



Waterlow Park Trust Strategy

March 2022 V.10.0

To be read in conjunction with TAG Constitution, partnership agreement and handbook.

Waterlow Park Trust Guiding Principle

To maintain, preserve and enhance the Park

The gift of the Park by Sir Sydney Waterlow was to provide 'A Garden for the Gardenless'¹. Waterlow Park is first and foremost a park for the people of London to enjoy, especially those who may have limited access to their own private outdoor space.

Waterlow Park Trust Aims

- **Balancing Needs & Demands**
Balance human demands with the natural and conservation needs of the park.
- **Ecology & Bio-diversity**
Take account of anticipated environmental pressures, notably the challenge of climate change and what this means to biodiversity and park development.
- **Heritage**
Preserve and enhance key heritage features of the Park.²
- **Welcoming & Stimulating**
Provide an environment and range of activities that support and improve people's mental and physical wellbeing.
- **Inclusion, Access & Diversity of use**
Be inclusive and welcoming to all. Encourage a diverse range of opportunities for enjoyment of the park balancing the demands of different park users.
- **Sustainability**
Put sustainability at the heart of choices in terms of energy, materials and products.

¹ 39% of Camden residents do not have access to a private outdoor space (ONS Private outdoor space data 2020) This rises to 61% overall for Greater London (see http://www.wlgtf.org/garden_resource.html)

² Waterlow Park is a Heritage Park with listed features in a conservation area including key views of the London horizon - see 'Context' for detail.

- **Quality**
Ensure high standards of maintenance of infrastructure & soft landscaping (flora etc).
- **Funding & Resources**
Develop a secure funding mix working with the council and other partners.
- **Community Involvement & Future Management**
Harness the strengths of stakeholder groups, working in partnership to add value to the park by developing and celebrating all the park has to offer.

Action Plan 2022 - 2026

- Undertake **policy formulation and review** in all areas of activity³.
- Work on **financial sustainability** which should include fundraising as appropriate in collaboration with the Friends and others.
- Develop towards the goal of becoming a '**Zero Carbon Park**'
- Encourage **public engagement** with the Park through the Camden Parks, Friends, Lauderdale, Lux, TCV and other organisations involved in the Park
- Encourage the development of **cultural and artistic opportunities**

Implementation

The Trust strategy will be implemented through engagement between the Trust Advisory Group (TAG) with the Friends and other stakeholder groups using the tools and methods now in place, notably an online tracker and document sharing system. Implementation to be monitored through quarterly TAG meetings.

³ Existing Camden policies should only be subject to variance where decided to be necessary by TAG. If no policy exists TAG may also decide that none is required.

Context

The park

Waterlow Park is the largest Camden managed Park (11 hectares) in the borough of Camden, and is Grade II* listed. It has other listed elements separately registered,⁴ Waterlow Park is on the slopes of Highgate Hill next to historic Highgate cemetery and close to Hampstead Heath, Kenwood and a number of other green spaces. The park is on the eastern boundary of Camden with the London Boroughs of Islington, and Haringey.

The topography provides an opportunity for a variety of activities, visitor experiences and vistas. The topography also provides a unique challenge in reconciling and maintaining overall harmony between different 'zones' in the Park.⁵

Waterlow Park is a heritage Park, given to London as a 'garden for the gardenless' by Sir Sydney Waterlow. Its Trust status and history are important to recognise and celebrate as a jewel among the green spaces of London.

Lauderdale House set in the Park is an important heritage building, with a cafe and is a thriving events venue, Arts and Education Centre

Lux, an international arts agency specialising in moving image artists is based in the Waterlow Park Centre.

Two lodges are also within the Park. Both the Dartmouth Park and Swains Lane lodges are currently rented to private tenants thereby providing income to the Park once refurbishments costs are repaid.

The Park has varied flora and fauna. There are many trees framing views of the London skyline including modern landmarks such as the Shard and historic ones notably St Paul's Cathedral. The three ponds, wildlife and meadows contribute to the Park's semi-natural feel. There is also an orchard, hedged areas, a kitchen garden and a formal parterre garden as well as areas devoted to ornamental beds and borders. The park is a Site of Borough Grade

⁴ Statue of Sir Sydney Waterlow (1379135) – Grade II Listing
Waterlow Park (1000849) – Grade II* Park and Garden
Lauderdale House (1379128) – Grade II* Listing
Sundial to southwest of Lauderdale house (1379133) – Grade II
Garden steps to the south of Lauderdale house (1379130) – Grade II
Garden walls to the southwest of Lauderdale house (1379131) – Grade II
Sundial approximately 5m from south angle of Lauderdale House (1379132) – Grade II
Lodge at Swains Lane Entrance and attached railings (1379134) – Grade II
Entrance gates and walls to Lauderdale House adjoining Highgate Hill (1379129) – Grade II
Drinking water fountains (by infant playground, near tennis courts and in the wall of the Park on Highgate Hill)

⁵ See Maps

Importance for Nature Conservation and includes Amenity grassland⁶, Hedge, Planted shrubbery, Pond/lake, Ruderal, Scattered trees, Scrub, Semi-improved neutral grassland, Tall herbs, and Wet grassland habitats. The park has a number of specimen trees, which include some fine copper beeches (*Fagus sylvatica* var *purpurea*), maidenhair tree (*Ginkgo biloba*), Indian bean-tree (*Catalpa bignonioides*), oak (*Quercus* sp.), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Persian ironwood (*Parrotia persica*) and crack willow (*Salix fragilis*).

Sports, leisure and children's play are catered for with two play areas, tennis courts, multi-usage courts and a petanque court.

In 1971 Waterlow Park came under the ownership and management of the London borough of Camden, having previously been held by the London County Council. The council is the sole trustee of the charity 'Waterlow Park' (charity number 1048153).

The Trust's charitable objects are:

"use and enjoyment as and for a public park for the recreation of the public with or without a public museum"⁷

Camden 2025

Camden 2025⁸ is the shared vision for Camden, written following a citizen assembly approach.

Camden 2025 sets out a vision for the future of the borough, where everyone contributes to achieving a safe, fair, creative and active community.

Camden 2025 includes five calls to action, relevant areas drawn out:

- Homes and housing
- Strong growth and access to jobs
- Safe, strong and open communities
 - Our community spaces, whether children's and community centres, libraries, play streets or parks, should encourage interaction and engagement between neighbours, and people with different experiences and backgrounds.
- Clean, vibrant and sustainable places
 - Our parks and open spaces will be exciting, welcoming and safe, providing places for people to be physically active, and families and communities to gather.
- Health, independent lives
 - Everyone should know how to take charge of their own health and wellbeing, and be encouraged and supported to keep active, eat well and stay healthy.

Highgate neighbourhood plan

The Highgate Neighbourhood Plan was adopted in 2017 by Haringey and Camden.

The Neighbourhood Plan includes the following:

"Open space makes a vital contribution to our overall quality of life in cities. It provides a sense of freedom and relief from our built environment. It provides

⁶ See GIGL reference - about wildlife

<http://discover-london.gigl.org.uk/site-Details.aspx?SID=CaBI03&sType=sinc>

⁷

<https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-search/-/charity-details/1048153/governing-document>

⁸ <https://www3.camden.gov.uk/2025/camden-2025>

somewhere to relax, somewhere to play, somewhere to enjoy and learn about nature and to meet with friends or exercise. In the main, it is a vital shared resource. The existence of quality open space also improves the visual attractiveness of where we live and work and helps define the unique character of an area that people want to live and visit there.

One of the aims of the Plan is to ensure the maintenance and improvement of Highgate's open spaces in line with the desires expressed during consultation to ensure that they are used for the benefit of the whole of the community. The Plan recognises the richness of open space that Highgate is blessed with but also welcomes the changing attitudes towards our green area as expressed through the Mayor's 'Great Outdoors' programme."

A core objective of the plan (number 4: Open Spaces and Public realm) is *To empower the whole community to protect, enhance and obtain the maximum benefits from Highgate's open space, where this does not harm the existing integrity or character of the open space, whether publicly-accessible or not.* This is supported by 7 sub-objectives.

Waterlow Park is listed as a 'Major open space' – *Multifunctional areas of outstanding importance in local, regional or national terms.*

Camden Local Plan

Policy A2 Open Space of the Local plan sets out the key protections for green spaces like Waterlow Park.

Waterlow Park is recognised as part of an area of Metropolitan Open Land (alongside Highgate cemetery and Fairseat.

The view from Waterlow Park is currently not designated

The London Plan

The new London Plan⁹ was launched in early 2021 and came into force on the 2 March 2021.

The Plan seeks to make London greener and healthier. It protects green and open spaces as well as the Thames and London's other waterways.

The Plan promotes urban greening for new development, as well as the creation of Healthy Streets. It has policies that will help to address poor air quality and enable more people to walk, cycle and use sustainable modes of transport to get about.

The London plan sets out strategic and local views (Policy HC3). Boroughs are responsible for identifying local views in Local Plans. At present the views from Waterlow Park are not defined as a strategic view.

⁹ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/new-london-plan/london-plan-2021>