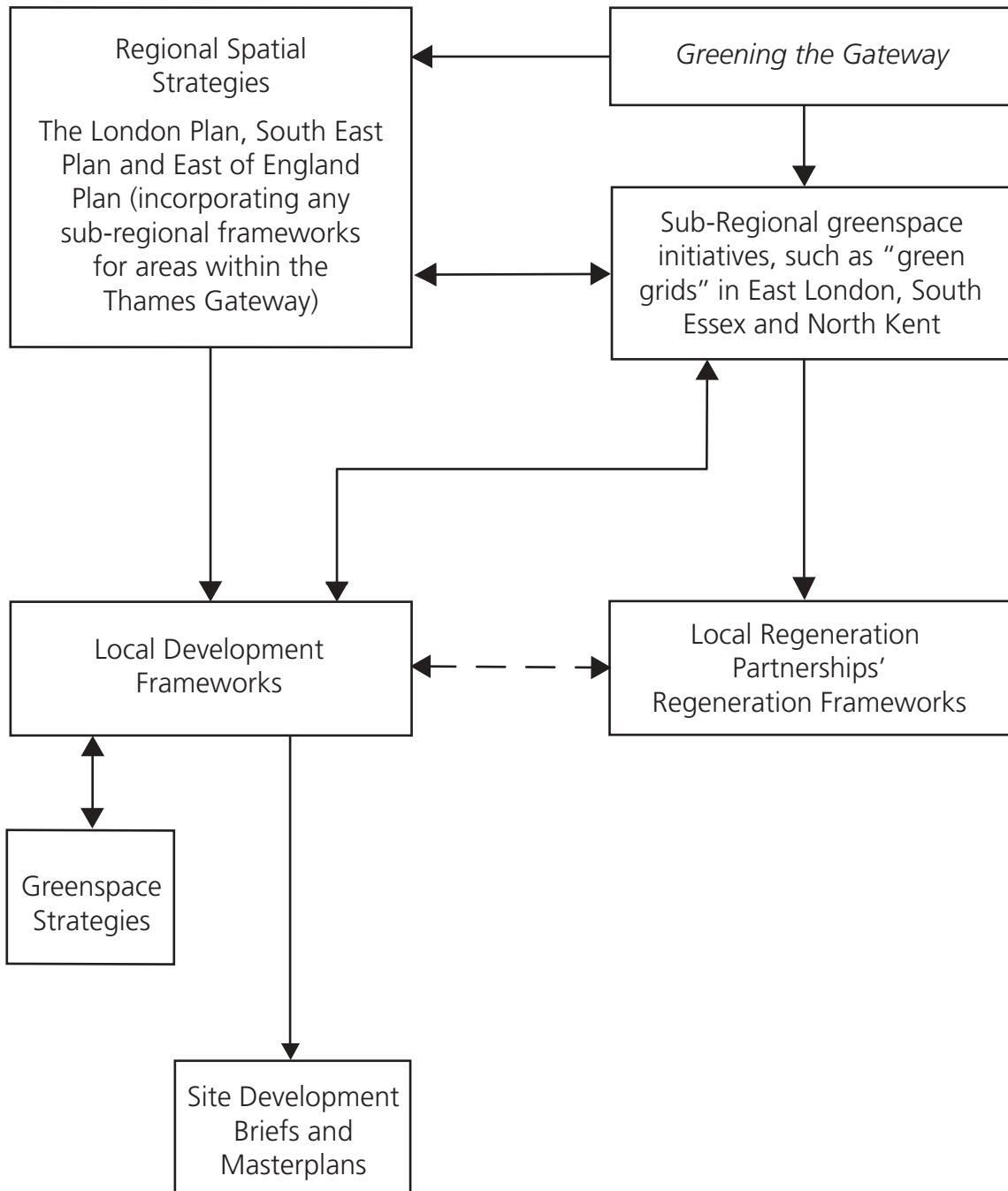


Diagram 1: Integration of greenspace planning and the statutory planning system in the Thames Gateway

Regional/Sub-Regional

3.4 The new and emerging Regional Spatial Strategies (RSSs) that cover London, the South-East and the East of England will cover all aspects of sustainable development over a 15-20 year period. The Government expects *Greening the Gateway* to inform these strategies so that the appropriate regional policy framework is in place to deliver a greenspace network in the Thames Gateway.

3.5 The RSSs and any sub-regional frameworks should draw on existing sub-regional greenspace initiatives in Thames Gateway, including the “green grids”, “Green Arc”, Kent Medway regional park, Thames Path “City to Sea” and Thames Chase Community Forest, which offer excellent examples of partnership working to plan and deliver networks of greenspace.

Local

3.6 Regional and sub-regional plans for greenspace will need to be translated into plans for delivery at the local level and brought together with plans for housing and other development. Local Development Frameworks, which set out the key elements of the planning framework for the area, will be the main vehicles for planning and delivering greenspace alongside growth in the Thames Gateway. These should be informed by local greenspace strategies, as recommended in Planning Policy Guidance Note 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation (2002). Evidence-based local greenspace strategies are key to the effective planning and prioritisation of expenditure on greenspaces.

3.7 ODPM has established a number of local regeneration partnerships in the Thames Gateway to lead the plans for growth and regeneration in their area. It is also essential that the principles of *Greening the Gateway* and the sub-regional greenspace initiatives set out in 3.5 above are integrated directly into local regeneration partnerships’ regeneration frameworks and inform the projects that they support.

Local greenspace planning – Barking and Dagenham Parks and Greenspaces Strategy

The Barking and Dagenham Parks and Greenspaces Strategy is one of a new breed of greenspace strategies due to its scope, content and spatial dimension.

The Strategy's outline Landscape Framework plans the greenspaces and corridors of the Borough so that they:

- provide multifunctional benefits for communities, consistent with regional strategies such as Greening the Gateway;
- contribute to, and link in with, the development of continuous greenspace connections at sub-regional level across the London Thames Gateway Green Grid.

The Strategy has also enabled the Borough to address parks and greenspace issues from the local planning level through to detailed delivery and individual site masterplans.

Examples include:

- the embedding of the Landscape Framework into the Local Development Framework process in order to incorporate greenspace planning into wider planning strategies;
- the planning application for the 10,800 dwelling Barking Riverside development, where the Strategy set the context for a Landscape and Ecology Framework. The Landscape and Ecology Framework will protect the mudflats and other habitats within the site, whilst increasing public access to the newly developed riverside;
- the Strategy included an assessment of all local parks in the borough against a number of themes including the character and quality of the landscape, and considered Barking Park to be a greenspace with particularly strong links to heritage. This allowed the council to secure a £3 million Heritage Lottery Fund grant.

Site Specific

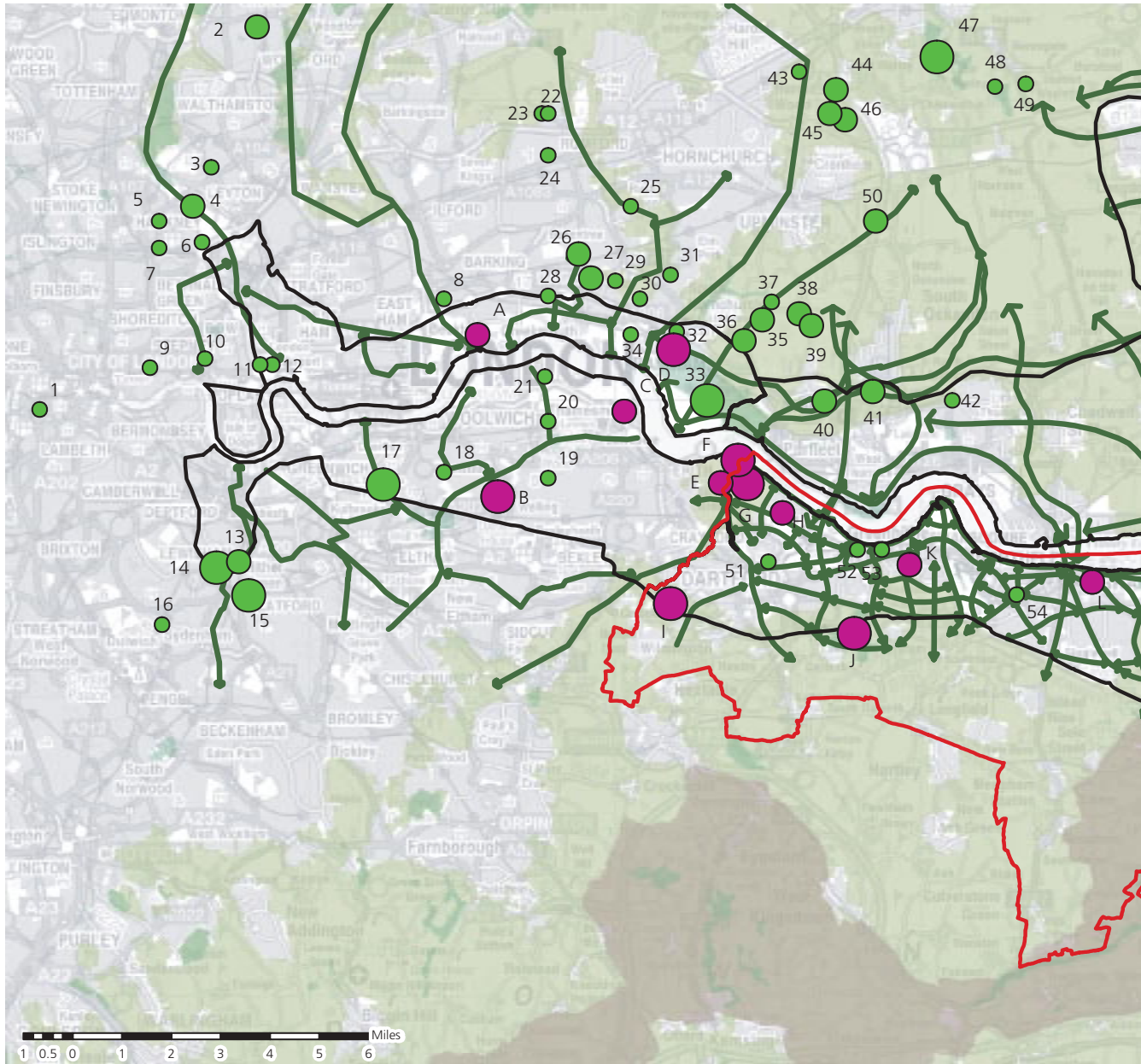
3.8 Local Development Frameworks, including greenspace strategies, will inform site development briefs and masterplans. Where briefs and masterplans are developed in advance of the strategic-level plans being finalised, the principles of *Greening the Gateway* should be directly integrated into site level plans.

Indicative Spatial framework

3.9 The following maps demonstrate the spatial planning approach translated through the pan-Gateway, sub-regional, local and site specific levels as set out in diagram 1. They provide an indicative spatial framework for greenspace in the Thames Gateway. The maps highlight areas of existing greenspace, planned greenspace, and the strategic links between them. They are intended to help inform future planning for greenspace.

3.10 The pan-Gateway map on page 15 comprises information on existing protected landscape, a selection of greenspace projects being funded by Government, its sponsored agencies and other partners such as the RSPB, and plans for greenspace being developed through key sub-regional initiatives. It is not intended to represent all current or future green/open space in the Thames Gateway. Rather, it is an attempt to provide a sense of the scale and location of greenspace across the Thames Gateway as a first stage in a long-term developing framework.

3.11 The maps on pages 16-19 set out more detailed plans for greenspace in the London area of the Thames Gateway at the sub-regional, local and site-specific level, alongside other types of infrastructure planning. The maps are based on information available at the time of going to press which is subject to change. All plans for greenspace are subject to the usual consultation and evaluation arrangements and these maps should not be taken as an indication that a particular site has been tested through the planning system.



Produced by the GIS U

Selected Greenspace Projects

-  Local/Neighbourhood Greenspace
 -  Medium Greenspace
 -  Regional/Large Greenspace
 -  ODPM-funded greenspace projects
1. Waterloo
 2. Larkwood
 3. Low Hall Sportsfield
 4. Hackney Marshes
 5. Clapton Pond
 6. Mabley Green
 7. St. John Churchyard Gardens
 8. Abbey Green
 9. Biglands
 10. Brickfield Gardens
 11. Aberfledy Street, London
 12. Bow Creek Ecology Park
 13. Slagrove Place Green Improvements
 14. Sundermeads Park
 15. Mountsfield Park
 16. Sydenham, London
 17. Springfield Housing Estate
 18. Dot Hill Community Woodland
 19. Bostall Heath
 20. Abbey Wood Park (East)
 21. Southmere Park
 22. Tatony Green
 23. Padnall Lake
 24. Romford, Essex
 25. Eastbrookend Country Park

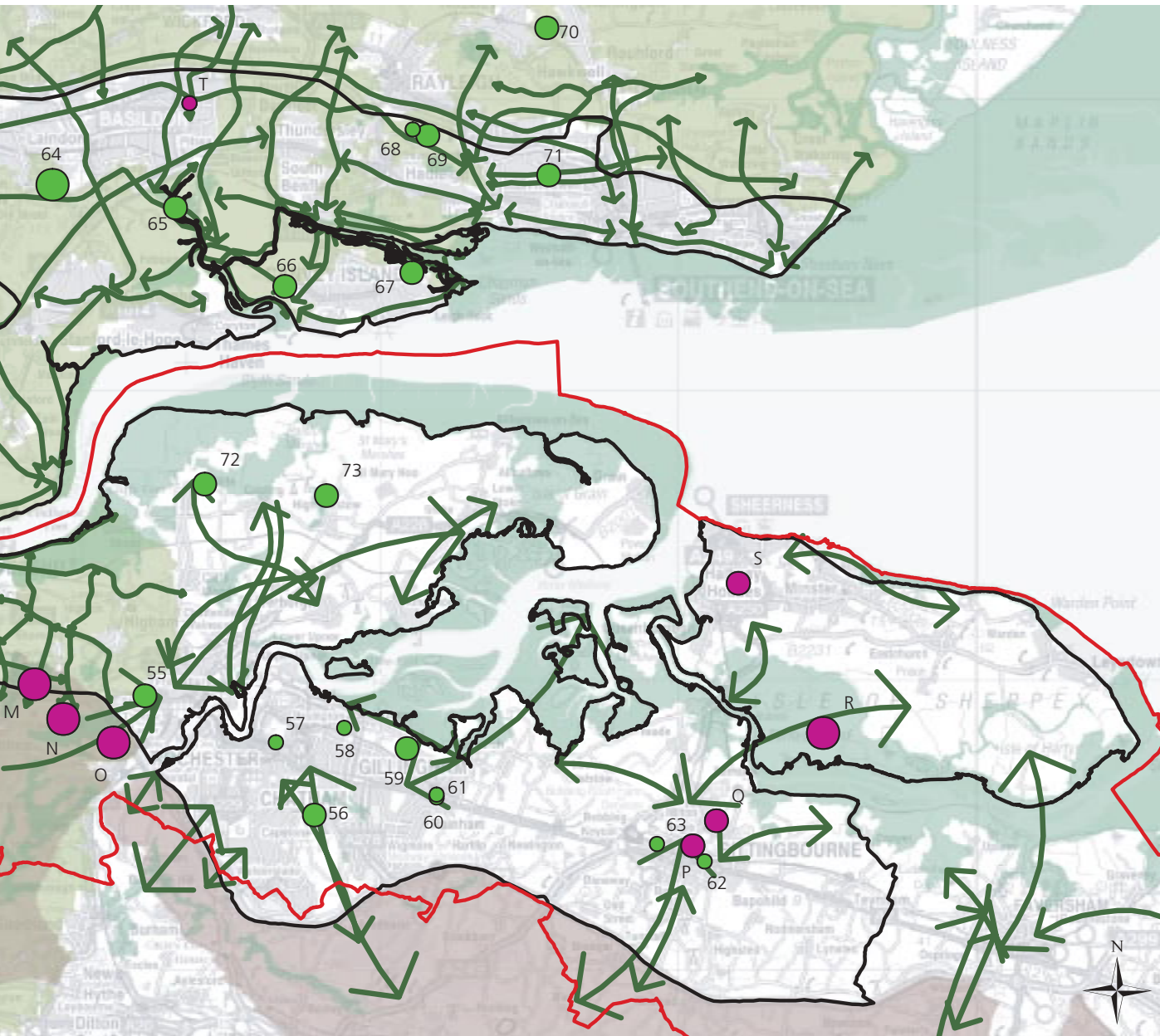
26. Parsloes Park
27. Old Dagenham Park
28. Scrattons Ecopark
29. Leys Park
30. Mardyke
31. Roosevelt Way Woodland
32. Rainham Creekside Park
33. London Riverside Conservation Area
34. Ford Motor Co.
35. Arnolds Field Community Park
36. Rainham Quarry
37. Warwick Lane Landfill
38. Cely Woods
39. Belhus Woods Country Park
40. Mardyke Valley Project
41. Mardyke Woods
42. Stifford
43. Harold Court Woods
44. Tylers Wood
45. Pages Wood & Mount
46. Folkes Lane Woodland
47. Thorndon Country Park
48. Hatch Farm
49. Central Plaza
50. Broadfields

Environmental Designations
 Including: Sites of Special Scientific Interest, National Nature Reserves, Ramsar Sites, Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation

Study area for North Kent regional park

Green Belt

Potential green grid/infrastructure networks
 (based on draft plans and feasibility studies)



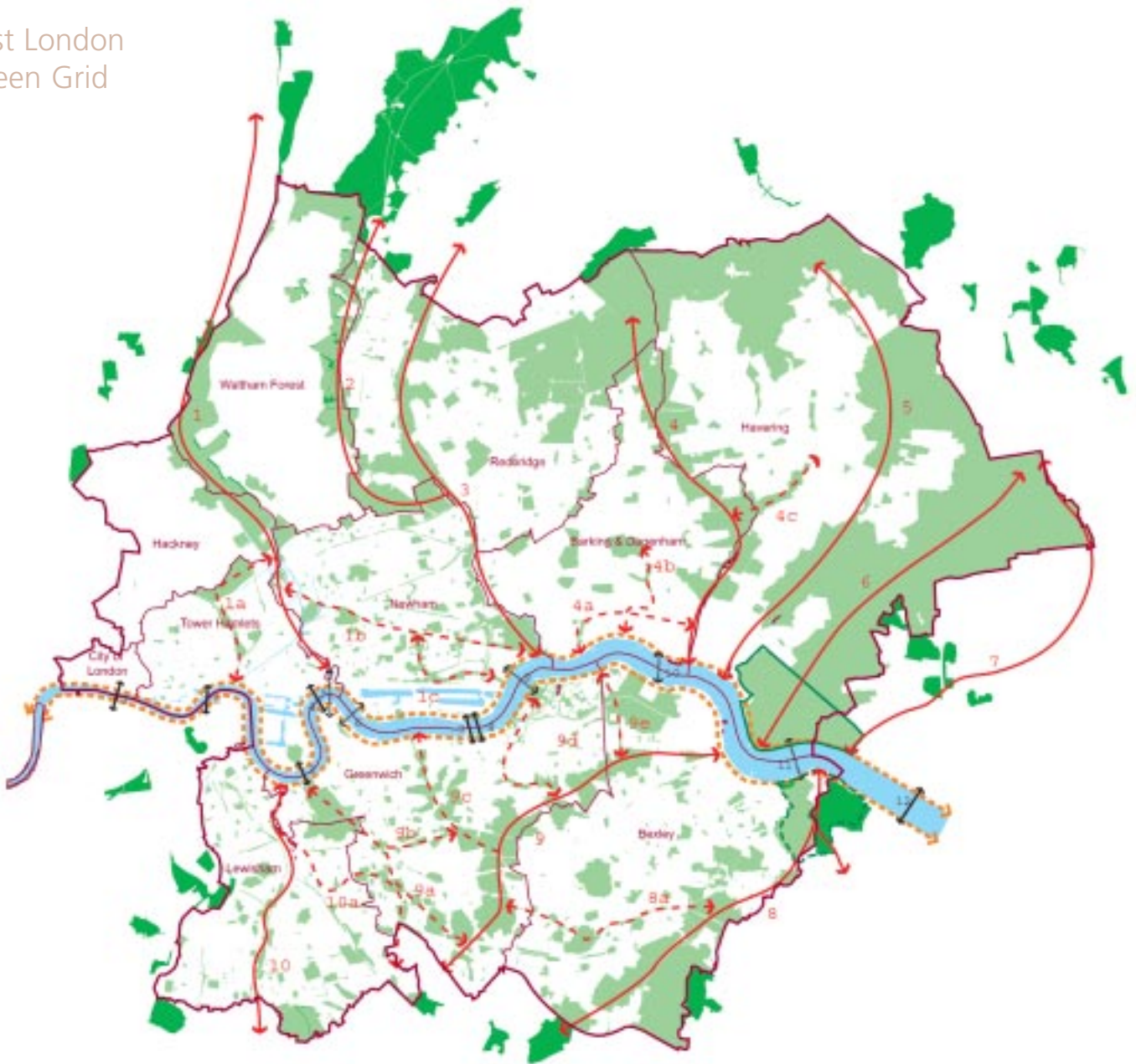
Unit, PLUS5, ODPM, using the Ordnance Survey 1:250,000 raster data, with the sanction of the Controller of HM Stationery Office. Licence No. 100018986. © Crown Copyright 2005.

- 51. Temple Hill youth play area
- 52. Charles Street
- 53. Eagles Wood
- 54. Springhead Linear Park
- 55. Rede Common
- 56. Capstone Country Park
- 57. Chalk Pit Play Area
- 58. Queen Elizabeth Field
- 59. Gillingham Riverside Country Park
- 60. Thompson Close
- 61. Sunderland Close
- 62. St Michaels Road
- 63. The Meads
- 64. Langdon Nature Reserve
- 65. Wat Tyler Country Park
- 66. Canvey Walk
- 67. Canvey Heights Country Park
- 68. Starvelarks Wood
- 69. Pound Wood
- 70. Warley Country Park
- 71. Prittlebrook Greenway
- 72. Cliffe Pool RSPB Site
- 73. Northward Hill RSPB Reserve

ODPM-funded projects:

- A. Lower Roding Valley
- B. River Cray Study
- C. Marshes Implementation Plan – Erith
- D. Rainham Marshes
- E. Marshes Implementation Plan – Crayford
- F. Darenth Valley
- G. Managing the Marshes
- H. Marshes Implementation Plan – Dartford
- I. Dartford Heath
- J. Ancient Woodlands Country Park
- K. Swanscombe Heritage Park
- L. Riverside Leisure Area
- M. Shorne Wood Country Park
- N. Cobham Park
- O. Ranscombe Farm
- P. Central Plaza
- Q. Church Marshes
- R. Elmley Eco-Tourism
- S. Sheerness Triangle
- T. Nevendon Nature Reserve

East London Green Grid



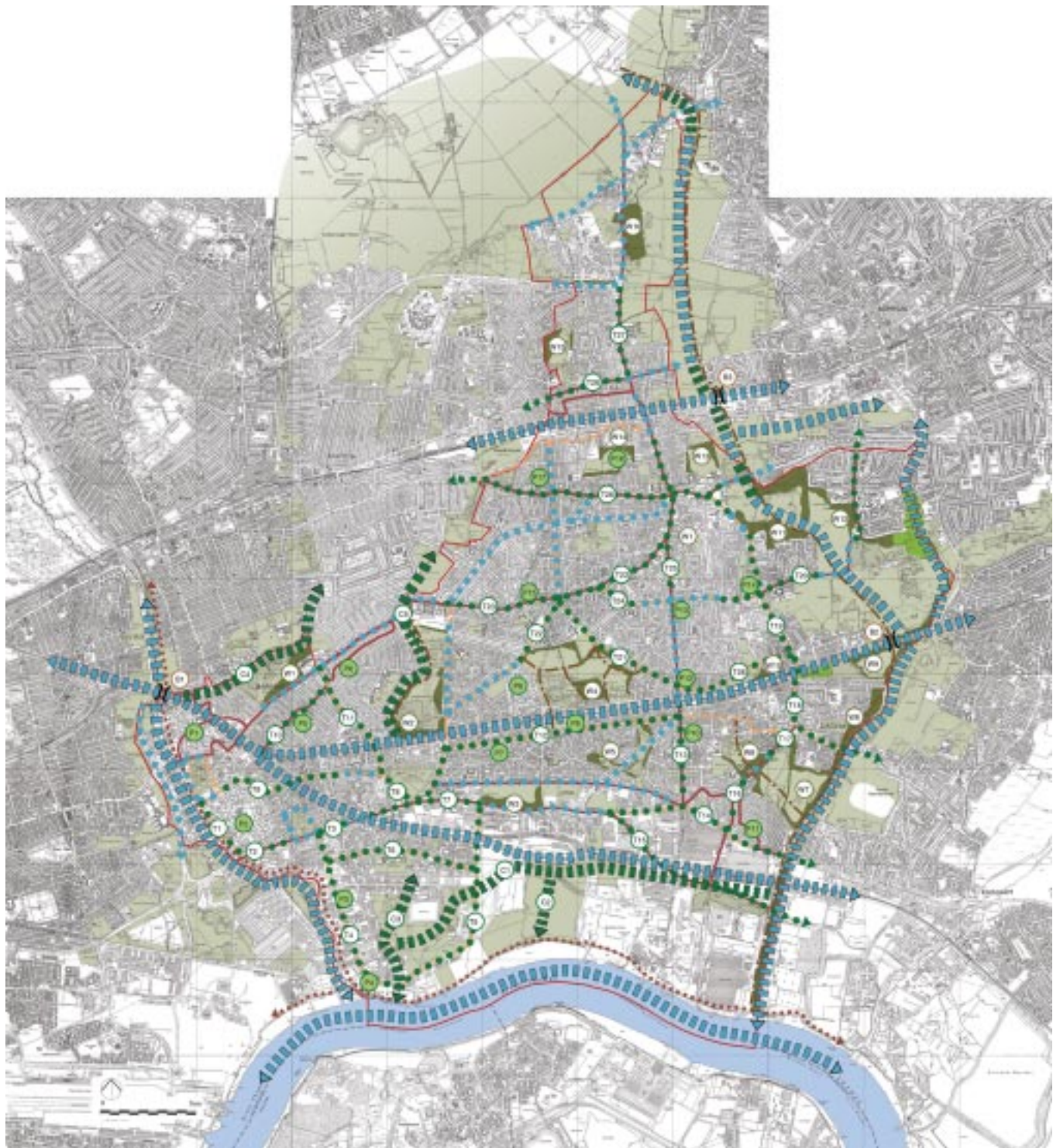
London Development Agency/Thames Gateway London Partnership/LDA Design

- Strategy area
- London Borough boundaries
- River Thames, tributaries and water bodies
- Public open space outside the strategy area (data supplied by Land Use Consultants which has not been verified as part of this study due to being outside the study area)
- Public and private open space
- London Riverside Conservation Pack
- London Riverside Conservation Pack proposed extension to include Dartford and Crayford Marshes
- Existing river crossings
 - 1 Tower Bridge – vehicular/pedestrian/cycle bridge
 - 2 Rotherhithe Tunnel – vehicular/pedestrian/cycle tunnel
 - 3 Greenwich Foot Tunnel – pedestrian/cycle tunnel
 - 4 Blackwall Tunnel – vehicular tunnel
 - 7 Woolwich Foot Tunnel – pedestrian/cycle tunnel
 - 8 Woolwich Ferry – vehicular/pedestrian/cycle ferry crossing
 - 12 Dartford Crossing – Dartford Tunnel and Queen Elizabeth II Bridge
- Proposed river crossings
 - 5 Millennium Dome – Lee Valley Park – cable car crossing for pedestrian/cycle use
 - 6 Silvertown Link – river crossing between North Greenwich and Silvertown
 - 9 Thames Gateway Bridge – vehicular/pedestrian/cycle bridge
 - 10 Ford Crossing – Ferry to be re-opened following its recent closure for pedestrian/cycle use
 - 11 London Riverside Conservation Park – Proposed cable car crossing for pedestrian/cycle use

- Proposed Thames Path
- Strategic greenspace corridor
- Strategic greenspace link

- 1 Lee Valley Regional Park
 - 1a Victoria Park/Mile End Park Link
 - 1b Northern Outfall Sewer Link
 - 1c Becton Park Link
- 2 Epping Forest Corridor
- 3 Barking Creek/River Roding Corridor
- 4 Beam River/East Dagenham Corridor
 - 4a London Riverside Link
 - 4b Goresbrook Link
 - 4c Ravensbourne River Link
- 5 Ingrebourne Valley Corridor
- 6 Rainham/Upminster Corridor
- 7 Mar Dyke Corridor
- 8 Darent/Cray River Corridor
 - 8a River Shuttle Link
- 9 South-east London Green Chain Corridor
 - 9a Greenwich to Eltham Link
 - 9b Kidbrook Link
 - 9c Thames Barrier to Shooters Hill Link (part of South-east London Green Chain)
 - 9d Tripcock Park to Plumstead Common Link
 - 9e Thamesmead Link (part of South-east London Green chain)
- 10 Ravensbourne/Pool River Corridor
 - 10a Quaggy River Link

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham greenspace Strategy



London Borough of Barking and Dagenham/LDA Design

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| Existing Parks and Green Spaces | Existing Cycle Routes | Existing Wildlife Corridor | London Borough of Barking and Dagenham Boundary |
| Existing Woodland | Proposed Cycle Routes | Proposed Wildlife Corridor | Proposed Local Park in Deficient Areas |
| Proposed Woodland | Additional Recommended Cycle Routes | Proposed Riverside Walk | Proposed Foot and Cycle Bridge |
| Existing Tree Lined Streets | | | |
| Proposed Tree Lined Streets | | | |

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham greenspace Strategy Key

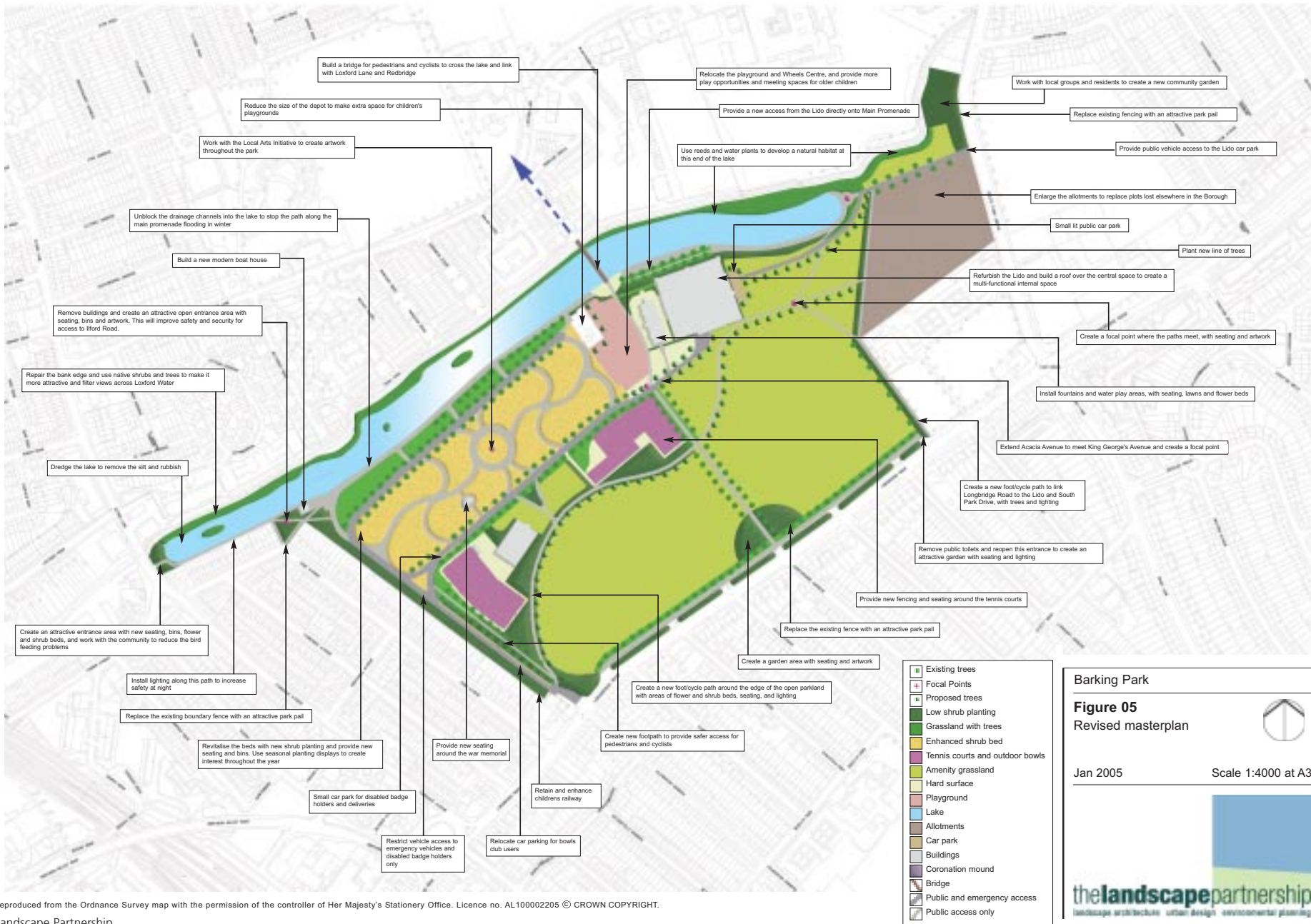
Location of proposed local parks		
Ref. No	Ward	Existing open space
P1	Abbey	Quaker Burial Ground
P2	Gascoigne	Existing housing greenspace
P3	Thames	See Barking Reach Masterplan
P4	Thames	See Barking Reach Masterplan
P5	Longbridge	School Grounds
P6	Longbridge	Incidental Green Space
P7	Eastbury	Derelict Site
P8	Mayesbrook	Incidental/Recreational Space
P9	Goresbrook	Allotments
P10	River	No existing space
P11	River	No existing space
P12	Alibon	No existing space
P13	Alibon	Incidental Green Space
P14	Heath	Incidental Green Space
P15	Valence	School Grounds
P16	Whalebone	Recreational Space
P17	Valence	School Grounds

Location of proposed woodland	
Ref. no	Park / Green Space
W1	Barking Park
W2	Mayesbrook Park
W3	Castle Green Park
W4	Parsloes Park
W5	Goresbrook Park
W6	Old Dagenham Park
W7	The Leys
W8	Beam Valley
W9	Beam Valley
W10	Pondfield Park
W11	Central Park
W12	Barking College
W13	All Saints' School and Robert Clack School Playing Fields
W14	Open Space behind industry by Whalebone Lane South
W15	St Chad's Park
W16	Greenbelt land opposite Chadwell Heath Cemetery

Location of proposed foot/cycle bridges	
Ref. no	Location
B1	Across the District Line by River Rom corridor
B2	Across the District Line by Eastbrookend Country Park joining the Beam Valley and the country park
B3	Across the railway line providing a link through the Dagenham Corridor

Proposed tree lined streets	
Ref. No	Street Name
T1	Gascoigne Road
T2	Alfreds Way A13 (Trunk road)
T3	Alfreds Way A13 (Trunk road)
T4	River Road
T5	Renwick Road
T6	Bastable Avenue
T7	Alfreds Way A13 (Trunk road)
T8	Lodge Avenue
T9	Ripple Road
T10	Rossilyn Road & Levett Road
T11	Upney Lane
T12	Woodward Road & Hedgemans Road
T13	Heathway A1240
T14	A1306
T15	A13
T16	Ballards Road
T17	Ballards Road
T18	Rainham Road South
T19	Rainham Road South
T20	Dagenham Road
T21	Parsloes Avenue & Reede Road
T22	Porters Avenue
T23	Wood Lane
T24	Beverley Road
T25	Heathway
T26	Green Lane
T27	Whalebone Lane North
T28	Eastern Avenue (Trunk road)

Proposed wildlife corridors	
Ref. no	Location
C1	Barking Reach – see Barking Reach Masterplan
C2	Brook
C3	Brook
C4	Loxford Water
C5	Mayes Brook



Barking Park
Figure 05
 Revised masterplan

Jan 2005 Scale 1:4000 at A3



Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey map with the permission of the controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. Licence no. AL100002205 © CROWN COPYRIGHT.

4 Funding

“Government has begun to demonstrate its commitment to the vision outlined in this strategy through its support for early action projects”

(Section 6.4, Greening the Gateway)

4.1 The Government is increasing resources for greenspace and the wider local environment, both nationwide and within the Thames Gateway. This includes funding for both the enhancement and creation of greenspace, and the long-term maintenance of sites.

4.2 Critically, local delivery partners will need a good evidence base to secure funding, and to ensure that resources are used effectively and efficiently. Government is streamlining ODPM and Home Office funding for improving the local environment into the new £660m ‘Safer and Stronger communities’ fund for local authorities over the next 3 years. In the Thames Gateway, this has been supplemented by nearly £20m to date for greenspace projects from the ODPM Thames Gateway Programme fund.

4.3 A wide range of other public funding sources are also available for greenspace provision and management, such as the Environmental Protection and Cultural Services block for local authorities and the Forestry Commission’s English Woodland Grant Scheme. The Big Lottery Fund is currently consulting on the shape of its future programmes, but has announced that the key outcomes will include access to safe, clean attractive rural and urban environments. Other funding sources that support community greenspace projects are set out in GreenSpace’s ‘Claiming Your Share’ guide (2004).

4.4 Private sector investment will play a major role in delivering greenspace as part of growth and regeneration in the Thames Gateway. Developer contributions from Section 106 agreements are traditionally an important source of funding for parks and greenspaces, which will also often be delivered as an integral part of developments. The changes to s106 agreements which the Government consulted on in November 2004, should bring improvements to the system of planning obligations, including the speedier resolution of planning applications involving s106. Business Improvement Districts and similar initiatives are an effective way for local businesses to contribute to the funding of management and maintenance of a high quality local environment to support the local economy.

4.5 Alternative funding models for greenspaces are currently being explored by CABI Space. Government and delivery partners will need to consider how these might be applicable in the Thames Gateway.

4.6 Competing pressures on resources mean that there is a need to ensure that those funding sources that do exist are accessed and used efficiently. The planned strategic approach set out in section 2 will help delivery partners identify priorities and use available funding to the best effect. It will also help support investment in green infrastructure ahead of or alongside development so that residents get the benefits from the start. Greenspace strategies and site management plans are invaluable in securing buy-in and attracting additional resources from other private and public sector partners such as developer contributions, support from local businesses or funding from grant-awarding bodies. Planning explicitly for greenspace with a wide range of functions can also result in match-funding being made available from organisations in other sectors, including heritage, health and regeneration.

4.7 In allocating its Thames Gateway Programme funding, ODPM will continue to give priority to quality greenspace projects that can demonstrate their fit with sub-regional and local greenspace strategies. ODPM will also expect this priority to be reflected in the regeneration and project frameworks being drawn up by Thames Gateway local regeneration partnerships.



Groundwork: Kent-Thameside

Making the case for funding – Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council's greenspace Strategy

In 2001 Doncaster Council's Best Value review, which included an assessment of greenspace services, found that cuts in excess of £1 million had been made to the budgets for the grounds maintenance, countryside and landscape teams. This led to difficulties in maintaining quality greenspace.

In response, the Council produced a greenspace Strategy which provided the vision and delivery framework for enhancing Doncaster's green areas. Prior to the strategy the Council generally sought designated funding (such as City Challenge and SRB funding) in a reactive way. The new planned approach to greenspace enabled the authority to identify and fund priority areas in a more strategic and effective way.

The Council's provision for and maintenance of greenspaces rose from £1.8 million prior to 2001 to £9 million by 2004. Funding of the greenspaces Department was also increased by £850,000 (from £2million in 2000).

The greenspace strategy was also responsible for highlighting a wide range of additional funding streams, including Central Government, Grant Bodies (such as the Heritage Lottery Fund), Local Development Agencies and various charitable trusts.

By 2004, all priority greenspace projects had secured the funding they needed. When Section 106 planning obligations are included, it is estimated that more £65 million will have been invested in greenspace provision and improvements by the Council or its partners in the area during the five-year improvement plan.

5 Key Challenges for Delivery

5.1 There are a number of key challenges to delivering the objectives of Greening the Gateway. These cannot be solved immediately and solutions are likely to evolve with developments in policy and practice. However, a planned approach will help overcome them.

Delivering multifunctionality

“We will encourage local authorities, developers and others to regard the landscape as functional green infrastructure greenspaces fulfil a range of practical roles which can enhance the quality of urban living in a number of important ways”
(Section 4.1: Greening the Gateway)

5.2 A major theme of *Greening the Gateway* is the concept of functional green infrastructure offering a range of benefits including:

- recreation, relaxation, sport and healthy exercise;
- education and social inclusion;
- mitigating the impacts of climate change through sustainable flood and water management, and pollution control;
- improvement in local water quality and increased ground water recharge via the use of sustainable drainage schemes (SuDS) and improved soil management;



Forestry Commission

- reducing impacts of local air pollution;
- protection and enhancement of biodiversity;
- income generation via the 'green economy';
- sustainable food production, such as allotments and community gardens;
- a bridge to the countryside;
- networks of cyclepaths and pathways;
- a sense of place and identity;
- demonstrating the quality of the environment to residents, visitors and potential investors.

5.3 It is essential that this “multifunctionality” of greenspace is recognised in its planning, design, management and maintenance. A wide range of benefits can be derived from understanding the relationships between, for example, land and soil restoration, water management and the conservation of natural and cultural heritage. The precise functional use of greenspace will need to be decided at the local level, dependent on specific needs, but good planning should seek to deliver multiple benefits.

5.4 Early engagement by regional and local planners, designers and developers with organisations and community groups who have expertise in particular areas will help maximise the benefits that greenspace can provide to local communities. For example, the Environment Agency can advise local planners and developers on the incorporation of sustainable flood risk management measures into land-use planning and site design.

More information on these organisations, together with the type of support they can provide, is set out in section 6 of this document.

5.5 By ensuring that greenspace is delivered through the planning system, it can also be planned alongside other infrastructure. This can help deliver multifunctional greenspace through, for example, linking the development of greenspace strategies to local transport plans, Right of Way improvement plans, walking and cycling strategies, community strategies, cultural strategies, economic regeneration strategies, health plans, biodiversity action plans, strategic and local flood risk assessments, sustainable drainage schemes and landscape strategies.

Multifunctionality – Thames Chase Community Forest

Thames Chase Community Forest was established in 1990 and currently covers areas in the London and Essex Thames Gateway.

The multifunctional aspect of Thames Chase was developed with the creation of the Forest Plan, published in 1993. This created 10 broad policy areas designed to establish a range of activities and schemes to enhance the experience for visitors and to improve and maintain the environment and biodiversity of the area.

One of Plan's policy areas involved the development of the forest's educational facilities, stating that "Thames Chase will be planned to create a rich resource for environmental education, serving schools and other education groups in the local community". Over the years, Thames Chase has worked with a number of partners to deliver this policy. For example, in 1999 the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham built the Millennium Centre in Thames Chase, in the newly created Eastbrookend Country Park. The centre includes dedicated environmental education staff and a classroom for school and public lessons. Also in 1999, a local trust in Thurrock employed a new warden for Thames Chase who provides walks and talks for schools and other groups. In 2000 Thames Chase attracted funding from Ford for a new Education room at the Forest Centre in Upminster.



Thames Chase – Forestry Commission

The Long-term Management of Quality Greenspace

“The management of the greenspace network is absolutely critical to its effectiveness in enhancing the regeneration process and it must be carefully considered and adequately resourced from the earliest stage in the development process”
(Section 6.7, Greening the Gateway)

5.6 A planned strategic approach must include consideration of how greenspace will be managed and maintained over the long-term to ensure quality and that the site remains fit for purpose. Such consideration will need to occur at all spatial levels at the outset of the planning and design process. Embedding multifunctionality into the planning and design of greenspace will help secure its long-term management. For example, the creation of a variety of beneficial landscapes that do not all require intensive management, and increasing the importance of greenspace through its role in flood protection and water filtration, will promote its maintenance.

5.7 The management and maintenance of public greenspace will continue to be a role for Local Authorities. However, competing demands on budgets and an increasing recognition that the value of greenspace is wider than public amenity, mean that there is also a need to develop new and additional models of funding, management and maintenance.

5.8 Innovative models of long-term management already exist, such as using the green economy to generate an income, private sector management trusts for individual developments and Business Improvement Districts (BIDS). Delivery agents will increasingly need to consider their use in the Thames Gateway, as well as developing alternative models. The Government has recently set up the Land Restoration Trust to explore the use of new funding models for the management of greenspace. The Trust is currently investigating possible sites in the Thames Gateway.

5.9 Greenspace projects are likely to be more sustainable in the long term if they have been developed with the involvement of new and existing communities. Partnership work with local community and non-Governmental organisations (such as ‘Friends of’ groups, the RSPB and Local Wildlife Trusts) will not only secure benefits in the design and use of greenspace, but can also lead to shared responsibility for long-term maintenance. Local delivery agents, especially local authorities, should consider opportunities for new and existing communities in the Thames Gateway to play a role in planning and maintaining new and existing greenspace.

5.10 There is already a range of support available for greenspace management and maintenance in the Thames Gateway. CABE Space has published a good practice guide on management plans and also provides direct advice to Thames Gateway local authorities through its advisory scheme. ODPM's Living Places: Caring for Quality is a good practice guide that provides innovative ideas and tools for effective management of public spaces. It is aimed at managers of the public realm, particularly in local authorities. The Green Flag Award Scheme also recognises, rewards and provides a framework for high management and maintenance standards for greenspaces.

Long Term Management – Ranscombe Farm Country Park

Ranscombe Farm, which borders the Thames Gateway to the west of Rochester, contains 700 acres of open space typical of the North Kent Downs with rolling hills and coppice woodland. The farm was purchased by Medway Council with the support of ODPM and Plantlife International, the wild-plant conservation charity.

Medway Council and Plantlife's aim was to enhance the area's wildlife, landscape and recreation interests. Essential to success was Plantlife's agreement to take long-term responsibility for staffing and maintenance of the Country Park. This was something that Medway Council could not undertake due to existing commitments. From the outset, partners agreed to keep the site as a working landscape rather than an amenity site. This meant that maintenance works will be undertaken by farming and woodland operations. Tenancy agreements have been made to legally bind partners to the delivery of the Ranscombe Farm project, in turn supported by a service agreement that sets out management tasks to be undertaken by Plantlife.

Ranscombe Farm has secured £665,000 funding from ODPM which, together with other funding, has enabled the development of six kilometres of new footpath, a new car park, and the employment of a warden to 'meet and greet' users. Ranscombe Farm is now able to provide an attractive and functional 'gateway' to the countryside as part of the North Kent Green Grid.



Ranscombe Farm – Medway Council

Skills for the Planning, Design, Implementation and Maintenance of Greenspace

5.11 Successful delivery of *Greening the Gateway* will also depend on addressing the need for people with practical landscape planning, design, nature conservation and management skills.

5.12 Across the country, there is a challenge to ensure that we have enough people with the right skills to deliver greenspace. Following the Egan review of skills needed to create sustainable communities, the Government is creating a new National Centre for Sustainable Communities Skills. It will look to influence the supply of generic skills training for a range of professionals including those involved in the greenspace sector. The Regional Centres of Excellence will drive the development of skills and learning at a regional level. CABE Space is also developing a national strategy to ensure that the nation has sufficient numbers of trained professionals to deliver the greenspace agenda.

5.13 Groundwork, the British Trust of Conservation Volunteers (BTCV), the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Wildlife Trusts and other voluntary and community sector organisations already provide a wide-range of opportunities for people to learn new skills by involving them in practical environmental projects in the Thames Gateway.

6 Roles and responsibilities

6.1 Success in delivering the core principles of *Greening the Gateway* will depend on contributions from a great many organisations.

6.2 In this document it is not possible to set out the roles, responsibilities and initiatives of every organisation that will be involved in delivering *Greening the Gateway*. This section focuses on the role of Government, its Agencies and its funding. It also provides a broad outline of the strategic roles that we envisage for key partners as part of the overall delivery framework.

6.3 The roles set out here are not exclusive, but the aim is to outline the main opportunities and set the foundation for the development of more detailed delivery plans as time progresses. Agreed priority actions are included.

Pan-Gateway

Roles of ODPM and its sponsored bodies

ODPM – Office of the Deputy Prime Minister



6.4 ODPM is leading on implementation of the Sustainable Communities Plan, including taking forward plans for growth and regeneration in the Thames Gateway. ODPM will:

- lead the delivery of cleaner, safer, greener public spaces and improvement of the quality of the built environment across the country, including the Thames Gateway, with measurable improvement by 2008;
- lead on taking forward *Greening the Gateway*, and work with other Government Departments and local partners to oversee delivery;
- continue to use its Thames Gateway Programme funding to support greenspace projects, giving priority to quality projects that can demonstrate their strategic fit with regional/sub-regional initiatives and local greenspace strategies;
- promote good practice in greenspace provision through its sponsored bodies and local regeneration partnerships;
- develop an evidence base to monitor greenspace provision and delivery of *Greening the Gateway*.

Action: to successfully deliver all ODPM funded greenspace projects.

Action: to establish a land-use database covering Thames Gateway by spring 2005.



Groundwork

6.5 Groundwork is a federation of local Trusts that share a charitable purpose to build sustainable communities through community participation in environmental action. Groundwork receives grant funding from ODPM as well as support from Local Authorities, the European Union, the National Lottery, private sponsors and charitable foundations. Groundwork is currently delivering programmes totalling £3 million in the Thames Gateway.

6.6 Groundwork has expertise in engaging local people and in reaching communities that other organisations sometimes find it hard to reach. Its approach to facilitating community-led improvements to local environments means that it can actively engage existing and new communities in the Thames Gateway in making decisions about their area, including the design, implementation and management of greenspace projects.



Forestry Commission

6.7 The four established local Groundwork Trusts in the Thames Gateway, supported by three regional teams, will contribute to the delivery of *Greening the Gateway* by working with a wide range of partners (including local authorities and the voluntary and community sector) to:

- deliver flagship *Greening the Gateway* projects that demonstrate the multi-functional benefits of greenspace, such as Swanscombe Heritage site in Kent and the Managing the Marshes project in Dartford, Crayford and Bexley;
- continue its urban forestry programme in East London as part of the London Thames Gateway Green Grid;
- conclude the development of the new Groundwork Trust proposed for South Essex by finalising the programme activities and core funding agreements with local partners and the ODPM;
- promote a community-based approach to greenspace improvement and management projects in the Thames Gateway, including through facilitation of community dialogue and participation, inclusion of vulnerable and marginalised groups, and provision of local skills development, training and employment opportunities;
- identify opportunities and funding sources for environmental regeneration, greenspace and environmental education projects in support of *Greening the Gateway*;

Action: to complete the Groundwork Thames Gateway Strategy and Business Plan, integrating all Groundwork Thames Gateway activities, by the end of April 2005.

6.8 CABE Space is part of the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment supported by ODPM. It champions excellence in the planning, design, management and maintenance of public space and in particular, parks and greenspaces. It is currently supporting five local authorities or partnerships in the Thames Gateway through its advisory service on greenspace strategies. CABE Space will:

- support Thames Gateway Partnerships in the delivery of sub-regional initiatives such as “green grids” through technical advice and training on planning, funding requirements, management and adoption at local level;
- continue to support Thames Gateway local authorities in the development of greenspace strategies through its advisory service, training workshops and guidance publications;
- increasingly seek to provide support for site specific initiatives in the Thames Gateway, including advice to local planning authorities, developers and environmental organisations on masterplanning, design, management and maintenance;
- promote the attainment of the Green Flag award standard to local authorities in Thames Gateway, through providing technical advice on integrating the award within greenspace strategies.

Action: to provide support to all local authorities in the Thames Gateway on the preparation of greenspace strategies.



Land Restoration Trust



6.9 The Land Restoration Trust is a new independent organisation created by a partnership of English Partnerships, Groundwork, the Environment Agency, and the Forestry Commission. It was launched in April 2004 to provide long-term sustainable management of public spaces across England. The Land Restoration Trust is currently exploring sites in the Thames Gateway and it is hoped that it will be able to support partners in the long-term management of greenspace projects.

Action: to provide assistance to landowners on land transfer and liability issues to enable the creation of new greenspace in Thames Gateway with secure long-term management and funding.

ODPM Agencies – CABE Space

The advisory programme run by CABE Space and funded by the ODPM has been providing technical support to a number of local authorities, partnerships and associated organisations throughout the Thames Gateway. At the sub-regional level, early support was delivered to the South Essex Partnership that included focussed training for landscape, planning and parks service officers within the Thames Gateway South Essex catchment. This sought to integrate the principles of Greening the Gateway, Green Grid and greenspace Strategy initiatives through planning and service delivery procedures alongside developing networks for creating examples of good practice.

It is clear that the greatest potential for improving the quality and functionality of greenspace will be at the local level. CABE Space's advisers have been working with Southend Borough Council, to upgrade their existing parks strategy to form a fully functional and visionary greenspace Strategy for the entire Borough. This has included establishment of a framework for site auditing and user consultation, developing a draft structure for the strategy, and the establishment of a steering group to lead to its development and delivery.



CABE Space

Roles of Defra and its Sponsored Bodies

Defra – Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

6.10 Defra has a series of national initiatives that, when applied to the Thames Gateway, will help deliver sustainable development by conserving and enhancing ecology and landscapes, promoting the efficient use of natural resources, and managing flood risk. As part of these national initiatives it will:



- support the implementation of *'Working with the grain of nature: a biodiversity strategy for England'* by promoting the integration of biodiversity into policies, plans and programmes within and beyond national and local government e.g. through the Thames Gateway Biodiversity Action Plan;
- work with stakeholders in the Thames Gateway to develop Rights of Way Improvement Plans that will help protect and enhance public access to greenspace in the area. The plans will be incorporated into Local Transport Plans with the aim of providing an integrated network of routes and improvements for walking and cycling;
- work with the Department of Transport, Government Offices and local authorities in the Thames Gateway to ensure that air quality obligations are fully met. Air pollution can have a negative effect on greenspace by damaging or impairing the growth of ecosystems and vegetation;
- continue research into how the distribution of greenspace can be used to mitigate flood risk, as part of a wider study on adapting to future climate change;
- follow up Defra's "Making space for water" consultation exercise by developing a strategy for the next 20 years on the management of floods and coastal erosion. The strategy will include looking at solutions such as using greenspace or wetland habitat as temporary flood water stores.

Actions:

- **to lead on policies for national and international wildlife sites, to work towards the Government's PSA target on Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) that 95% of the SSSI area will be in favourable or recovering condition by 2010.**
- **to review progress reports from highway authorities in the Thames Gateway on the integration of Rights of Way Improvement Plans within the provisional Local Transport Plans due in July 2005.**

Forestry Commission

6.11 The Forestry Commission is responsible for delivering forestry policy and, in England, reports to the Secretary of the State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. The Commission has a specific programme to create new woodlands in priority areas, including the Growth Areas, and works with a range of public and private sector landowners to sustainably manage woodland as well as managing the public forest estate. Since 1990 the Commission has invested £2 million in Thames Chase Community Forest, which provides a gateway to the countryside for the east London and south Essex Thames Gateway. It has also managed an additional £3.6 million from its Capital Modernisation Fund and £750K from landfill tax credits. By the end of 2004 one million new trees had been planted and over 90 kilometres of path created.

6.12 The Forestry Commission will:

- increase the woodland cover in the Thames Chase Community Forest and involve the voluntary sector (the Wildlife Trusts, BTCV, the Woodland Trust) and local people in tree planting, path building and woodland management;
- work with planning authorities, major developers, voluntary organisations and local communities to develop and manage new publicly accessible community woodlands within the Thames Gateway, using Thames Chase Community Forest as an example of good practice;
- encourage new woodland initiatives in the Thames Gateway designed to maximise social and environmental benefits, for example, piloting a new system of partnership grant delivery in the London Thames Gateway;



Forestry Commission

- promote new methods of management and maintenance within woodland and related greenspace;
- complete the Regional Forestry Frameworks covering the Thames Gateway to ensure that national and regional policy for woodland and trees is properly integrated with the main economic, social and environmental strategies operating at the regional level.

Action: to increase the woodland cover for the 40 square mile area of Thames Chase to 30% by 2030 (from 8% in 1990) by planting 5.5 million trees.

Action: to complete all Regional Forestry Frameworks that cover the Thames Gateway by April 2005.



Countryside Agency

6.13 The Countryside Agency is the leading source of rural expertise and advises on countryside matters for England. It works to conserve and enhance the environment, and to spread economic and social opportunity throughout our rural communities. It aims to ensure that everyone should be able to enjoy attractive accessible greenspace and countryside near where they live.

6.14 The Countryside Agency will:

- provide advice to local authorities, developers and community groups on high quality development and best practice techniques for creating and accessing green infrastructure through seminars and its website;
- provide funding, for example to local authorities and community groups, for demonstration projects on best practice techniques for creating and accessing greenspace;
- provide advice to partners on the delivery of the “green grids”, “Green Arc”, North Kent Regional Park and other sub-regional greenspace initiatives, including through the establishment of a Green Arc staff team;
- work with Groundwork, English Nature, the Rural Development service and the Forestry Commission to develop a strategy for unlocking the potential of the countryside in and around cities and towns. This will be piloted in the Thames Gateway through seminars and best practice guidance for local authorities, developers and community groups and funding for demonstration projects;
- continue to support the work of Thames Chase Community Forest to strategically plan and deliver a multifunctional countryside close to where people live and work;
- continue to provide funding support to:
 - Doorstep Greens (local community greenspaces) until end 2006;
 - the Thames Chase Community Forest Therapi health project until end 2005;
 - the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the North Downs National Trail.

Action: to launch and promote a vision of the countryside in and around cities and towns and pilot its implementation in Thames Gateway by 2006.

English Nature

6.15 English Nature is the government agency that champions the conservation of wildlife and geology in England through ensuring the protection of special sites and promoting policies that will result in the enhancement, restoration or creation of wildlife habitats and geological features. It acts as a regulator, but also as an adviser and enabler.





Forestry Commission

6.16 English Nature is responsible for notifying, monitoring and protecting Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs); administering European sites (such as Special Protection Areas for birds and Special Areas of Conservation); establishing and managing National Nature Reserves; and promoting the designation of Local Nature Reserves. It is also responsible for driving the implementation of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) and supporting regional and local BAPs. In the Thames Gateway English Nature will:

- provide advice to regional and local partners on the integration of biodiversity objectives into “green grids”;
- provide advice to local authorities and developers on nature conservation and development, including through its publication Biodiversity by Design;
- work with partners to ensure that key nature conservation sites, such as Canvey Wick and Rainham Marshes, are not only protected but effectively integrated into the wider vision for Thames Gateway.

Action: to implement a Tidal Thames Habitat Action Plan with the Thames Estuary Partnership.

Action: to work in partnership with EEDA, Castle Point Borough Council and voluntary bodies to deliver a multi-functional community wildlife space at Canvey Wick in South Essex by 2007.

Action: to ensure the Thames Gateway Biodiversity Action Plan is in place by 2006.

Environment Agency



6.17 The Environment Agency is the public body with prime responsibility for protecting and improving the environment in England and Wales. It has various regulatory responsibilities with regard to flood risk management, air and water quality, contaminated land, waste management, the protection of water resources, the conservation of inland and coastal waters and associated land and wildlife, the recreational use of these waters, public access and the sustainable use of resources. It is a statutory consultee in the development planning process and advises Government, Local Authorities and other organisations on their plans and policies.

6.18 In the Thames Gateway the Environment Agency will provide local authorities, private developers and others with advice on:

- the environmental impacts of development;
- remediating brownfield land;
- the incorporation of greenspaces and habitat enhancement into development;
- the management of flood risk including sustainable solutions such as the use of greenspace for occasional flood storage and sustainable drainage systems (SUDS);
- improving communities' access to the natural environment.

Action: to carry out a flood/water level management plan of the inner Thames Marshes by summer 2005, balancing the needs of conservation and flood risk management, to enable the London Riverside Park proposals to be realised.

British Waterways

6.19 British Waterways is the UK's largest navigation authority and seeks to maintain and develop its waterways in a sustainable manner so that they fulfil their full economic, social and environmental potential. These aims reflect Defra's commitment to sustainable development, conservation, biodiversity and rural regeneration. British Waterways will work with other stakeholders to:

- enhance public access to greenspace in the Lee Valley and Bow Back River areas of the London Thames Gateway. This will be done via the creation and improvement of a network of cycleways and towpaths in the area;

- identify funding for the creation of urban wildlife habitat schemes for voles, otters and other species in the reed beds and marshland greenspace of the Lower Lee Valley:
- facilitate ecology and biodiversity study visits for local schools along the banks of the Lee and Bow Back Rivers.

Action: British Waterways will work in partnership with stakeholders on the development of the “Water City” project in the Lee Valley. The 500 acre mixed-use development will include quality open space and enhanced biodiversity.

Defra Agencies – Managing the Marshes

The Managing the Marshes project aims to bring about better management of irreplaceable wildlife and heritage resources by restoring the remaining 500ha of degraded Thames grazing marsh at Erith, Crayford and Dartford marshes in the Kent Thames Gateway. The marshes play a vital role in safeguarding the local area from flooding. Its network of ditches and mosaic of wet grassland, reed beds, saltmarsh and scrubland are a haven for a host of rare and protected species.

ODPM is funding £1m to enable Groundwork to work with the local community to deliver habitat creation, a strategic cycle route, heritage trail and other access improvements. Groundwork is working in partnership with a number of key Defra agencies including the Environment Agency, who are currently supporting the development of a water level management plan, and English Nature, who are supporting detailed ecological survey work. The Managing the Marshes partnership also incorporates a range of other local stakeholders including the RSPB, Dartford Borough Council, GlaxoSmithKline and Hanson Aggregates.



Groundwork – Kent Thameside

Roles of DCMS and its Sponsored Bodies

Department for Culture, Media and Sport



6.20 DCMS policy areas relevant for the development of greenspace are sport, leisure, the National Lottery, and tourism. In addition, through sponsorship of the Commission for the Built Environment (CABE) and English Heritage, DCMS promotes better design quality and maintenance of conservation areas and of the historic environment. DCMS has devolved its resources directly to fund front line activity through a network of sponsored bodies, which work with local government and the voluntary sector to deliver cultural and sporting objectives in the Thames Gateway. Specifically, DCMS will:

- contribute to the Cleaner, Safer, Greener Communities programme including through design quality (CABE) and in promoting play and sport in open spaces;
- work closely with London 2012 on the bid to host the Olympic and Paralympic Games. If successful, this will include the creation of the largest urban park in Europe for 150 years and enhance the quality of urban greenspace, increase biodiversity and revitalise the river ecosystem in the London Thames Gateway;
- review its Sustainable Development Strategy to ensure it supports the whole sustainable communities agenda.

Action: to work with the Big Lottery Fund to consider new programmes to support the provision of and access to greenspace, including in the Thames Gateway.

Sport England

6.21 Sport England provide the strategic lead for sport in England and are responsible for delivering the Government's sporting objectives. As part of this objective, they help Local Authorities plan for the provision of sporting facilities including playing pitches, golf courses and other sports requiring green areas. Sport England will:

- make available a comprehensive database of sport facilities, including playing pitches, to help Local Authorities in Thames Gateway carry out local needs assessments for PPG17;
- provide guidance to Local Authorities in Thames Gateway on producing playing pitch needs assessments.



Action: to produce the London database of sport facilities by mid-February 2005 and databases for the East and South by mid-April 2005.



Sport England

English Heritage

6.22 English Heritage is the Government's principal adviser on all aspects of the historic environment. Working in partnership with Essex County Council and Kent County Council, English Heritage has recently completed a historic environment characterisation project for the Thames Gateway. It will:

- ensure that the importance and potential of the historic environment is recognised in the delivery of *Greening the Gateway* by working with local delivery vehicles on the practical application of the Thames Gateway Historic Environment Characterisation.

Action: to complete a programme of workshop/seminars for local regeneration partnerships explaining the practical applications of the Thames Gateway Characterisation Project by May 2005.

Heritage and greenspace – Darnley Mausoleum in Cobham Park

Cobham Park, located just a few miles from Gravesend and Rochester, will offer a unique historic and natural open space to North Kent. The park, bordering the Kent Thames Gateway, is a historic landscape of open parkland, woodland and ancient wood pasture containing veteran trees. The area also contains the grade I listed Darnley Mausoleum, designed in 1783.

When the Earl of Darnley gave up the estate in the 1950s, the park was broken up and both the open space and Mausoleum suffered for a number of years from fragmented ownership, vandalism and a lack of cohesive and informed management.

The impetus for restoration work came from the construction of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link along the park's northern boundary, which led to compensation funding for the area. The Cobham and Ashenbank Management Scheme (CAMS), a partnership vehicle for the six land-owners, was developed and worked with local and national bodies, such as Gravesham Borough, English Heritage and the National Trust, to jointly plan the park's restoration and safeguard its future. Further funding was sought and included approximately £750,000 from ODPM. In total funding of some £5 million for the first phase is now in place.

CAMS is currently looking to develop a vehicle (possibly a trust) and seek additional funding to take forward the long-management of the Cobham Park. This will include widening public access, educational and volunteering initiatives, particularly for visitors new to the countryside. Once restoration of the Darnley Mausoleum is completed, ownership of the property will pass to the National Trust.



Cobham Park – CAMS

Regional/Sub-Regional

Role of Regional Government/organisations

6.23 **Government Offices** represent central Government in the regions and will play a key role in supporting regional and local implementation of *Greening the Gateway*. They will be involved in coordinating the input of ODPM, Defra and DCMS Agencies and sponsored bodies at the regional level, supporting partners in developing and implementing sub-regional greenspace initiatives and ensuring that these are co-ordinated with other regional strategies, programmes and organisations, such as the Mayor of London's 100 public open spaces programme and the North Kent Area Investment Framework Environmental Group.

6.24 The Government Offices also support the **Regional Planning Bodies** who have a role in ensuring that the appropriate regional policy framework is in place to deliver sustainable development, including the principles of *Greening the Gateway*.

6.25 The **Regional Development Agencies** are responsible for developing the regional economic strategy and planning for economic development and regeneration at the regional level. The LDA, SEEDA and EEDA will need to ensure that planning for green infrastructure is reflected in the regional economic strategy and that the redevelopment of RDA-owned sites supports the delivery of multifunctional greenspace networks. For example, SEEDA is committed to incorporating the principles of *Greening the Gateway* into its future developments at Rochester Riverside and Northfleet Embankment in the Kent Thames Gateway.

Role of Thames Gateway Partnerships

6.26 The Thames Gateway London, South Essex and Kent partnerships are funded by ODPM. They will play an important role in working with regional and local partners to strategically plan and identify priorities for green infrastructure across each sub-region.

6.27 The Thames Gateway London Partnership (TGLP) has developed and is consulting on plans for a "green grid" in East London. The Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership (TGSEP) is supporting the development of a South Essex Green Grid. The Thames Gateway Kent Partnership (TGKP) is supporting the development of "green grids" in Medway, Swale and Kent Thameside and exploratory work for a North Kent regional park. The Partnerships will need to continue to support regional and local partners in translating these strategic initiatives into delivery through local development frameworks, local delivery vehicle regeneration frameworks and individual projects.

6.28 The Partnerships will also have a role in supporting local delivery vehicles and local authorities to develop local greenspace strategies.

Action: London Green Grid strategy completed by July 2005; South Essex Green Grid strategy completed by April 2005; Kent strategic environment priorities in place by June 2005; North Kent regional park Forward Plan in place by July 2005.

Thames Gateway Partnerships – London Green Grid and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

The Thames Gateway London Partnership (TGLP), supported by ODPM, have appointed consultants to undertake a 'strategic level' Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) for the 11 Thames Gateway London boroughs. The SFRA will assess the risk of flooding to existing and proposed development from all flood sources including tidal, fluvial and storm water run off, and propose a range of flood management options to reduce the risk and consequences of flooding.

Through the SFRA, the consultants will pay special attention to the flood risk management opportunities presented by the London Thames Gateway Green Grid. The SFRA will recommend the location and design of new greenspaces and the redesign of existing spaces to improve the permeability of the urban realm, or to safely store floodwater. It is anticipated that this work will underline the infrastructural potential of greenspaces and provide opportunities to combine functional engineering with aesthetic enhancement and biodiversity conservation.



Environment Agency

Local

Implementation by Local Regeneration Partnerships

6.29 ODPM is funding and sponsoring new delivery bodies for each of the major development areas in Thames Gateway to plan and manage the growth programme at local level. These local regeneration partnerships are currently drawing up regeneration frameworks that will set out their vision for the area with key strategic goals and be a blueprint for future development. It is essential that the principles of *Greening the Gateway* and regional/local greenspace initiatives are embedded in the regeneration frameworks because of their importance in planning for growth in priority areas. The regeneration frameworks offer the opportunity to ensure that greenspace is planned alongside other environmental work, such as strategic flood risk assessments, and other infrastructure, such as transport links.

6.30 The regeneration partnerships will also develop project frameworks setting out specific proposals to deliver the objectives of the regeneration framework over the following three year period. These will guide and inform the investments made by the ODPM and others to ensure a more strategic approach to funding. Project frameworks will therefore help plan funding and delivery of greenspace creation and enhancement, guided by the principles of *Greening the Gateway* and regional/local greenspace initiatives.

Action: all Local Regeneration Partnerships regeneration and project frameworks to have taken into account *Greening the Gateway* objectives and sub-regional initiatives by 2006.

Implementation by Local Authorities

6.31 Local authorities have a critical role in the planning, design, funding and management of greenspace and the wider local environment. This document cannot list all of the elements that this role entails and, indeed, individual local authorities will often approach the role in different ways. However, a broad description of the roles of local authorities in the delivery of *Greening the Gateway* is set out here.

6.32 Enhancing the quality of existing greenspace will be a major element of delivering *Greening the Gateway*. Green Flag awards provide a nationally and locally recognised standard of excellence in managing and maintaining parks, greenspaces and play areas. Some local authorities in the Thames Gateway, such as Southend and Barking and Dagenham, already contain several greenspaces that have been awarded Green Flags. In delivering the Thames Gateway as a model of sustainable development, all local authorities in the Thames Gateway should aim to have at least one park or greenspace that meets the Green Flag Award standard.

6.33 The development of a greenspace strategy that feeds into the Local Development Framework allows sub-regional and local greenspace initiatives to be integrated with plans for housing, other development and infrastructure at the local level. A successful greenspace strategy should integrate with the PPG17 requirement to audit open space to support the preparation of local development frameworks by identifying community needs, establishing local standards of quantity, quality and accessibility, and developing a prioritised action plan for delivery and management over a set time period. CABE Space provides direct advice to authorities in Thames Gateway on developing greenspace strategies, and it has also published a good practice guide. The GLA has published London-specific guidance for the London Boroughs.

Action: all local authorities in the Thames Gateway should aim to have a greenspace strategy in place by 2008.

Action: all local authorities in the Thames Gateway should aim to have at least one Green Flag Award winning greenspace by 2008.

Local Authority Delivery – Chalkwell Park's Green Flag Award

Chalkwell Park, in the Essex Thames Gateway, is sited to the west of Southend-on-Sea and is bordered by one of the most densely populated wards in the country. With no other greenspace available to local residents, the importance of Southend-on-Sea Borough Council maintaining a well kept, high quality park cannot be understated.

The park covers 10.5 hectares and provides a range of community facilities such as cricket, mini football, tennis and basketball. The colourful ornamental gardens are much loved by the park's visitors and the extensive rose garden is well known for its spectacular displays. There is space for informal recreation and both of the park's playgrounds are always busy.

The park has now held a Green Flag Award (the national standard for quality greenspace in England and Wales) for six years and the standard has provided the framework for its continuous improvement. Each year, the local authority supports the development of existing or new features, such as more community involvement and environmental education programmes. In 2005, the Borough Council will be developing a wooden pond-dipping platform, constructed from locally sourced timber, which will allow children greater access to the park's wildlife.



Ian James

Site Specific

Implementation by the Private Sector/Developers

6.34 The private sector will have an important role in delivering greenspace in the Thames Gateway, particularly through individual planning applications. Translating the spatial planning approach through the regional/sub-regional and local levels should provide certainty for planning greenspace at the site specific level. Private developers will need to consider how their plans fit with, and can contribute to, the delivery of the strategic framework, particularly how the site fits with networks of greenspace, strategic flood risk planning and management and maintenance requirements. This will maximise the contribution that greenspace can make to the value and sustainability of development and ensure that greenspace is planned from the outset.

6.35 The private sector will also have an important role in developing innovative models of funding and maintenance, such as management trusts and Business Improvement Districts.

Private Sector Delivery of Greenspace – Springhead Development

Countryside Properties (Special Projects) Ltd have outline planning permission to build approximately three hundred homes at Springhead near Ebbsfleet in the Kent Thames Gateway. The planned development incorporates a diverse range of greenspace including a one hectare landscaped central park, a football pitch, a play park, a pathway and some small community greenspace.

The provision of enhanced greenspace adds social and environmental value to housing developments by creating a sense of place for a community and protecting the wildlife and biodiversity of an area. For a private developer it can also add value to a property, as well as building brand value and fostering customer loyalty.



Countryside Maritime Ltd

Implementation by the Community and Voluntary Sector

6.36 The voluntary and community sectors are a major source of skills, knowledge and expertise on greenspace, and will be vital to the successful delivery of *Greening the Gateway*. Some of the most successful spaces are created and cared for by the community – the people who use the space and know what is needed. Both the community and voluntary sectors have a role in enhancing and creating greenspace through individual projects, along with its management and maintenance. They will be particularly important in identifying areas of greenspace that are in practice too small to form part of strategic spatial planning.

6.37 As partners in larger projects, community and voluntary organisations can contribute specialist skills and experience in helping to develop best practice. They will also play an important role in encouraging community participation in, and raising awareness of, environmental improvements. Local authorities and local regeneration partnerships should ensure that the community is involved in decisions about its local environment and has the opportunity to inform the design of greenspace to meet its needs.

Voluntary Sector – RSPB Rainham, Wennington and Aveley Marshes

The RSPB reserve at Rainham, Wennington and Aveley Marshes is one of only a few ancient landscapes left in London and Essex Thames Gateway. At 360 hectares, the site is the largest remaining expanse of wetland bordering the upper reaches of the Thames Estuary. It is also a Site of Special Scientific Interest, offering diverse bird interest, especially for breeding birds and wintering wildfowl, wading birds, finches and birds of prey.

The RSPB has been actively engaged with volunteers from the local community in the development of the site. For example, local volunteers have helped in the construction and maintenance of ODPM funded footpaths, nature trails and viewpoints.

Many local schools are already using the reserve and by 2006 a sustainably designed Environment and Education Centre, part-funded by ODPM, will become its gateway. It is envisaged that the centre will attract over 100,000 visitors a year and provide exciting opportunities for local people and visitors to the Thames Gateway to learn about the amazing variety of wildlife that lives on the Marshes as well as improve understanding of the military and social history of the site. The reserve will be part of the London Thames Gateway Green Grid as well as forming the core of a larger Conservation Park being developed along with other partners that will become one of London's top outdoor destinations.



RSPB-images.com

7 Mapping and monitoring

“It is ... important that maximum use is made of the environmental evidence base. In some areas there may be a need for additional survey work in order to increase the understanding of existing land use and environmental pressures”

(Section 5.3, Greening the Gateway)

7.1 In *Greening the Gateway*, the Government acknowledged the need for further mapping and monitoring of greenspace and the environment within the Thames Gateway. This will allow national, regional and local organisations to make evidence-based decisions, and will form the foundations of robust greenspace strategies. Such information will help to target resources and activities to the areas that require the most attention, for example, where there is a deficiency of a particular type of greenspace. It will also allow changes to the provision of greenspace to be tracked and the delivery of Greening the Gateway to be monitored.

7.2 ODPM is developing various datasets to monitor its Public Service Agreement on Cleaner, Safer, Greener public spaces, including working with Defra to collect neighbourhood level information on the quality of the local environment. Specifically, it is developing a national greenspace database detailing the location and quality of different types of greenspace, with the Growth Areas being mapped as a priority. The intention is to provide accessible data that can be shared with partners to inform the delivery of greenspace.

7.3 In spring 2005 ODPM will also be publishing generalised land use data for 9 categories including greenspace. This will cover the whole of England, including the Thames Gateway.

Supporting documents and guidance

- Countryside Agency/Groundwork – The Countryside in and around towns – a vision for connecting town and country in the pursuit of sustainable development
- Countryside Agency – Practical Guidelines for developing 'walking for health' schemes www.whi.org.uk
- Countryside Agency – Regeneration Around Cities – the role of England's community forests
- CABE Space – A Guide to Producing Parks and greenspace Management Plans, May 2004
- CABE Space – Is the grass greener?...Learning from international innovations in urban greenspace management, July 2004
- CABE Space – Green Space Strategies: a good practice guide, May 2004
- CABE Space – Involving Young People in the Design and Care of Urban Spaces, May 2004
- CABE Space – The Value of Public Space, March 2004
- GLA – Guide to Preparing Open Space Strategies, best practice guidance of the London Plan, March 2004
- Environment Agency – Partnership in Planning. Riverbank Design Guidance
- Environment Agency – 25 Case Studies from Thames Region
- Environment Agency – 20 Best Practice Case Studies from London
- Forestry Commission – London Trees and Woodland Framework (2004)
- GreenSpace – 'Claiming Your Share' Guide (2004)
<http://www.green-space.org.uk/publications/claimingyourshare.htm>
- National Urban Forestry Unit – Green Gateway – a strategy for trees and woodland in East London (2002)
- National Urban Forestry Unit – Trees or Turf – comparative costs of managing greenspace (1999)
- National Urban Forestry Unit – Trees and Woods in Towns and Cities – a guide to producing urban forestry strategies (1998)
- ODPM – Growing in the community: a good practice guide for the management of allotments
- ODPM – Living Places: Caring for Quality (2004)

