

Holland Park

Management Plan



Part Three

2006-2016



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF
KENSINGTON
AND CHELSEA

HOLLAND PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN

PART THREE:

CONTENTS

Page 2	Map of Holland Park
Page 3	Background
Page 4	1. Introduction
Page 5	2. Landscape
Page 10	3. Interpretation and Visitor Management
Page 12	4. Ecology and Wildlife
Page 14	5. Buildings and Infrastructure
Page 16	6. Formal Recreation, Sport and Play
Page 18	7. Arts and Entertainment
Page 20	8. Security and Safety
Page 22	Appendix One: The way forward
Page 23	Appendix Two: Management Plans and Record
Page 31	Appendix Three: The Ecological Importance of Holland Park
Page 34	Appendix Four: A brief history of Holland Park
Page 39	Appendix Five: The Park's Green Flag and Beyond

Up-dated Version January 2010



Holland Park

BACKGROUND:

Holland Park's Management Plan was first written in 1986 – Part one. This externally researched and written document was reviewed in 1996 – Part Two, and that review is itself now ready for revision to take the park's planning beyond 2006 – Part Three.

Uniquely this review is being under-taken in the knowledge that by the close of 2005 there will have been produced a Parks Strategy for the whole borough, a Play Strategy, a Sports Strategy, an Arts Strategy, a Local Development Framework and a Community Safety Plan. Some of these strategic documents are already written, some are being written and others currently being reviewed. Arguably, few if any existed in 1996 and even fewer in 1986 when the original plan was drawn up.

Part Three of the Management Plan can therefore be seen as an extension of a living management plan that is as much flexible to the changing needs placed upon the park as it is conservative in order to ensure preservation of all the fragile historic elements and nature that make the park the unique place that it is in the hearts of its visitors.



One of the benefits of the electronic media era, in which we live, is that it is possible to update the Management Plan in response to achievements and new objectives. The core substance is not being amended and will not be ahead of the proposed formal review in 2015. However it is hoped that this process will result in this document being both a plan and a record.

As always, the invaluable assistance of colleagues, the Holland Park Advisory Group, the Friends of Holland Park and the informal input of other users of Holland Park are gratefully acknowledged.

PART THREE:

TAKING HOLLAND PARK BEYOND 2006:

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The first review of the original Management Plan demonstrated that much has been achieved since the production of the original management strategy of 1986. The proposed further revision of the management strategy again raises some of these items for further consideration. It is important to emphasise at the outset that this is a management review informed mainly by experience and observation rather than public consultation and the rationale for this is indicated in the following paragraphs. The appended action plans show when the latter stages are anticipated.

1.2 The future management philosophy for Holland Park is likely to remain much as before and could be summed up as "more of the same." Few are dissatisfied with the status quo and consequently few would welcome any major change in the character and appearance of the park.

1.3 However, in addition to the other strategic consultations and documents listed in the preceding section, towards the close of 2004 the Council took the decision to produce a wider Parks Strategy in order to provide a rationale and set of priorities that would guide the very large capital programme identified (see section 5.1 below) to bring all of the borough's parks "up-to scratch".

1.4 This strategic Parks Strategy over-view will entail public discussion and consultation through focus groups and presentation – some of which may alter the objectives of this review, and all of which will enable a more comprehensive revision of the Holland Park Management Plan in the coming years. It is therefore proposed that aside from the obvious consultation of the Friends of Holland Park and the Holland Park Advisory Group, no other specific public consultation will be undertaken to inform this particular review.

1.5 The intervening years between the original plan, the first review and this current one, have again seen major physical and operational changes, most of which have directly benefited the park. Perhaps conversely, though, the proposed rebuilding of Holland House, for example, despite a huge amount of work being

done to secure the required funding, was finally dropped as an option.

1.6 The following sections consist of a list of observations and recommendations from a variety of sources, including some given low priority in the original strategy document.

1.7 As in the original plans and for convenience, these have been placed under the headings listed below with Security and Safety being added as a consequence of its high profile in local concern rather than evidence of any shortcoming:

- Landscape
- Interpretation and Visitor Management
- Ecology and Wildlife
- Buildings and Infrastructure
- Formal Recreation, Sport and Play
- Arts and Entertainment
- Security and Safety



2. LANDSCAPE

In reviewing and setting out future plans for the landscape it is important that just as this space is meant to be a “people’s space” so too must it be an example of horticultural excellence. Such “excellence” must translate itself to represent considerably wider use of herbaceous plants and perennials, reduced dependence upon annuals except where appropriate by design or to draw attention, greater variety of shrubs as ground cover rather than just screen or

barrier planting and great care that the love of trees does not create an arboretum in place of a more diverse flora.

A Although richer in plant species than most London parks, Holland Park does still suffer from symptoms of the mid-late 20th century dependence upon easily mown grass, annuals, hardy 'municipal-choice' shrubs and trees. A fuller palette needs developing.

B Planting skills and practices must be reviewed at both the specification and throughout the delivery stages of the grounds maintenance contract. The skills of the Head Gardener particularly are paramount and it is crucial that strong links are forged between the client council officers and the site based contractor management team.

C Recycling and greater attention to sustainable practice must replace waste. The successful Christmas tree and other green waste collection for mulching should where possible be built upon. Leaf mulching *in situ* should be possible with the purchase and use of suitable mini-shredders.

D The under-used glass facilities available in the works yard must be brought back into full-time use so as to widen the variety of plants grown and thus enrich both Holland Park and by natural extension all other green-spaces across the borough.



E The annual bedding schemes must continue to tax the professional skills of all involved in their design so as to ensure Holland Park's place as a centre of horticultural innovation, imagination and colour.

F Furniture must continue to be kept with-in the style of the landscape and visitor perception of Holland Park as a conservative landscape. Memorial benches are a welcome addition – although the park is now full. Future memorial gifts could be recorded in a publicly accessible Park Memorial Book that would acknowledge the donors as well as their reasons for the donation.

G The commissioning of a new borehole in 2005 will considerably improve irrigation schemes in the park. Although some disruption can be expected in coming years as the associated network of spurs from the main ring main are laid , the horticultural benefit will be evident.

2.1 THE CENTRE: several suggestions were deferred in the original strategy, it may be appropriate to consider some of these items again:

A The repaired brick arches to the North of the Belvedere Restaurant continue to appear somewhat incomplete. The whole area is best summed up as “too many benches and too much tarmac”.

B The previous suggestion that Lime trees or Hornbeam, trailed to a supporting framework in order to extend the arches, may be worthy of further consideration.

C The proposed re-orientation of the Napoleon Garden was not followed through. However, the adjacent lawn area between the Napoleon Garden and the Dutch Garden previously proposed as the site for a Garden for the Blind or “Five Senses Garden” could still prove suitable for such a purpose.

D The experimental Mediterranean Garden has been both successful and popular and should now be considered a permanent fixture.

E The terraced beds flanking the steps from the Dutch Garden into the Iris Garden have had in 2004 their informal mixture of Heathers and dwarf conifers replaced with mixed herbaceous and perennial plants. A controversial decision, it proved popular with both park users and judges in the “in Bloom” competitions.

F In the Iris Garden itself, the suggestion has been made that some of the Irises be replaced with other species that would give a longer period of flower in this area. Research into the

American-bred “remontant” strain needs to be undertaken as they should provide both a spring and an autumn flowering season.



G The new café was finally opened in the spring of 2004 and provided three outdoor sitting areas as well as the opportunity to improve the planting of this very busy cross-road in the park.

H The large area of tarmac between the stable yard entrance and the colonnades remains an unpleasing, busy area. In the shorter term resurfacing of this area is still being proposed, with a shingle surface suggested to affect a softer appearance and hopefully deter roller-skates and skateboards. The heavy use by both pedestrians and vehicles serving the café and Youth Hostel will require substantial foundation to whatever surface is eventually laid.

I The view of Holland House from the South, and from the area of the House to the South, remains possibly one of the least satisfactory features of this part of the park. It is unfortunate that the front elevation can only be seen from a relatively close distance, being otherwise hidden by mature trees. It is however unlikely that change of the magnitude necessary to open up that vista would be popular – however desirable!

2.2 THE SOUTH: this section of the park comprises the sports field and the adjacent avenue known as Earls Court Drive leading to the Earls Court or High Street entrance to the park.

A Arguably the main entrance into the park, and despite handsome entrance gates, this area remains uninviting. In 2004 the park's proudly flown Green Flag at this gate was supported by the experimental introduction of two large floral peacocks. These proved to be great fun as well as a positive draw for passers by who otherwise may have avoided visiting the park and should be considered for future summers.



B Strategically, any major changes to this area would be best considered only once the future use and intended improvements to the Commonwealth Institute are known – it is currently no longer used as permanent exhibition space.

C The original strategy suggested the planting of a hedgerow on the inner side of the eastern boundary of the sports field. This would provide a more rural atmosphere and create a valuable wildlife resource, as well as screen the north-south pedestrian movement from the vista across the field.

2.3 THE NORTH: this is the mainly wooded area beyond the North Lawn.

A The Kyoto Garden – a popular feature since 1991, must be sympathetically cared for in the style of Kyoto and not an “English interpretation” of it.

B The planting in the area immediately around Lord Holland's Pond will in 2005 be improved following the pond's extensive

reconstruction and lining that was commenced in late 2004. The bridge is being replaced completely.

C The periodic relocation of enclosure fencing on a five to seven year cycle as suggested in the original strategy would encourage the reinstatement of vegetation in this area. There is now a critical need for a proper woodland management plan if the area is to continue as thriving ecologically diverse habitat.

D A programme of improvement of path margins and open grass areas in the woodlands by the introduction of wildflower species would improve wildlife diversity and have significant effect on the landscape.

E The Petanque area that replaced the squash courts needs reconsidering as it is not used for its intended purpose and the successful planting of the neighbouring "Sun-Trap" in 2004 needs to be extended.

3. INTERPRETATION / VISITOR MANAGEMENT

Whilst any encouragement of increased usage of Holland Park, particularly of a non-local nature may be strongly resisted, this park has metropolitan importance to the whole of London and it is inevitable that in view of its location and unique characteristics the park will remain an attraction for large numbers of visitors - particularly during the summer months. While this will impose difficulties and pressures on certain points and at certain times, the park management should take these into account, deal with them constructively and where-ever possible benefit from this popularity.



A Objective mapping of the pressure points and the routes to and from them should be carried out as a necessity and the consequent traffic directed through clearly explained, but imaginative use of footpath surfaces rather than invasive "this way" sign boards. The Heritage Trail in Boston, USA and Concert Hall Trail in the Barbican Centre are both good examples of such an idea.

B Carefully located interpretive information boards may be justified in certain areas, for example, near to Holland House. Lessons may be learned from the Royal Parks in the location and design of signage and interpretative boards. The current attempts at interpretation of the history of the park and house are of extremely limited value.

C Directional signage - the negative messages currently prevalent and be replaced with a possible reduced number of single style, positive, clear statements that meet the specific needs of the visitor. Conventional finger-boards are often misleading.

D Greater use of symbols should be considered as should directions to the nearest Tube station, and other key external links. Existing conflicts between the various visitor maps and location points on the ground must be resolved urgently.

E A history trail, as suggested in the original strategy was never pursued. This could be relatively easily achieved on a "self-guided walk" basis and would, if supported by suitable interpretative materials as indicated above, also enable the park to be considered for Green Heritage Site status.

F The history of Holland Park is at present unexploited and the possibility of historical display boards, such as used successfully in Cremorne Gardens, in the yard of the old stables should be investigated. The old borehole that was located in 2004 needs explanation.

G Holland Park's place in British horticultural history needs celebrating: the first Dahlia's grown in the country were those grown in the early 1700's in what is now the Rose Garden beside the Orangery. Although a rich display is found in the Napoleon Garden, there is neither interpretation nor key provided.



H The sale of items relevant to the history and wildlife of the park through the Reception office could be considered. Voluntary assistance has previously been offered by The Friends of Holland Park.

I Access for the disabled wheelchair user within the park is relatively good. However, improved signage at a lower level indicating suitable routes could reduce the amount of intrusive “conventional” finger-boards as well as assist with meeting the expectations of the Disabilities Discrimination Act (2002).

4. ECOLOGY AND WILDLIFE

The present officer strength does not permit expansion of the Ecology Service. School visits to the park are at the maximum number possible and little increase is likely. Extension of practical volunteer work as well as the use of the Probation Service, particularly in the woodland area, is worthy of further investigation.

A Continued development of woodland margins between woodland paths and the enclosure fences is proposed.

B Where appropriate, hedgerow planting along enclosure fences will continue, providing a valuable habitat for a variety of species.

C The Biodiversity Action Plan (2004) for the borough will be used in future as the basis for the management of the wildlife enclosures. This will also inform the Woodland Management Plan proposed below.

D The development of the north enclosure containing the wildlife ponds should continue with the guidance and assistance of English Nature and the London Wildlife Trust.

E An area of woodland to the north east of the Petanque area remains currently under-managed and has become an area of illegal entry to the park and perceived focus for anti-social activities. The physical improvement of this area and its ecological management would improve its value as a wildlife resource.

F The park needs a Woodland Management Plan as a sub-strategy of this Management Plan. Covering a major part of the park, the woodland enclosures are currently managed in a fairly un-prescriptive manner that, although not detrimental, does not demonstrate viable options for their future well-being. A survey in 2004 of the health of the park's trees emphasised a need for ongoing vigilance.



G A tree planting policy needs to be developed in order to preserve the rich diversity of the species and also ensure that the park is not over-planted. Memorial plantings are to be encouraged – but as with furniture donations, plaques must be resisted.

H The ongoing issue of how best to deal with the under-growth and sycamore saplings needs urgent attention. Our proposal is for Tamworth pigs to be introduced to forage as an experiment – though experience since 1992 at Holme Lacy (a satellite of Pershore College) suggests this will be very successful.

I The value of the wildlife enclosures in the north of the park could be greatly enhanced through improved species interpretation. Not every walker has the time to attend the comprehensive programme of events organised by the Ecology Centre.

J The pollination of flowering plants by is a critical ecosystem service of great value to humanity, both monetary and otherwise. Pollination systems are under increasing threat from anthropogenic sources, including fragmentation of habitat, changes in land use, modern agricultural practices, use of chemicals such as pesticides and herbicides, and invasions of non-native plants and animals. Honeybees are critically important for pollination and recent declines in honeybee numbers across Europe bring home the importance of healthy pollination systems. The establishment of a small apiary in Holland Park will help to increase pollinator populations within the local area, this will in turn increase seed production and will improve the ecological potential of the local area.

In addition local honey can be sold from the Holland Park reception to fund and generate a small profit to support the apiary.

5. BUILDINGS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

As stated above, the proposed rebuilding of the House did not happen and is unlikely now to be an option. This has changed significantly the proposals for the buildings that were out-lined in the original review.

A The park buildings are managed by different sections of the Council and organisations – it is important to emphasise that Leisure Services manage the park as public open space. Closer liaison meetings between these other areas of the Council and Leisure Services that examine strategically and resolve the at times conflicting views must be the appropriate way forward.



B The new café was opened early in 2004. There are two criticisms – the noise and the server layout that slows up service. Both make for a less than satisfactory experience and will need careful re-appraisal if this important amenity is to live up to expectation. Although not currently being considered, noise baffling at least in a part of the building, does need appraisal.

C The original kiosk and storage areas remain in place and thus remain as an impediment in the colonnade arches and prevent an uninterrupted link with the Mural Walkway.

D A programme of path resurfacing, replacing existing black tarmac with a more visually pleasing shingle surface, will have the added advantage of discouraging skateboards and roller-skates.

E Development of a planned maintenance programme for buildings within the park based on a condition survey – in 2003/04, John Cobb Consulting was commissioned to survey all the parks' buildings across the borough and this will inform future repairs and restoration. There are no proposals in this review to change the existing annual planned buildings programme and response to damage arrangements (covered by an in-house Service Level Agreement).

F The repair and protection of the Italian tiles along the colonnade walkway has commenced at the instigation of the Friends – intervention that has halted their decline and ensured that this important feature can now be better appreciated by visitors. This will be completed in 2005 subject to the success of a capital bid submitted to the Council for consideration in late 2004. An asset plan of soft or small architectural features such

as the Drinking Fountain in the Dutch Garden should be compiled and similar restoration / preservation initiatives under-taken.

G Revisit the suggestion that the colonnade walkway be re-opened for public use. Although the health and safety implications do need consideration, it is important that the opportunity for visitors to appreciate the iris garden from above as well as views taken for granted by the original occupants of the House are not dismissed out of hand on account of operational difficulties. Timed openings and supervision by the Parks Police could be considered.

H Refurbishments of existing park toilets will arguably remain on all future reviews – if nothing else but on account of the need to have in place an ongoing refurbishment of these important facilities. Baby-changing facilities are now included.

I Pursue necessary works to strengthen and support the North perimeter retaining wall of the park. This is due to commence in early 2005 and will include repairs to some of the lodge walls that have been caused by ground movement.

J Addressing the almost impossible conundrum of whether to conserve / protect or restore is always likely to be controversial. The restoration of the tiles at the instigation of the Friends of Holland Park is a good example though of how difficulties can be overcome through positive leadership. Now that it appears that that Holland House is unlikely to be restored it will be necessary to agree and fund a maintenance and refurbishment programme.

6. FORMAL RECREATION, SPORT AND PLAY

The hugely popular open space that provides space for cricket, tag rugby and football, athletics and other formal active games is also the venue for kite fliers, un-powered model aircraft and a whole host of other informal activities. This puts the turf under a huge amount of pressure and consequently large areas are closed to the public – particularly in early summer – in order to repair the damage and prepare it for the winter programme.

A Tennis remains extremely popular. The floodlighting of some courts has proven to be popular among users, and enabled the introduction of netball and basketball at night.

B The park's central reception office remains the focus for all bookings and consideration is being actively given for the introduction of an electronic system that in 2005/06 should enable the "on-line" booking of facilities in the park.

C The extremely popular toddlers play area near Ilchester Place entrance has recently been refurbished and some items of equipment have been replaced. Replacement of equipment on an as needed basis should continue.



D As this play-area is used in all weathers, a small shelter, of sympathetic design to the area, would be appreciated by parents and carers. The original strategy document noted the lack of shelter available in the park as a whole. However the colonnade and new café do provide some cover.

E The large playground constructed in 2003 has proven extremely popular and arguably the benchmark against which all others in the borough are being measured (rather unfairly!). Shelter is provided for the parents / carers in this area. The adjoining toddlers' area is currently kept separate from the main playground on account of its belonging to the One o'clock Club – a non-parks team managed facility. This needs urgent resolution so that at times of peak use (weekends) families are able to make full use of all facilities in the park. The new Borough Play Strategy (expected in late 2005) will contain more specific proposals for resolution.



F Walking and jogging, Tai Chi and other fitness programmes continue to grow in popularity in the park and should be encouraged.

G Of concern is the number of under-regulated coaches operating in the park offering anything from tennis coaching to personal fitness training. There is a case here for insisting that all such activities are regulated – particularly where children are concerned and this could be done through the Grounds Maintenance Sports Development programme.

7. ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Arts and Entertainment are currently mainly managed through the Education Department. This creates difficulties and at times conflicting objectives that need resolution through perhaps more empathetic and closer management than at present.

A The hall facilities that rebuilding the House would have provided are no longer a consideration.

B The annual opera season will continue under canvas – a new one is due in 2006 – and this important feature of the summer will continue to provide a programme of opera in the park.

C The future needs of the opera (such as an expanding space requirement for catering concessions in order to improve its financial viability) need to be carefully weighed so as to not be seen as an intrusion on other summer activities in the park.

D Alfresco cultural activities in the centre of a west London park must not be allowed to dictate or censor the objectives of the public open space – but should rather be included to enrich the overall visitor experience.

E The temporary erection of an outdoor auditorium opera in the park for the opera may possibly be used to introduce particularly children to a wider programme of artistic and cultural activities.

F A number of requests continue to be received each year to hold brass band concerts in the park. Consideration may be given to this popular and traditional public entertainment. The North Lawn may be a suitable location for this occasional feature.



G Un-amplified music by both individual and small groups of musicians is proving a popular amenity on the London Underground. In summer consideration should be given for licensed “buskers” to play in select corners of the park as well as a programme of alfresco concerts under the colonnade by established musicians such as those currently held weekly in St Mary Abbotts’ Church at lunchtime.

H Sculpture continues to be both a popular as well as at times a controversial feature of the park and the use of the Napoleon Garden as home for a modern monumental piece is appropriate. Other corners as well as vistas could in the future be improved by sensitive placement of appropriate pieces to broaden the cultural richness of the park. Temporary exhibitions of sculpture should continue to be encouraged.

I The Ice House is managed exclusively by the Education Department as a gallery for local artists. This should continue.

J Poetry remains un-represented in the park and consideration should be given to the introduction of a Poetry seat with regularly changed poem as in Islington's Battishill Street Gardens or Gunnersbury Park.

K Commercial entertainment – either for the general public or a corporate (private) clientele - is a potent source of income for the park and although not previously encouraged in Holland Park, this will need careful and judicious consideration so as to help balance the future financial needs of the park on the one hand but not by over-intrusion detract from the primary functions of the park as a public open space. There will need also to be a balance between charitable events and those put on for entrepreneurial benefit.



8. SECURITY AND SAFETY

A safe environment for all: statistically, there is less crime against the person in parks than on our streets or any other form of public open space – and this is particularly true of Holland Park. Nonetheless, there is, as a consequence of banner headline press coverage, a public perception of our parks as being increasingly unsafe places and the wrongly-held perceptions of the adjoining Holland Walk footpath continue to over-flow into the park.

A While it is true that there are sites in the Borough where there may be higher levels of vandalism, problems of public drinking, drug-taking or prostitution, any over statement of these challenges is totally misleading and the net effect is to reduce the number of people who feel able to freely use our open spaces. This results in parks ceasing to be a resource that is equally accessible to all.

B The "lack of presence of people" and the "presence of disorder" are two of the key preconditions for crime and the fear of crime (Cambridge Institute of Criminology). This is currently addressed in Holland Park by the presence of the Parks Police – however their peripatetic role has recently been extended to cover all of the borough and specific events such as the opera can restrict their ability to undertake foot patrols as they attend to the local demands of the event.

C Designing out crime is a not feasible option and future improvements in this direction will need to focus on higher visibility of the Parks and Metropolitan Police and Community Support Officers.

D Dog walkers continue to be a significant and regular constituent group. They contribute significantly to the perception of the park being a well-used place, act as the unofficial eyes of the Parks Police and park management in the event of something not being quite in order and are an unofficial deterrent to anti-social behaviour. Conversely they are a source of unwelcome animal detritus on footpaths, intimidating to many – particularly young – users of the park and not seen particularly favourably by many park users. However, like or loathe them, they are in the park and will remain so. There is a need however to balance the needs of the dog walkers (who are not always the owners of the hounds they walk) with the wider group of users and a policy needs developing that reconciles the legitimate pleasure of dog walkers with the ability of the non-dog walkers' free access to all facilities: access by dogs to the area surrounding the café must be reviewed in particular.

E Horse riders are occasional visitors to the park and their visits should be considered and managed in a similar manner to that of dogs. Horses unfortunately are capable of causing considerable additional damage to turf as well as to footpaths.

F Cyclists are forbidden under the existing bye-laws of the park – yet enforcement of the policy is both impractical and at variance with wider sustainable transport policies of government, the Mayor of London and the Council. The Parks Police patrol on bicycles and Council officers are being encouraged to follow suit...but the public remains discouraged from doing so. This needs urgent re-appraisal and a move to the American system that gives pedestrians right of way and consideration on public footpaths should be evaluated.

H Litigation is becoming an increasingly heavy burden on local authorities and in setting out future spending plans both in the wider Parks Strategy and management plans of the park, it will be necessary to ensure that Holland Park remains amongst other things, a safe place to visit (personal security), to walk through (footpaths), to play (play grounds, courts and fields), to eat and drink (restaurant and café food hygiene) and make full use of all amenities (toilets, offices).

I The Parks Police service is based in Holland Park but regularly patrols the other sites using their vehicles. They also monitor the CCTV cameras in other parks from their base in Holland Park. There are 11 Parks police officers, 2 sergeants and one inspector. The parks police enforce the byelaws and they maintain a good relationship with park users.



APPENDIX ONE: The way forward

February / March 2005	Public consultation via focus groups on the wider Parks Strategy and Play Strategy - done
April / May	Public consultation on the Parks Strategy (draft) - done
September / October	Review of the other strategies and comments received from the public consultation: Arts Strategy Community Safety Strategy Local Development Frame-work Parks Strategy (draft) Play Strategy (draft) Sports Strategy
December	Revision of Part Three – Taking Holland Park Beyond 2006 - produced
January 2006	Implementation of “Part Three (a) – Taking Holland Park Beyond 2006”
July 2006	Green Flag retained
March 2007	Revised Local Biodiversity Action Plan (2008-2012)
March 2007	Woodland Management Plan for Holland Park
July 2007	Green Flag retained

APPENDIX TWO: Management Plans & Record

AREA	ISSUE	PROPOSED TIME-TABLE	LEAD	RESULTS
LANDSCAPE:	Assessment of plant species	2005 on	Head Gardener, Contract Manager	This is continuous.
	Reviewing recycling options	2005 on	Contract Manager, Departmental Recycling team	100 per cent of the green waste is recycled in the park.
	Increased use of Holland Park nursery	2005 on	Leisure Services Manager (Parks); Quadron Contract Manager; Contract Manager	The benches in the Nursery were replaced in February 2008. Now replaced they are utilised more and Cyclamen is grown along with hanging baskets.
	Improved bedding schemes	2005 on	Contract Officer; Head Gardener	The Council and the Contractor work in partnership to improve the bedding schemes year on year.
	Memorial Book for donations	2007	Leisure Services Manager (Parks);	A Memorial book was ordered in

			Cemeteries Manager	December 2007 and is now on display in Holland Park reception.
THE CENTRE	Review of area adjoining the Belvedere and Napoleon Garden	2006	Contract Manager;	Pleached <i>Tilia</i> sp. hornbeam trees donated by the friends were installed in 2007 to support the framework and extend the arches.
	Re-consider the proposed "Five Senses Garden"	2010	Leisure Services Manager	
	Investigation into "remontant" variety of Iris	2008	Contract Officer; Head Gardener	Iris were planted in 2009. Four beds in the Iris Garden have been planted with 'remontant' Iris.
	Stable yard / café area – options for change	2007/08	Contract Officer; Projects Manager	New lighting was installed Feb/March 2008
THE SOUTH	Earls Court gate entrance improvements	2006/07	Leisure Services Manager (Parks); Head Gardener.	Improvements to Earls Court Gate entrance were carried out in 2006

				with assistance from the friends.
	Hedge row planting along eastern boundary of field	2007	Ecology Manager; Contract Manager; Head Gardener	With assistance from the Friends native hedgerow planting was carried out in 2006.
THE NORTH	Replacement of the wooden fence	2007/08	Projects team	The woodland fencing is maintained annually.
	Finalising of Lord Holland Pond project and planting	2006	Contract Manager.	This was carried out in 2007.
	Relocation of enclosure fencing	2005 on	Contract Manager; Ecology Manager	
	Woodland Management Plan	2007	Ecology Manager; Contract Manager.	A Draft Woodland Management Plan was put in place in 2007.
	Improved management of path margins	2003 on	Ecology Manager; Contract Manager	Continuous.
INTERPRETATION /VISITOR MANAGEMENT	Mapping of pressure points and pedestrian flows	2008	Leisure Services Manager; Projects Manager; Planning officers	

	Interpretation of the park – boards	2007 on	Leisure Services Manager; Parks Development Officer	Signage has been referred to the Cabinet member and is under review due to new corporate guidelines.
	Review of directional signage and map conflicts	2007	Leisure Services Manager / Ecology Manager.	As above.
	History trail research	2010	Leisure Services Development Officer (Parks)	
	Celebration of links with the Dahlia	2010	Leisure Services Development Officer (Parks)	
	Review the sale of items relevant to the history or ecology of the park	2008	Ecology Manager; Quadron Contract Manager	Items made from storm damaged trees have been sold in the park on open days.
	Improved signage for people with disabilities	2007/08	Leisure Services Manager	Signage has been referred to the Cabinet member and is under review due to new corporate

				guidelines.
ECOLOGY AND WILDLIFE	Woodland margin development	2004 on (commenced already)	Ecology Manager	Continuous
	Hedge-row development	2006 / 07	Ecology Manager; Contract Manager	Continuous

	Woodland Management Plan and consideration of the introduction of Tamworth pigs	2007/08	Ecology Manager; Contract Manager	As mentioned above a Draft Woodland Management plan is now in place.
	Continued development of the north enclosure and ponds	2003 on (commenced already)	Ecology Manager	Continuous
	Development of the woodland north east of the Petanque area	2006 on	Ecology Manager	The Draft Woodland Management Plan covers this.
	Development of a tree planting policy for the whole park	2007	Contracts Manager; Ecology Manager	The Draft Woodland Management Plan covers this.
	Introduce honey bees into Holland Park	2009	Contracts Manager; Ecology manager	This project is underway and 22lbs of honey were successfully extracted in autumn 2009.
BUILDINGS AND INFRASTRUCTURE	Review of building management and use	2009/10	Head of Leisure; Head of Conservation	

	Improvements to the café	2005	Head of Leisure; Projects Manager.	New lighting is being installed in Feb/march 2008.
	Review of path and roadway surfacing	2006 on	Leisure Services Manager; Contract Manager; Projects Manager	This will be covered in 'ParkScape' a guide for the parks that is currently being worked on.
	Development of the annual buildings maintenance programme in response to the Cobb Report	2004 on	Projects Manager	Continuous.
	Continued repair and preservation of the Italian tiles	2006	Projects Manager	This has been achieved with the assistance of the Friends.
	Consider re-opening of the colonnade walkway	2006	Leisure Services Manager; Inspector of Parks Police.	This has been achieved for Open Days.
	Toilet refurbishment	2007	Projects Manager	The toilets were refurbished in 2007.
	North perimeter	2008 on	Projects Manager	Works to

	wall strengthening and associated works			strengthen the wall began in 2009.
	Complete the new bore-hole water ring-mains around the park	2006 on	Projects Manager.	In 2006 the northern ring main was installed and in 2007 the southern ring main was installed.
FORMAL RECREATION, SPORT and PLAY	Electronic booking system	2007	Head of Leisure; Quadron Contract Manager.	Electronic booking software is now in place.
	Replacement and repair of equipment	2003 on (commenced already)	Contract Manager; Projects Manager	In January 2008 further works were carried out.
	Provision of additional shelter	2006	Projects Manager	
	Linking the adjoining play areas	2007/08	Head of Leisure	In January 2008 works were being carried out.
	Developing programmes of sports, games etc	2004 on	Head of Leisure; LPSA officer; Quadron Contract Manager.	A new sports outreach team is now in place.
	Regulation of coaching activities in the park	2006/07	Head of Leisure; Quadron Contract Manager	Ongoing
ARTS AND	Assessing and	2006 on	Head of Leisure;	A new canopy was

ENTERTAINMENT	addressing future needs of the opera		Opera Management Team; Leisure Services Manager;	installed in time for the 2007 season.
	Broadening the scope of cultural activities in the park	2006 on	Head of Leisure; Head of Adult Education; Leisure Services Manager	Various Arts activities have been taking place in the park such as 'Sing in the Park'. A new opera canopy was also installed.
	Introduction of a poetry seat	2008	Head of Adult Education; Leisure Services Manager.	We now have two poetry seats being piloted elsewhere in the borough.
	Development of commercial entertainment	2007 on	Head of Leisure; Leisure Services Manager.	An Events Strategy is currently being drafted.
SECURITY AND SAFETY	Higher visibility of Parks Police and associated services	2005 on	Inspector of Parks Police.	New corporate initiatives now exist with Met. Police.
	Development of a dog policy	2006	Head of Leisure; Leisure Services Manager; Inspector of Parks Police.	New by-laws were introduced in January 2007.
	Development of	2006	Head of Leisure;	

	policy on horse riding in the park		Leisure Services Manager; Inspector of Parks Police	
	Review of cycling in the park	2008	Head of Leisure; Leisure Services Manager; Inspector of Parks Police	This was completed in 2007- there is to be no change.
	Review of safety – risk assessments for public use of the park	2006-07	Leisure Services Manager; Quadron Contract Manager	Ongoing.

APPENDIX THREE:

Summary of report setting out the ecological importance of Holland Park

Holland Park (M131)

Grid Reference = TQ 248 797

Area = 21.74 ha

2002 Survey Reference; 12001/19-39

Planning Status; Metropolitan Open Land, Conservation Area, Area of Metropolitan Importance, Site of Nature Conservation Importance.

Major Habitats; Non-native-broadleaved woodland, native broadleaved woodland, planted shrubbery, scattered trees, amenity grassland, semi-improved neutral grassland, standing water.

Justification for Designation; Holland Park comprises one of the larger areas of semi-natural habitat within central London and is important for its populations of mammals (including bats), birds and breeding amphibians. The site includes large areas of woodland, an uncommon habitat in inner London. .

Description; Holland Park contains a complex mosaic of habitats that have in recent years been managed with ecology in mind. There is an Ecology Centre within the park which oversees environmental education and provides a base for ecological management of the park.

Holland Park's current habitats originate from the creation of a woodland park on open pasture in the 18th and 19th centuries. Following a long period of neglect, the park was acquired by London County Council in the 1950's and later transferred to Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, who introduced more ecologically based management in the 1980's.

The current woodland habitats comprise a number of enclosures of varying character. During a period of neglect much the woodland park succeeded to an elm/sycamore dominated woodland. Dutch elm and sooty bark disease greatly reduced both species possibly creating a more open, ecologically interesting woodland structure. Elsewhere there are areas dominated by beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) or Turkey (*Quercus cerris*) and pedunculate oak (*Q robur*). The shrub layer generally comprises suckering elm, young sycamore and holly (*Ilex aquifolium*). The holly can become very dense in places and

the shrub layer is shading out all ground-flora in a number of enclosures. Further commonly found species included bramble, elder and dog rose (*Rosa canina*). The ground-flora is very variable, depending on level of disturbance and level of shade cast by canopy and/or shrub layer. Widespread species include bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*), nettle, ivy (*Hedera helix*), wood avens (*Geum urbanum*), red campion (*Silene dioica*), lords and ladies (*Arum maculatum*). More localised species include male fern and probably introduced foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*), lily of the valley (*Convallaria majalis*) and sowbread (*Cyclamen hederifolium*). The woodland park reportedly supports an excellent assemblage of over 300 species of fungi.

The wildlife enclosure, path-sides and arboretum include more open vegetation where semi-improved neutral grassland (some sown with wild flower mixtures) grades into tall herb. Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), cocks foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), annual meadow grass (*Poa annua*) and perennial rye grass (*Lolium perenne*) mix with greater birds foot trefoil (*Lotus pedunculatus*), tufted vetch (*Vicia cracca*), meadow vetchling (*Lathyrus pratensis*), musk mallow (*Malva moschata*), hedge bedstraw (*Galium mollugo*) and ox-eye daisy (*Leucantheum vulgare*). The wildlife enclosure additionally includes pignut (*Conopodium majus*), upright hedge parsley (*Torilis japonica*), stone parsley (*Sison amomum*) and three clumps of wood millet (*Milium effusum*).

There are number of water features within the park including two very well planted wildlife ponds within the wildlife enclosure. The larger pond contains bogbean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*), yellow iris, water mint, gypsywort, lesser spearwort (*Ranunculus flammula*), common reed, purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*), spiked water milfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*) and a little least duckweed (*Lemna minuta*). The reeds and open water supported a family of moorhens. The second pond is partially dried up and contains a dense stand of common reed and common reedmace with water mint and purple loosestrife. The Borough Amphibian and Reptile Survey 1995 reported common toads, common frogs and smooth newts from the wildlife ponds, common frogs from the Kyoto Pond and both common toads and common frogs from Lord Holland's Pond. Lord Holland's Pond contained 15 pairs of common frogs and 140 clumps of frogspawn indicating that Holland Park was the most important common frog breeding ground in the Borough.

Around the remains of Holland House, there are formal gardens with planted shrubbery and amenity lawns and further expanses of amenity grassland towards the south of the site and near the site entrances.

The current survey recorded 12 bird species, a variety of invertebrates (field grasshoppers, speckled wood, small white, common darter and blue tailed damselfly). The Borough Bird Survey 2001 recorded 34 species, 27 breeding or possibly breeding. This included species uncommon in central London such as sparrowhawk, great spotted woodpecker and tawny owl. The Park also supports large numbers of breeding blue tits, great tits and wrens as well as smaller numbers of song and mistle thrush, blackcap, chiffchaff, goldcrest, long tailed tit and coal tit.

The Borough Bat survey indicated that Holland Park is an extremely important site for bats with brown long eared bats and pipistrelles seen feeding in the park. The Borough Mammal survey 1997 highlights that a number of mammals are present within the park, including hedgehogs (indicated by droppings), domestic rabbits, foxes (the Fox Survey estimates four resident families), grey squirrel and wood mice. Additionally, there have been reports of brown rat and a feral ferret.

Data Sources; Borough Ecological Survey 1993, Borough Bat Survey 1994, Amphibian and Reptile Borough Survey 1995, Mammal Borough Survey (Excluding Bats) 1997, Fox Survey 1998, Borough Breeding Bird Survey 2001, Borough Ecological Survey 2002.



The future of Holland Park?

APPENDIX FOUR:

A brief history of Holland Park

'May taste respect thee and may fashion spare'

For most of its long history Holland Park was the private estate of a noble family and it was a nineteenth century guest who scratched this line on one of the windows of Holland House.

The property was bought by the London County Council in 1952 for about a quarter of a million pounds and transferred to the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea from the Greater London Council in 1986.

That a private estate should survive in one of the most populous parts of London until the middle of the twentieth century is in itself exceptional and there is a fascinating history attached to Holland House and Park. This is set out at length in the Earl of Ilchester's two volumes 'Chronicles of Holland House' (Murray, 1973) but a brief outline is helpful.

The first connection of the Holland family with the property was in the early years of the seventeenth century when the house was built for Sir Walter Cope. Originally called Cope's Castle, the house became known as Holland House when Sir Walter's son-in-law, Sir Henry Rich, was created Earl of Holland in 1624. The new Earl made considerable additions and alterations to the house until he came to an untimely end on the gallows in 1649 as a Royalist supporter during the civil War.

Following this the house was confiscated for some time and used by some of the Parliamentary leaders. Tradition has it that Fairfax made the house a Puritan headquarters and Cromwell is reputed to have met his deaf General Ireton in the grounds so that he could discuss State matters without being overheard. The house, however, was later restored to Lady Holland and, once reinstated, she encouraged the private performance of plays there in defiance of Puritan enactments.

The history of the house is well documented and the next two centuries saw a brilliant stream of visitors. Robert, second Earl of Holland, became fifth Earl of Warwick in 1673 and he made Holland House his principal residence. It was through his daughter-in-law, Charlotte, that the house acquired the first of its literary associations for, after the death of her first husband, she married Joseph Addison.

During the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries Holland House passed through the hands of various tenants but it was not until the property was leased by Henry Fox in 1746 that the house regained some of its former importance. Henry was elevated to the peerage in 1763 and shortly after he bought the property outright. His famous son, Charles James Fox, the orator and statesman, spent his childhood there and frequently visited the house, when, under his nephew the third Lord Holland, it became a great centre of social and political life. Sydney Smith, writing to Lady Holland, remarked 'I do not believe all Europe can produce as much knowledge, wit and worth as passes in and out of your door under the nose of Thomas the porter'. The great days of Holland House lasted until the middle of the nineteenth century. The heir then dying without issue, the estate was transferred by his widow to the fifth Earl of Ilchester, a member of the elder branch of the Fox family. The Ilchester family continued to occupy the house until the outbreak of the Second World War.

The original Jacobean mansion was built, so it is thought, by John Thorpe but later additions were many and various. In time these piece-meal extensions seriously weakened the whole structure and the house was constantly having to be repaired and buttressed. Considerable alterations were carried out during the nineteenth century including the formation of the Garden Ballroom in the former seventeenth-century stables and in 1874 the house was thoroughly renovated. Much of the fabric, however was in a bad condition and during the Second World War the property was bombed. The house was left largely derelict until the London County Council purchased the Holland Estate from the Earl of Ilchester in 1952. The condition of the building was such that after much heart searching it was found practicable to preserve only the ground story and arcades of the central portion, the damaged east wing and the impressive Portland stone gateway popularly attributed to Inigo Jones. In 1959 the east wing was restored to form part of the new King George VI Memorial Youth Hostel. The central section of the old house was restored more slowly and, in 1964, it became the site of an exciting new venture by the LCC – an open-air theatre. The grounds of the estate are no less notable than the house. The 54½ acres of the present park are only a part of the original estate but most of the distinctive features of the grounds have been preserved.

One of the most celebrated of these features is the unusual and charming Dutch Garden. Adjoining the house, the garden extends to the former ballroom, now the Belvedere restaurant. It was first laid out in 1812 by Buonaiuti, the 'factotum' and librarian of the

Holland family and was originally known as the Portugal Garden. During the nineteenth century, however, England's relations with Portugal deteriorated, and so the name was changed. The garden consists of a formal and geometrical arrangement of flower-beds, bordered with box and separated by straight paths. Along its length runs an old brick wall covered with creepers. Possibly the only difference between the present garden and the original lay-out is that the paths have been widened to make room for mothers with prams to pass each other. In one of the alcoves is Rogers' Seat on which an inscription by the third Lord Holland commemorates his friend, Samuel Rogers, the poet and banker.

Adjoining the Dutch Garden and next to the arcades is the Iris Garden with its fountain and pool. It is in this part that in the early nineteenth century the first dahlias are said to have been planted by Lady Holland who probably introduced the flower into England. Floodlights has been installed in the whole of this garden area and an attractive floodlit walk is open until later every evening.

In the corner of the Iris Garden there is a circular building dating back to the eighteenth century which is thought to have been an ice house. Over the years it became overgrown but it was restored in 1973/74.

Leading from the North Lawn to the woodlands is now the Acer Walk (2004) but which previously was the Azalea Walk and before that the Rose Walk - bordered with Caroline Testout roses. This was first planted about 1894 by Lady Ilchester but none of the original roses survived. Azaleas were tried as a replacement for the shaded out roses but failed due to adverse soil conditions. The Acer (Rose) Walk leads into an avenue of trees planted by Lady Holland in 1876, many of the original limes still surviving. Romantic legend ascribes a ghost to the avenue, said to be a female figure which appeared only to women members of the Holland family. According to Aubrey (*Aubrey's Miscellanies* 1696), Lady Diana Rich and her sister Lady Isabella Thinne, daughters of the Earl of Holland, both met the ghost which seemed to be their own apparition and both died shortly afterwards. A third daughter, Mary, wife of the first Earl of Breadalbane was said to have suffered a similar fate (*Holland House - princess Marie Liechtenstein* 1875).

The woodlands, known in the seventeenth century as 'the Wildernesses' stretch over 28 acres of the northern part of the park - the largest area of 'natural' woodland in central London. Fenced paths lead through the woods which contain a great variety of oaks, birches, limes, chestnuts and cedars. Around these each spring bloom crocuses, daffodils, bluebells and rhododendrons; azaleas

also abound in this area. Traces of the former Japanese Garden planned and established by Lord Ilchester still exist in part of the woodland. Some impressive yuccas remain as well as many fine magnolias, wisterias and other exotic plants.

Many interesting bird species have been observed in the woodlands of Holland Park. During 1976 a total of thirty-one were observed including the tawny owl and the great spotted woodpecker. See also the species listed in Appendix 3. Chilean flamingos, demoiselle cranes, crowned cranes, red jungle fowl have also been introduced at various times into the woodland area – but fallen foul of the fox. However, a familiar sight and sound still is that of the many peacocks strutting around in the proximity of the North Lawn and Yucca Lawn.

The first part of the property to be opened to the public in October 1952 was the woodland. In due course the remainder of the park was made available for public use and gradually more and more new features were introduced. Two new entrances were constructed in Abbotsbury Road and in the road called Holland Park. The first of these is a vehicle entrance leading directly into the car park. The other, for pedestrians only, opens into a 'sun-trap' area with seats and flowers from where a path leads through the woods. Another wrought iron gateway forms an imposing entrance from Kensington High Street.

Several statues are permanently on display in the grounds. The first of these, at the junction of the Rose Walk and the pond is a memorial to the third Lord Holland by G F Watts and J E Boehm. Of the others, one, the Boy and the Bear Cubs by J M Swan is on loan from the Tate Gallery and is sited close to the refreshment house. Another, a female statue that was once at the western end of the Dutch Garden, is by Eric Gill purchase by the LCC and now in the cafe. Inside the Orangery are the bronze replicas of The Wrestlers' two Greek statues found in Herculaneum. Milo in the Dutch Garden was donated by the friends in 2003 and in 2004 an Epstein from the borough's collection was added to the café.

The Holland Park Court Theatre, opened in 1964, and has evolved into the Holland Park Opera season from June to August.

(Acknowledgements to GLC doc. Holland Park –19147/4.79/10m)

English Heritage Register of Parks and Open Spaces

Holland Park was registered Grade II on 10 January 1987.
Reference number PG1805.



APPENDIX FIVE:

THE PARK'S GREEN FLAG AND BEYOND

In 2001 Holland Park was awarded its first Green Flag and has continued to enjoy the national recognition associated with that award ever since.

The Green Flag scheme is the national "benchmark" for parks and green spaces that meet the scheme's criteria to a sufficiently high standard and which have a site-specific management plan.

These criteria require the park to demonstrate both on paper and by inspection:

- That it is a welcoming place
- That it is a healthy, safe and secure place
- That it is a well-maintained and clean space
- That it is a sustainable environment with sustainable management practices
- That Conservation and Heritage are intrinsic within the management
- That there is community involvement
- That the park is well marketed and promoted
- That the park is in possession of a management plan or strategy

The park's future management will continue to be directed by these criteria as we take the park from 2006 to 2016.

