



Arundel Close Wildlife Site Management Plan

2026 – 2030



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1.0 Introduction

This management plan has been written by Richmond Councils' Ecology Officer as part of the Councils' commitment to the preservation and enhancement of biodiversity. Each site is managed in accordance with the habitat and species action plans of the Richmond Biodiversity Action Plan, the London Local Nature Recovery Strategy, general good habitat management practice and current legislation.

1.1 Caveat


The implementation of prescriptions in this management plan will be subject to available budget.

2.0 Terms of Reference

This management plan is designed to inform the sustainable management and enhancement of Arundel Close from nature conservation, landscape and visitor perspectives. This will be achieved by Richmond Council working in conjunction with Council contractors and community organisations.

Throughout this management plan our goals are to:

1. Restore the site to make it an attractive leisure and environmental asset for residents and visitors.
2. Protect and enhance the ecology of the mixed habitats with appropriate management and planting.
3. Enhance the visitor experience by creating an attractive natural space which invites exploration and food production.
4. Support and develop the Friends group and engage with a wide cross-section of the community.



To deliver these goals, this plan considers the sites' history, ecology and visitor use; drawing on existing data, it sets out refined objectives and the prescriptions to deliver and maintain the site over the next five years.

The management plan should not be regarded as fixed; the prescriptions provide a framework and guidance that enable reaction to changing conditions. Reviewing progress and monitoring key features on a regular basis is important in ensuring the site is managed appropriately and in a sustainable way, as such as a management review will be carried out by the Council annually.

3.0 Site Description

3.1 Site details

Location	Arundel Close, Hampton, TW12 1SW
Grid Reference	TQ 13950 71041
Ownership	London Borough of Richmond upon Thames
Designation	Site of Borough Importance for Nature Conservation (# RiB06)* <i>*part of Longford River SINC</i>
Area	0.2 ha
Key habitats	Orchard, meadow grassland and scrub edges
Key species	Song thrush, stag beetle, pollinators

3.2 Site description

This wildlife site is situated at the end of a cul-de-sac in the residential area of Hampton. The only access point for pedestrians and maintenance vehicles runs from the parking area of the cul-de-sac into the middle of the site. Arundel Close is a very small site at just less than 0.2ha and is made up of a mix of scrub with trees of varying ages and grassland. An orchard was planted in the grassland with a community grant in 2013. A ditch runs around the north and east sides with the remainder of the site bordered by residential properties and garages. The ditch is an active part of the water management from nearby sports fields, draining into the Longford River.

3.3 Designation

This site is designated as:

- Included within the Longford River Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), full details can be found in *Appendix 4*.

3.4 Ecological interest and features

The grassland meadow includes species such as wild carrot (*Daucus carota*), an important pollinating plant especially for bees, hoverflies and beetles. The scrub that surrounds the site consists mainly of bramble (*Rubus fruticosus agg.*) and ivy (*Hedera helix*). The bramble forms a neat thicket like a hedgerow, which is ideal for birds in the nesting season. The berries from both plants provide a generous food supply and ivy is also the main food plant for the holly blue butterfly (*Celastrina argiolus*).

Hazel (*Corylus avellana*), blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) and the occasional buddleia (*Buddleia davidii*) are also found within the scrub. Blackthorn is the larval plant of the brown hairstreak butterfly (*Thecla betula*), a rare butterfly confined to the South of England but is now becoming more common within Richmond Borough. Stag beetles (*Lucanus cervus*) are found throughout Richmond borough and Arundel Close Wildlife Site has two loggeries to provide breeding habitat for them. In 2025, The Friends group created a nesting bank for solitary bees, which supports the life cycles of pollinating insects.

The trees are mainly young birch trees (*Betula sp.*) but there are some mature hazel stools and on the left of the site, just outside of the boundary, there is a very old pear tree, quite substantial in size. Other tree species include sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) and a willow (*Salix sp.*) along the western boundary that has recently been pollarded due to limb failure.

The ditch that runs around two sides of the site, is ephemeral in nature and can be dry for many months of the year, however it provides habitats for amphibians and invertebrates and connects to the Longford River.

3.5 Community orchard

A community orchard was planted in 2013 as part of a larger enhancement project which included hedge and bulb planting and the installation of two new resting



benches. The works were funded through the Council Parks Improvement Project and carried out by The Conservation Volunteers (TCV). A variety of fruiting species were planted including apples, damsons, pears, plums and a single gage tree. In 2023, to mark the ten-year anniversary of the community orchard, two new fruit trees, a quince and a medlar were planted.

3.5.1 Orchard species

The following fruit trees are found in the orchard:

- Apple trees - Christmas Pippin, Cox (self-fertile), Crispin, Jupiter, Katy and Morgans Sweet.
- Cherry trees - Stella
- Damson trees - King of the Damsons and Shropshire Prune
- Pear trees – Conference and Merton Pride
- Plum trees – Opal and Victoria
- Gage – Coe’s Golden Drop
- Quince – Serbian Gold
- Medlar – Nottingham Medlar

3.6 Community involvement

The Friends of Arundel Close Orchard formed in 2018 and underwent a change of leadership in early 2025. The group carries out regular volunteering and social days at the site and is supported by conservation charity Habitats and Heritage.

3.7 Access and visitor experience

Being a small site at the end of a cul-de-sac there are few visitors. However, the involvement of the Friends Group and the management of the site to include an area of amenity grass are all positive steps to encourage use of the site such as picnics and play.

The Royal Parks have right of access through the orchard to the Longford River and a 2m wide, 2m high access to the riverbank in the south-eastern corner of the site must be maintained.



3.8 Constraints

Japanese knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*) has historically been present on this site in the north-west corner. Following successful treatment, the site is being monitored for signs of regrowth under the London Borough of Richmond treatment program. Care therefore has to be taken with cutting the grass and scrub and whomever cuts the meadows must be able to identify Japanese Knotweed.

Being a quiet site with no thoroughfare the site suffers from occasional dog fouling, fly tipping and anti-social behaviour. Any damage caused to the site through vandalism, for example, will have a higher impact due to the reserve being so small. This site cannot withstand large heavy machinery.

Some pieces of asbestos from the garage rooves have previously been discovered behind the garages. Care must be taken when working in areas around the garages.

3.9 Evaluation

The key features of the site are the orchard, meadow and scrub habitat mosaics. The site is hindered by some low-level antisocial behaviour. Due to its location and connectivity Arundel Close plays an integral part in contributing to a rich wildlife corridor for many species.

4.0 Policies

4.1 Strategic Principles for Parks and Open Spaces

The borough has the largest area of public open space per head of population of any London borough. We have a local and national reputation for quality and leadership in the delivery of excellent parks. To ensure the quality of our Parks and Open Spaces remains at a high level, following public consultation, we have developed a series of strategic principles by which parks will be managed.

1. Our parks and open space management will have biodiversity, climate change and sustainability at the forefront.
2. Community participation with our Friends and Community Groups will continue to be encouraged and supported.
3. Our parks will promote active, healthy living and social inclusion for people of all ages and abilities.
4. The management of Parks and Open Spaces will create a sustainable legacy for future generations.
5. The quality of our Parks and open spaces will continue to define LBRuT.
6. Richmond will lead in the delivery of excellent parks and open spaces services.
7. Through innovation, the future development of the parks will be ensured.
8. Richmond's Parks will offer positive experiences to all visitors.

All Council owned and managed parks and open spaces are controlled by Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs). These orders impose various restrictions to dog control and other activities in our parks and open spaces, these can be found here.

https://www.richmond.gov.uk/services/parks_and_open_spaces/parks_enforcement_and_legislation#pspo.

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4.2 Nature Conservation Policy

During 2019, Richmond Council adopted a Nature Conservation Policy in which the Council recognises the special and diverse wildlife found within its Borough and its' duty to protect and preserve biodiversity. The Policy outlines the ways the Council will achieve this through management of its land, planning obligations and monitoring. The policy can be found in *Appendix 2*.

4.3 Tree Policy

Richmond Council has a tree management policy which recognises the benefits of trees and outlines a responsible management approach towards trees within the Borough. This can be found at *Appendix 3*.



5.0 Site Vision and Objectives

5.1 Site vision

To conserve, maintain and improve the quality of the orchard, ditch and meadow grassland habitats. Improving the visitor experience on site and making the site a destination for fruit harvesting, wildlife watching and play.

5.2 Objectives

From the site goals (*Section 2.0*) and informed by the site description and research into key areas, the following objectives have been developed to cover every aspect of the work to be done:

5.2.1 Objective 1: Nature conservation

Maintain and improve the habitat quality on site to ensure key species are in optimum conditions.

Ensure the orchard has appropriate management and if necessary, specialist contractors are used.

5.2.2 Objective 2: Visitor access

Maintain the amenity grass, pathways, boundaries, infrastructure and cleanliness.

5.2.3 Objective 3: Publicity, communication, and community involvement

With support from the Council and Habitats and Heritage (H&H), raise the profile of Arundel Close Wildlife Site and communicate with the Friends group, residents and interested parties.

Ensure volunteering work parties are available and tasks are wide ranging to cater for different abilities.

5.2.4 Objective 4: Monitoring and Management planning

Monitor the key habitats and species to ensure management action is achieving the site vision.

Review the management regularly and amend work plan as appropriate to ensure site vision is achieved.

6.0 Maintenance Prescriptions

The following detailed prescriptions are designed to manage the site features to deliver the site vision and objectives. The management is not set in stone and must be reviewed and updated based on evidence observed on site, so that management is in response to the observed condition or any environmental change.

Key to terms used within the prescriptions and work programme

AC	Arboricultural Contractor
FoACWS	Friends of Arundel Close Wildlife Site
GMC	Greenspace Management Contractor
H&H	Habitats and Heritage
LBRuT	London Borough of Richmond upon Thames
NCC	Nature Conservation Contractor
Minor trees	Trunks and limbs with a diameter of 10cm or less at 1.3m height off ground (Diameter at Breast Height)

6.1 Objective 1: Nature conservation

Prescription details	Description
<u>1. Scrub and minor tree maintenance</u>	<u>Tasks</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prevent bramble leaders or scrub encroachment onto meadow and amenity grasslands. - Maintain a minimum 1m buffer between the crown-perimeter of orchard trees and adjacent bramble scrub habitat. - Remove any exotic species present and use stump treatment to prevent regrowth. - Coppice selected hazels in 2nd year (2027). <u>Considerations</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Works should be carried out outside of bird nesting season unless a pre-works bird nesting survey has been conducted by an Ecologist. - All stems must be cut to ground level to avoid creating any trip hazards. - Any cordwood should be stacked for habitat/deadwood value; small brash piles should be created.
Responsibility: NCC	

<p><u>2. Remedial management of trees over 10cm DBH (diameter at breast height/1.3m)</u></p> <p>Responsibility: AC</p>	<p><u>Tasks</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Survey and manage tree stock in accordance with LBRuT policy. <p><u>Considerations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - AC to liaise with Appropriate Council Officer, NCC and FoACWS before undertaking any works on site.
<p><u>3. Meadow grassland maintenance</u></p> <p>Responsibility: NCC</p>	<p><u>Tasks</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grassland to be cut twice a year, during April and September, to a sward height of 10cm. - Remove all cuttings from the site or add to designated composting area on site. - Remove undesirable weeds such as burdock and creeping thistle during mid-summer, and top off seedheads of other vigorous species such as hogweed prior to grassland cutting. <p><u>Considerations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A litter pick must be undertaken before cutting grass. - Meadow cutting must not be carried out during high winds or extreme wet weather.



<p><u>4. Orchard tree maintenance</u></p> <p>Responsibility: FoACWS</p>	<p><u>Tasks</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prune fruit trees in line with The Orchard Project guidance (Appendix 5) to ensure optimum health. - Water fruit trees during periods of drought. <p><u>Considerations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fruit tree pruning must be carried out at the appropriate time of year to suit the species. - Do not prune out more than 30% of a fruit tree in any one year. - Trees must be left safe after pruning with no sharp low branches. - Any pests will need to be reported to the Appropriate Council Officer and remedial works discussed before commencing.
<p><u>5. Ditch maintenance</u></p> <p>Responsibility: NCC</p>	<p><u>Tasks</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inspect ditches bi-annually for blockages, removing any large branches or litter. - Conduct bramble clearance and woody shrub thinning along 20% of the ditch banks per year to prevent encroachment and future blockages.

6.2 Objective 2: Visitor Experience

Prescription details	Description
<u>6. Amenity grassland and pathside maintenance</u> Responsibility: GMC	<u>Tasks</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Amenity grass and 0.5m pathside strips to be maintained as per the standard specifications of the Greenspace Management Contract. - Benches and park furniture to be neatly strimmed round.
<u>7. Maintain pathways, boundaries, check site and structures</u> Responsibility: NCC	<u>Tasks</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Top up and maintain woodchip pathways. - Carry out weeding along pathways. - Cut back overhanging vegetation along pathways and around the edges of amenity grassland area up to a height of 2.4m. <u>Considerations</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tree issues involving larger branches or the necessity to work at height will need to be referred to the Appropriate Council Officer for liaison with the Arboriculture Contractor. - Infrastructure and signage should be checked regularly, and any defects reported to the Appropriate Council Officer within 7 days unless urgent.

8. <u>Litter collection</u>	<u>Tasks</u>
Responsibility: GMC, NCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Litter picks to be carried out on a regular basis, any large / hazardous items or fly tip to be reported to Appropriate Council Officer within 24 hours. - Bins will be emptied by the Parks Cleansing Team.
9. <u>Longford River access</u>	<u>Tasks</u>
Responsibility: NCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain a 2m gap as per map to allow access for Royal Parks to the Longford River.

6.3 Objective 3: Publicity, communication, and community Involvement

Prescription details	Description
10. <u>Publicity and communication</u>	<u>Tasks</u>
Responsibility: FoACWS/NCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FoACWS to advertise their events through social media and on-site posters. - FoACWS and NCC to each submit a twice-yearly work summary/future task list for agreement with the Appropriate Council Officer at review meetings.
11. <u>Community involvement</u>	<u>Tasks</u>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FoACWS to carry out an annual community day inviting residents to visit the site.

Responsibility: FoACWS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NCC, H&H and LBRuT to support the FoACWS to carry out any tasks they wish to do safely and efficiently, with appropriate training and guidance. <u>Considerations</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that risk assessment and method statements are up to date and relevant for all events and tasks.
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6.4 Objective 4: Monitoring and Management Planning

Prescription details	Description
<u>12. Habitat and species monitoring</u> Responsibility: LBRuT/FoACWS	<u>Tasks</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Every year identify a key ecological community or species group to monitor to inform management success. Expert help should be sought where required. <u>Considerations</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report any incidental sightings of species to H&H. - Where a sighting is imminently important to the management of a site (such as bird nesting or badger setts), the NCC or FoACWS must inform the Appropriate Council Officer prior to continuation of work.



13. Review management
and work plans

Responsibility:
LBRuT/NCC/FoACWS

Tasks

- An annual site visit will be undertaken with the Appropriate Council Officer, NCC and FoACWS to assess work progress and any issues encountered.
- At the end of each calendar year, the Management Plan and Work Programme will be reviewed and updated as necessary.

6.5 Table 1 – Arundel Close Work programme 2026 – 2030

Prescription	Priority	Year and compartment					Usual Timing	Lead resource	Prescription details	Comments
		2026	2027	2028	2029	2030				
P1: Scrub and minor tree maintenance	1	B D	B D	B D	B D	B D	Oct - Feb	NCC	Cut back encroaching bramble from orchard trees and grassland. Remove and stump treatexotic species. Coppice hazel in Year 2 (2027).	Consider impacts to nesting birds
P2: Remedial management of trees over 10cm DBH	1	All	All	All	All	All	As required	AC	Carry out tree works as required, in liaison with Appropriate Council Officer, NCC and FoACWS.	Consider impacts to bats and nesting birds
P3: Meadow grassland maintenance	1	A	A	A	A	A	Apr – Sep	NCC	Undertake bi-annual hay cut in spring and autumn months.	



									Remove undesirable weeds and umbellifer seedheads during mid-summer.	
P4: Orchard maintenance	1	A	A	A	A	A	As required	FoACWS	Manage orchard trees as per best practice guidance.	
P5: Ditch maintenance	1	B D	B D	B D	B D	B D	Oct – Feb	NCC	Inspect ditch biannually for blockages. Manage scrub along 20% of ditch channel per year.	
P6: Amenity grassland and pathside maintenance.	1	C	C	C	C	C	April - Nov	GMC	Amenity grass and 0.5m pathside strips to be cut as per GM contract specification. Ensure benches and park furniture are neatly cut round.	
P7: Maintain pathways, boundaries and check structures	1	All	All	All	All	All	All year	GMC NCC	Woodchip paths when required. Keep paths clear of overhanging obstructions, keep borders clear of weeds.	
P8: Litter collection	1	All	All	All	All	All	All year	NCC GMC	Litter pick when on site, any sharps/inappropriate/ large/bulky litter and fly tipping	



									to be reported to Appropriate Council Officer.	
P9: Access to Longford River	1	D	D	D	D	D	Nov - Feb	NCC	Maintain a 2m gap in vegetation to allow access for Royal Parks to the Longford River.	
P10: Publicity and communication	2	All	All	All	All	All	All year	FoACWS NCC	Raise profile of Arundel Close through social media and on-site posters.	Work with LBRuT Comms, H&H
P11: Community involvement	1	All	All	All	All	All	All year	FoACWS	Conduct annual community day on site.	H&H to provide support where necessary
P12: Monitor Key Species	2	All	All	All	All	All	As appropriate	LBRuT FoACWS	Monitor key ecological communities and species groups to inform management.	H&H to provide support where necessary
P13: Review management plan and work programme	1	All	All	All	All	All	Apr & Nov	LBRuT NCC FoACWS	Annual site meeting in spring. Annual review of management plan prescriptions.	



6.6 Priority levels

1 – Very important for the maintenance of the key habitats, species or visitor amenity

(i.e. annual meadow cut) and should reflect the bare minimum of what should be achieved each year.

2 – Of secondary importance to the key tasks, to be done if more time / resources are available (i.e. coppicing / thinning a secondary woodland boundary to a meadow, or additional survey work); priority 2 tasks could become 1s if not completed for a number of years.

3 – Luxury, wish list tasks: nice to do but not important if resources are not available; these items might become priority 2s over time if not completed but are unlikely ever to reach priority 1 unless significant change in other factors.

7.0 Management Map

7.1 Map to show site features and management actions



8.0 References

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9.0 Appendices

Appendix 1

Richmond Biodiversity Action Plan, habitats and species relevant to Arundel Close Community Orchard, [online] available at - [FINAL-RBAP-2025-2_compressed-2.pdf](#)

Appendix 2

Richmond Council Nature Conservation Policy [online] available at https://www.richmond.gov.uk/media/16895/lbrut_nature_conservation_policy.pdf

Appendix 3

Richmond Council Tree Policy [online] available at - https://www.richmond.gov.uk/media/6899/tree_policy.pdf

Appendix 4

Longford River designation

Site of Borough Grade II Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Reference: RiBII02

Site Name: Longford River in Richmond

Summary: A section of the Longford River with a wide range of wetland plants and good fish populations.

Grid ref: TQ 135 715

Area (ha): 5.78


Borough(s): Richmond upon Thames

Habitat(s): Hedge, Running water, Scattered trees, Semi-improved neutral grassland, Wet ditches

Access: Can be viewed from adjacent paths or roads only

Ownership: The Royal Parks

Site Description: The 2.7 kilometre section of the Longford River in Richmond borough (not including the part in Bushy Park, which is included in the Metropolitan site), despite its vertical banks, supports a diverse range of vegetation, including hemlock water-dropwort (*Oenanthe crocata*), marsh woundwort (*Stachys palustris*), water dock (*Rumex hydrolapathum*), lesser pond-sedge (*Carex riparia*), common skullcap (*Scutellaria galericulata*), branched bur-



reed (*Sparganium erectum*) and reed canary-grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*). Beneath the surface of the clear water, fennel-leaved pondweed (*Potamogeton pectinatus*) and hornwort (*Ceratophyllum demersum*) can be found. The river holds good populations of fish, including chub, roach, dace and gudgeon. Adjacent ditches support further wetland plants, including hemp-agrimony (*Eupatoria cannabinum*), celery-leaved buttercup (*Ranunculus sceleratus*), remote sedge (*Carex remota*) and meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*). Adjacent rough grassland and hedges provide additional habitats. The Longford River is a 19 kilometre canal built on the orders of Charles I to provide water to Hampton Court and feed ponds in Bushy Park.

Site first notified: 01/01/1993 Boundary last changed: 30/11/2005
 Citation last edited: 01/12/2005 Mayor Agreed:
 Defunct: N Last Updated: 23/03/2006

Appendix 5

The Orchard Project pruning guidance, [online] available at -
<https://www.theorchardproject.org.uk/guides-and-advice/>