

Update April 2021:

SCRUTINY REVIEW ACTION PLAN: Improving health, environmental quality, economic and social outcomes through Housing Open Spaces

Recommendation 1: Drawing on intelligence, the Council produces an up to date GIS map of housing open spaces and encourage THHF to sample and assess the accessibility of sites in wards with open space deficiencies identifying any improvement options.			
Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline	Update April 2021
1.1 THHF to support the council to produce an up to date GIS map of housing open spaces (housing amenity land)	Divisional Director, Housing and Regeneration (LBTH)	March 2020	The desktop exercise to map housing open space across the borough has been delayed due to other priorities, although the exercise has been completed for the Whitechapel area (this was done as part of Public Health's Communities Driving Change project). An internal resource has now been identified to undertake this activity and ensure that the information is saved as a layer on the GIS mapping system. In addition to identifying open space on council-owned housing estates, which are managed by THH, there will be liaison with THHF members to gather information on open space on RP-managed estates. The revised target date for this action is June 2021
1.2 Using the projected levels of open space deficiencies by ward (Open Space Strategy 2017-2027), the council to map and identify wards with housing open space deficiencies	Divisional Director, Housing and Regeneration (LBTH)	June 2020	Once the mapping exercise is completed in full, it will be possible to identify areas of the borough where there were open space deficiencies and areas which would benefit from improvement. The revised target date for this action is August 2021
1.3 THHF to deliver a pilot project to explore the accessibility of housing open space sites (sample) in wards with the greatest open space deficiencies identifying improvement options (including the unlocking of sites where this is considered the most suitable option following stakeholder consultations).	Divisional Director, Housing and Regeneration (LBTH)	October 2021	Once the mapping exercise is completed in full, it will be possible to identify areas of the borough where there were open space deficiencies and areas which would benefit from improvement. Revised target date to be confirmed and dependent on completion of Actions 1.1 and 1.2.

Update April 2021:

SCRUTINY REVIEW ACTION PLAN: Improving health, environmental quality, economic and social outcomes through Housing Open Spaces

Recommendation 2 (a): The Council to report back to the committee on new developments and their compliance with planning policies (below):

- Policy D.SG3: Health impact assessments
- Policy D.DH8: Amenity
- Policy D.H3: Housing standards and quality
- Policy S.SH1: Delivering high quality design
- Policy D.DH2: Attractive streets, spaces, and public realm
- Policy S.CF1: Supporting community facilities
- Policy D.ES3: Urban greening and biodiversity
- Policy D.OWS3: Open space and green grid networks
- Policy D.DH6: Tall buildings
- Policy D.ES2: Air quality

Recommendation 2 (b) The Council to prioritise and encourage underutilised spaces to be co-designed and transformed to deliver a balance between competing priorities

Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline	Update April 2021
<p>2.1 Monitoring of policies in the council’s adopted Local Plan relating to the delivery of open spaces, including those in housing developments, where these are publicly accessible, and through the decision-making process, ensure these are to a high quality. And in the draft Local Plan (anticipated for adoption in late 2019) investigate further indicators that would allow us to further monitor this in more detail. This would be reported in the Annual Monitoring Report and to Housing Scrutiny.</p>	<p>Adele Maher (LBTH)</p>	<p>17/18 AMR (March 2020)</p> <p>18/19 AMR (March 2021)</p>	<p>The Local Plan was adopted in January 2020. The relevant planning policies are monitored as part of the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR).</p>

Update April 2021:

SCRUTINY REVIEW ACTION PLAN: Improving health, environmental quality, economic and social outcomes through Housing Open Spaces

<p>2.2 Organised by the councils Members support service, members of the Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub Committee and Strategic Development Committee to carry out a site visit of a recently completed housing development, with feedback reported back to the Strategic Planning Team and THHF.</p>	<p>Adele Maher (LBTH)</p>	<p>February 2020</p>	<p>Due to the pandemic, it has not been possible to arrange a site visit on a recently completed housing development by members of the H&RSSC and Strategic Development Committees. This is an action which may be carried forward by both Committees in their work plans for the new municipal year, if it is safe and appropriate to do so, given the current National Government restrictions.</p>
<p>2.3 The council's Strategic Planning service to report the findings of the High-Density Living Survey and next steps to the THHF Executive and the Housing Scrutiny Sub-Committee</p>	<p>Adele Maher (LBTH)</p>	<p>December 2019</p>	<p>The findings of the High-Density Living Survey were presented to the H&RSSC at the meeting held on 21st January 2020. This action is complete.</p>
<p>2.4 The council to explore with stakeholder engagement the co-designing and transformation of underutilised spaces on council land to deliver a balance between competing priorities, encouraging and engaging RPs to do the same, reporting progress back to the committee.</p> <p>By March 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement on environmental improvements on Locksley Estate • Creation of a project park on Shelmerdine close. • Co-designing land formerly occupied by the Berner TRA, to deliver a community garden 	<p>Jane Abraham & Rupert Brandon (LBTH)</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locksley Estate environmental improvements: The design of the estate improvement works was agreed in February 2020, a budget for the works has been approved and the procurement of a landscape contractor is due to commence shortly. The current project timetable estimates the start date to be July 2021 and the works are likely to take between six and eight months to complete. The estimated completion date is March 2022 • Shelmerdine Close pocket park: Poplar Harca is seeking funding through the School Streets programme to create a pocket park alongside St Pauls School • Community garden on site of former Berner TRA building: The community garden proposals have been developed through co-design, a budget for delivery of the scheme has been approved and a contractor is being appointed. <p>The council has carried out extensive community engagement</p>

Update April 2021:

SCRUTINY REVIEW ACTION PLAN: Improving health, environmental quality, economic and social outcomes through Housing Open Spaces

			for the Locksley and Berner sites, but for the land owned by Poplar Harca, the consultation process has yet to start.
2.5 Public Health to lead and explore the expansion of the communities driving change programme working with landlords and residents to co-design open spaces, and continue to identify sites for outdoor gyms	Somen Banerjee (LBTH)	Ongoing	The last year has seen joint working in partnership with colleagues in regeneration and with HAC Capital Development Officer to clarify options on way forward now and in future. Two projects and a future way of working through LIF and AAPs and supporting consultation.
2.6 Communities driving change programme - Public Health to report back on progress and outputs / outcomes achieved to the Community Involvement Network.	Somen Banerjee (LBTH)	March 2020 & ongoing	Monthly presence at the network has enabled narration of progress made- with an emphasis on role of Covid response and recovery.

Recommendation 3: The Council to encourage and support THHF to develop a good practice guide to achieve quality open spaces – to deliver health, environmental quality, economic and social outcomes. Comprising of priorities to: - Green communities, roofs and balconies and support (incl. grants,

Update April 2021:

SCRUTINY REVIEW ACTION PLAN: Improving health, environmental quality, economic and social outcomes through Housing Open Spaces

tools and revenue funding (where possible)) community growing - Improving access, encouraging usage and multiuse facilities on open spaces - Eco friendly and environmentally grounds maintenance and intelligence based planting			
Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline	Update April 2021
<p>3.1 THHF to develop a collective good practice guide for community greening and quality open spaces.</p>	Chair of THHF	June 2020 & Ongoing	<p>A new Chair of THHF was appointed at the end of 2019 and before this and the other actions in the plan attributed to the Chair could be picked up, organisations represented in the THHF were managing their organisations in response to the COVID19 pandemic. Consequently, their focus over the past year was on responding to the pandemic and the actions assigned within this plan would not, given the pandemic and subsequent public health restrictions, have been easily delivered.</p> <p>The recommendations in this plan, (3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.6, 4.1, 4.4, and 5.1), are areas which can be delivered through the Community Involvement Network and Public Realm subgroups. The Chair of THHF will ask the Chairs of both these sub- groups to consider and set new timeframes for taking these actions forward. Once new timelines for delivery, are agreed (as we emerge in accordance with the Government's Lockdown exit strategy) this will be reported back to the H&RSSC.</p>
<p>3.2 Sharing through the public realm / benchmarking subgroup good practices in grounds maintenance procurement and delivery with a focus on environmental, economic and community benefits</p>	Chair of THHF	June 2020 & Ongoing	See comment update on Action 3.1
<p>3.3 The council to share with THHF its procedure for the Inspection And Maintenance Of Play Areas, presenting this to the benchmarking subgroup and training staff on its inspection regime as</p>	Chair of THHF & Matthew Twohig (LBTH)	June 2020	See comment update on Action 3.1

Update April 2021:

SCRUTINY REVIEW ACTION PLAN: Improving health, environmental quality, economic and social outcomes through Housing Open Spaces

required.			
<p>3.4 The THHF CIN to agree the best method to establish a platform for community greening in the borough, publishing the good practice guide and developing a map of community growing projects and contacts.</p>	Chair of THHF	June 2020 & ongoing	See comment update on Action 3.1
<p>3.5 The council's Biodiversity officer to attend the Public Realm Subgroup to re-introduce the Local Biodiversity action Plan and its priorities, encourage support and regular engagement (2-3 reps) with the Biodiversity Steering Group.</p>	John Archer (LBTH)	March 2020	<p>As a result of the Covid-19 crisis and its impacts on both the council and its partner's priorities, the Local Biodiversity action plan has not been reintroduced to the Public Real Subgroup. This is also in part due to the move away from face to face meetings in the interest of health and safety which has necessitated that meetings now take place virtually. In order to gain support and interest in the Local Biodiversity action plan, it will be much more effective when meetings resume face to face, when there are networking opportunities before/after meetings and in breaks, than through a virtual meeting.</p> <p>While meetings remain virtual, the officer has for this reason not looked to attend and present the plan. Once normal face to face meetings can resume, the officer will re-introduce the Local Biodiversity action plan and will pick up this action.</p>
<p>3.6 Through the THHF Public Realm Subgroup, each Landlord to nominate a key contact specialising on biodiversity matters to be added to the Council's biodiversity mailing list.</p>	Chair of THHF	March 2020	See comment update on Action 3.1

Update April 2021:

SCRUTINY REVIEW ACTION PLAN: Improving health, environmental quality, economic and social outcomes through Housing Open Spaces

<p>3.7 The Council's Sustainability team to explore through retrofitting, the greening of flat roofs of existing social housing stock, working with the THHF Executive.</p>	<p>Abdul Khan (LBTH) & Susmita Sen (THH)</p>	<p>March 2020</p>	<p>Tower Hamlets Homes (THH) have been working with the council's Biodiversity Officer on the feasibility of installing bio-solar roofs to some of the existing blocks managed by THH. Apart from the benefits of a green roof which will directly improve the thermal efficiency of the top floor dwellings, the use of solar panels will feed generated electricity directly into the communal block electrical supply benefiting all residents with reduced communal electricity service charges.</p> <p>Initially it is expected the council's available resources will allow for 6-8 bio-solar roofs to be installed when undertaking these at the same time a block is due to major works under the THH Better Neighbourhoods programme with the potential for some to be undertaken in 2021/22. THH in conjunction with the council are also exploring the feasibility to install bio-solar roofs as stand-alone projects where the existing roof is in very good condition</p>
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<p>Recommendation 4: The Tower Hamlets Housing Forum's Community Involvement Network supported by the Council to facilitate the delivery of projects that encourage community greening, growing and quality open spaces that deliver wide benefits.</p>			
<p>Action</p>	<p>Responsible Officer</p>	<p>Deadline</p>	<p>Update April 2021</p>
<p>4.1 The THHF Community Involvement Network to identify projects for all seasons (working</p>	<p>Chair of THHF</p>	<p>December 2020</p>	<p>See comment update on Action 3.1</p>

Update April 2021:

SCRUTINY REVIEW ACTION PLAN: Improving health, environmental quality, economic and social outcomes through Housing Open Spaces

with local residents, volunteers, organisations, schools, and charities - to engage the elderly, vulnerable, children, young people, and economically inactive in community greening and growing).			
4.2 The council's Housing Partnerships Team to co-ordinate submissions by THHF for community greening awards, including the Tower Hamlets in bloom awards, maximising bids in the innovation category.	Tracey St Hill(LBTH)	Ongoing	Covid19 put a complete halt on direct resident involvement in these types of initiatives although the CIN were circulated details of potential funding pots residents could apply for. It's timely that that this has been circulated again now as the sub groups are looking at developing the action plans for the year ahead so the CIN and Public Realm sub Group can revisit these points (4.2 and 4.3) in the coming financial year subject to resuming normal business as usual activities in late spring/ early summer.
4.3 The council's Housing Partnerships Team to support the THHF's Public Realm subgroup / Community Involvement Network to co-ordinate the entry of community greening bids, accreditations, and delivery of scrutiny outcomes.	Tracey St Hill (LBTH)	Ongoing	See comment for action 4.2
4.4 A community greening platform for residents, including information, advice and guidance, policies, procedures, duties, health and safety, licenses, and a map of community growing projects.	Chair of THH	Ongoing	See comment update on Action 3.1

Update April 2021:

SCRUTINY REVIEW ACTION PLAN: Improving health, environmental quality, economic and social outcomes through Housing Open Spaces

Recommendation 5: The THHF Community Involvement Network to widen the scope of its ‘food growing and managing a food garden training session’ to a broader development programme to cover community greening and growing (available to both residents and staff) comprising:

- **THHF good practice guide and sharing of good practices**
- **The Green flag awards for housing**
- **Intelligence based planting , enhancing biodiversity and green recycling**

Update April 2021:

SCRUTINY REVIEW ACTION PLAN: Improving health, environmental quality, economic and social outcomes through Housing Open Spaces

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits of friend's groups • Community greening and growing - policies, procedures, duties, health and safety, and licenses • Supporting a cottage industry and resident led social enterprises • Local employment initiatives in horticulture 			
Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline	Update April 2021
<p>5.1 Co-ordinated and facilitated by the THHF Community Involvement Network, the THHF resident training programme to extend its remit to comprise of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training for environmental teams on the green flag awards guidance for housing • Ongoing training to ensure intelligence-based planting and to enhance biodiversity (residents, TRA's and horticulture staff) • Training on the benefits of friend's groups, encouraging TRAs to take on the role • Borough wide training on the consolidated approach to community greening and growing - policies, procedures, duties, health and safety, and licenses • Sharing of good practices • Learning from successful organisations and experts in supporting local food growing, 	Chair of THHF	June 2020 & ongoing	See comment update on Action 3.1

Update April 2021:

SCRUTINY REVIEW ACTION PLAN: Improving health, environmental quality, economic and social outcomes through Housing Open Spaces

selling of those products at events and the creation of social enterprises. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The delivery of local employment initiatives in horticulture			
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