BRENT RIVER CORRIDOR Improvement Plan

This Plan has been produced by the Brent Catchment Partnership and finalized in March 2014

Brent Catchment Partnership

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THE BRENT CATCHMENT PARTNERSHIP

The Brent Catchment Partnership is a group of organisations who are committed to improving the rivers in the Brent catchment. The Partnership is not an organisation in its own right, but an informal network where members can share information, make plans and work together. The members -charities, community groups, borough councils, private businesses and government agencies - have been meeting regularly since 2010 and will keep working together to raise funds in order to carry out many of the actions in this Plan.

Steering Group

London Borough of Ealing
London Borough of Harrow
London Borough of Hounslow
London Borough of Brent
London Borough of Barnet
London Invasive Species Initiative
London Wildlife Trust
Thames21
Thames Water
Environment Agency
Thames Rivers Trust

Wider Partnership Members

Natural England
Zoological Society of London
Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust
Queen Mary, University of London
University of Middlesex
Welsh Harp Conservation Group
Connect Plus Services
Canal & River Trust (Formerly British Waterways)
Brent River and Canal Society
All London Green Grid
Professional facilitation for workshops to develop this plan was provided by Penny Walker of Interact Networks.

Brent Catchment Partnership

THE BRENT CATCHMENT PARTNERSHIP'S VISION

Our Vision is to improve and enhance the rivers within the Brent Catchment, making them cleaner, more accessible and more attractive, to benefit local communities and wildlife.

By 2021, water quality in the Brent catchment has improved and has a 'moderate' ability to support wildlife

By 2027 it will have a 'good' ability to support wildlife

Transforming up to 10 kilometres of heavily modified river to a more natural condition by 2021

Decreasing density and distribution of invasive non-native species in chosen locations by at least 20% by 2021

Having Giant Hogweed under a management programme in all parks, reserves and pathways by 2015

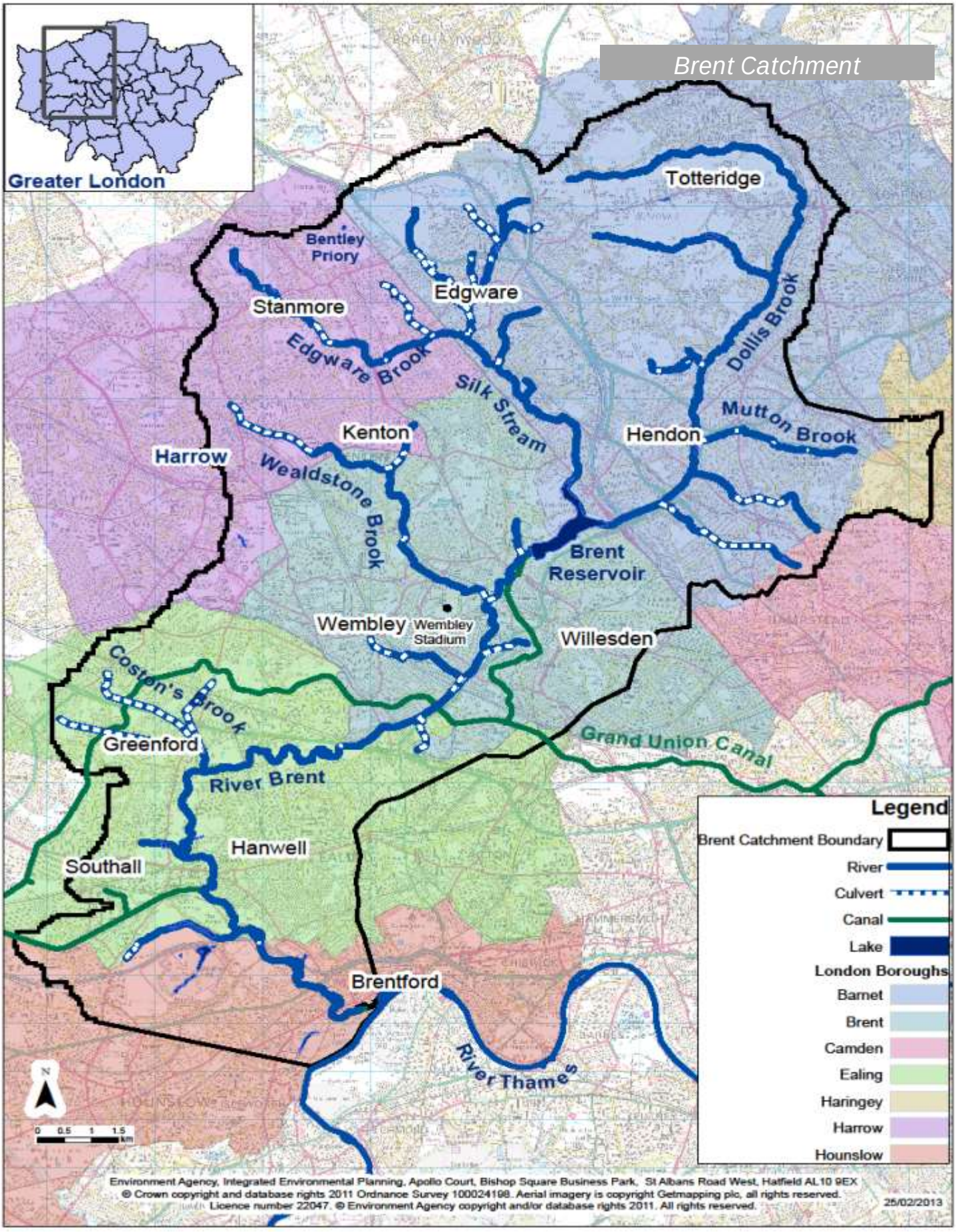
Completing a 24-mile riverside trail from Barnet to Brentford on the Thames

Creating or improving 12 miles of riverside access for walking, cycling and the disabled throughout the catchment

Creating at least two new green spaces along waterways in the Brent catchment by 2021

Delivering these outcomes will help to support local regeneration by making the area cleaner, greener and a more attractive place to live, work and start a business. These outcomes will help to improve the quality of life for everyone who lives in, works in or visits the area.

CATCHMENT GUIDE



CATCHMENT GUIDE

The Brent Catchment from Totteridge to the Thames

Dollis Brook

The 'Brent' actually starts its journey in Totteridge as the Dollis Brook. When it is joined by the Mutton Brook in Hendon, some 14 kilometres from its source, it is called the River Brent. It is subsequently joined from the west by three key tributaries before flowing down to Brentford where it joins the River Thames.

Silk Stream

The first of these, the Silk Stream, drains water from the Edgware area. It meets the Brent at the Brent Reservoir (Welsh Harp), which is a Site of Special Scientific Interest because of its population of waterbirds.

Wealdstone Brook

Not long after it leaves the Brent Reservoir, near Wembley Stadium, the River Brent is joined by the Wealdstone Brook, carrying water drained from Harrow. A little farther on it passes the Paddington arm of the Grand Union Canal, which crosses the catchment from east to west.

Costons Brook

Running through Ealing's 'green corridor', it is joined by the Costons Brook, carrying water from Greenford. For the last stage of its journey from Hanwell to the Thames, the Brent is a navigable river and is combined with the Hanwell arm of the Grand Union Canal.

CATCHMENT GUIDE

North West London Built Development

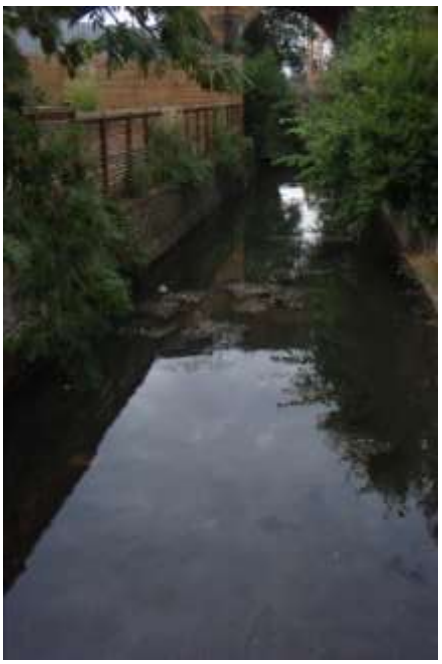
Historically the river would have meandered, particularly in the upper part of the catchment, while the lower part was once extensive marshland. But as London expanded, the river suffered. The only significant stretches that still keep their original shape can be found in the open spaces along the Dollis Brook and parts of the River Brent in Ealing.

Throughout the rest of the catchment, the river has been changed out of all recognition.

There are four major railway routes, plus the M1 and the M4. Many industrial estates and dense housing developments are built right up to the edge of the river. After such a urban development, it is no wonder much of the river is straightened, in artificial channels, or disappears from view in lengthy culverts (underground tunnels) like those beneath the A40 and North Circular Road, or under major railways near Neasden and Stonebridge. There are a great many other structures too like bridges, outfalls (drainage pipes), weirs, and even an aqueduct.

Development has changed the way that water drains into the river. There is greater risk of flooding as the rain runs rapidly off roofs, concrete and tarmac and finds its way more quickly into the rivers via a vast network of drains. This has led to the river being over-engineered in places to contain it. The surface runoff of rain takes with it all the contaminants it collects on the way (including pollutants like diesel from roads), and can overload the sewer system, adding to other pollution problems from industry and homes.

The legacy we have inherited is a polluted and heavily modified river with a great deal of unnatural bed or bank. There Is little room for wildlife in or around the river, plus many barriers to movement up and down. Where there is habitat for wildlife, it has to compete with invasive species (plants and animals that have been introduced by humans). People have limited opportunities to visit and enjoy the river or natural areas around it.



(Left) upstream Dollis Brook; (right) heavy modification near M1 Brent Cross

CATCHMENT GUIDE

Key Facts about the Brent Catchment

The 'Brent catchment' does not refer just to the borough of Brent but takes in parts of seven London boroughs. It covers a wide area of north and west London where all the rain that falls drains into the river Brent and its tributaries.

In North and West London the Dollis Brook, the Edgware Brook, the Silk Stream, the Wealdstone Brook and the River Brent all flow together within the Brent catchment.

There are a large number of man-made structures along the watercourse including 64 weirs, 196 bridges, 117 culverts and one aqueduct.

The Grand Union Canal and the Brent Feeder Canal are completely artificial watercourses and the Brent Reservoir is an artificial lake, created by a dam that was constructed to feed the Grand Union Canal.

The Brent Reservoir and Bentley Priory at the start of the Edgware Brook are both Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs).

The River Brent itself is only 16 kilometres long, but its tributaries total another 66 kilometres.

The Brent catchment falls 60 metres in height over 30 kilometres from source to the Thames. The land is steeper in the north and gets flatter as it nears the Thames.

The layer of rock lying beneath the whole of the Brent catchment is London Clay, which once it is fully saturated with water, cannot absorb any additional water. This means that the water level in the rivers can change rapidly. A significant quantity of water will still adhere to vegetation; and over the course of a year's seasons, the London Clay will absorb and hold a considerable volume of that rain water in the space above the permanent water table. Also green spaces rather than concrete and tarmac, provide opportunities for ponds, swales and other features that can temporarily hold water. The total land area that ultimately drains into the Thames via the Brent is approximately 175 square kilometres.

There are seven flood storage areas: five on the Silk Stream, and two on the River Brent.

WILDLIFE SITES
Sites of Special Scientific Interest

There are a number of non-statutory wildlife sites in the Brent catchment, both those on/adjacent to the river and within the wider terrestrial catchment. These Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) were first identified by the London Wildlife Habitat Survey in 1984-5 (by London Wildlife Trust on behalf of the Greater London Council), and have been updated and audited through subsequent surveys.

Brent (Welsh Harp) Reservoir for its birds

Bentley Priory for its meadow flora.

WILDLIFE SITES
Sites of Metropolitan Importance

The Totteridge Fields complex (bordering the Upper Dollis Brook) , Stanmore Country Park, Stanmore Golf Course, Fryent Country Park and small stretches of the Grand Union Canal.

The Totteridge Fields complex (bordering the Upper Dollis Brook)

Stanmore Country Park

WILDLIFE SITES
Sites of Metropolitan Importance

The Totteridge Fields complex (bordering the Upper Dollis Brook) , Stanmore Country Park, Stanmore Golf Course, Fryent Country Park and small stretches of the Grand Union Canal.

Stanmore Golf Course

Fryent Country Park

WILDLIFE SITES
Sites of Borough Importance

Stretches of the Dollis Brook, Deans Brook, Edgwarebury Brook, Silk Stream, and the Brent River and in some cases include broader parts of the river plain (for example Brent River Park and Stanmore Marsh).

Dollis Brook

Deans Brook

WILDLIFE SITES
Sites of Borough Importance

Stretches of the Dollis Brook, Deans Brook, Edgwarebury Brook, Silk Stream, and the Brent River and in some cases include broader parts of the river plain (for example Brent River Park and Stanmore Marsh).

Edgware Brook

Silk Stream

WILDLIFE SITES
Sites of Local Importance

Parts of the Brent River and the Mutton Brook are of Local Importance.

Mutton Brook

THE WATER FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE

Human activities are damaging our rivers, lakes and streams. This affects so many aspects of our lives that during the 1990s, the European Commission decided it was unacceptable. And so the **Water Framework Directive** (WFD) was born. It has been part of UK law since 2003.

Under the WFD, all rivers, lakes, reservoirs, streams, canals, estuaries, coastal and groundwater need to be restored to good ecological health*.

'Moderate' water quality means that:

- phosphate concentrations are 0.25 mg/l or less
- dissolved oxygen levels are 54% saturation or higher

levels of total ammonia are no higher than 1.1 mg/l

'Good' water quality means that:

- phosphate concentrations are 0.12 mg/l or less
- dissolved oxygen levels are 60% saturation or higher levels of total ammonia are no higher than 0.6 mg/

The initial deadline for achieving good ecological health was 2015, but this has proved to be an almost impossible task, so in most cases this deadline has been extended to 2021 or 2027.

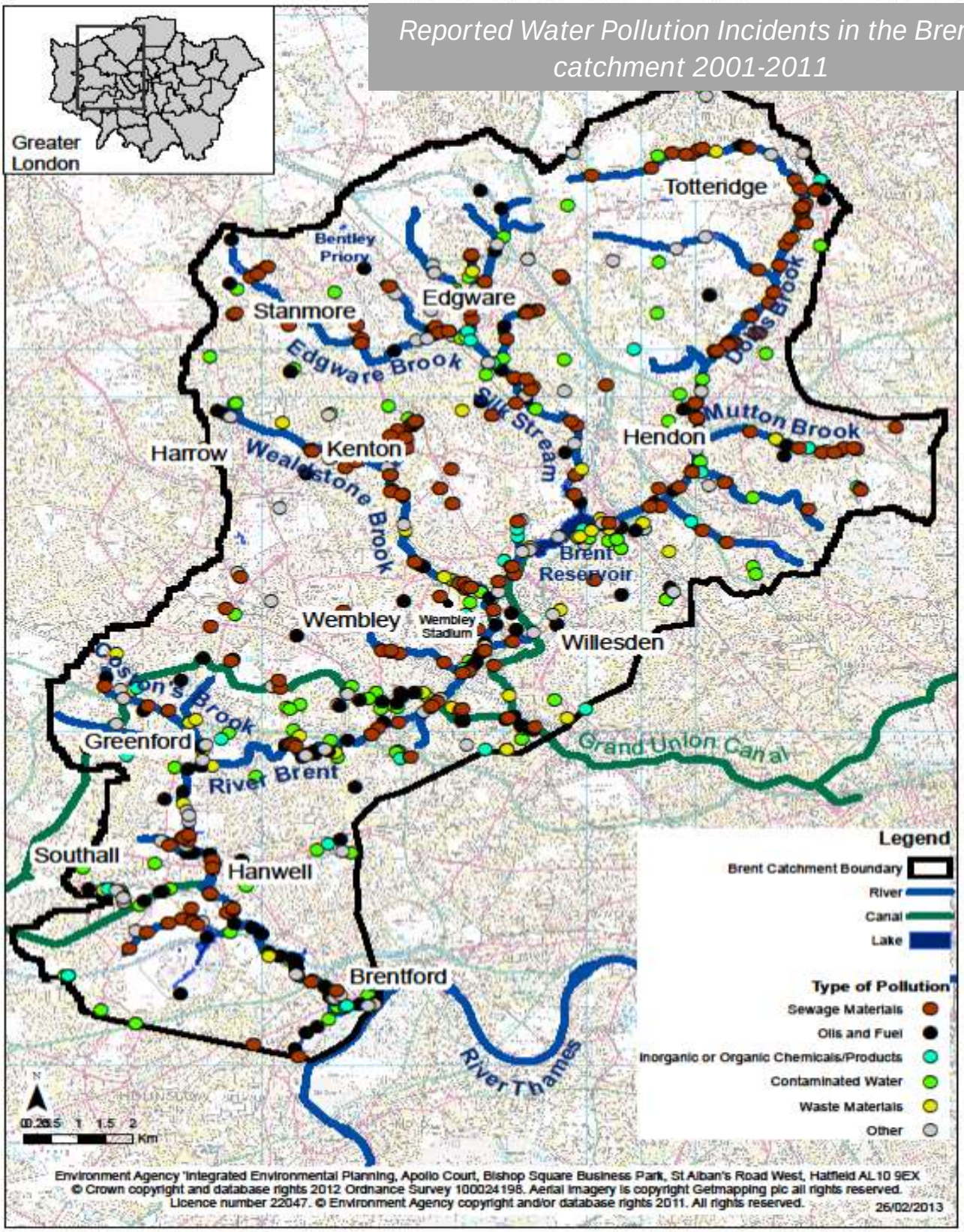
* technical terms used for this are 'Good Ecological Status' and 'Good Ecological Potential'. For links to information on the WFD and ecological health, see 'Where to Find Out More' at the end of this document.

Right now, all of the rivers, lakes and canals in the Brent catchment are considered to be in either 'poor' or 'moderate' ecological health. This means that we need to take action to get them back into good ecological health for the sake of people and the environment.

REDUCING POLLUTION

From 2001 to 2011, no fewer than 809 water pollution incidents in the Brent Catchment were reported to the Environment Agency. That's one every five days – more than one a week. Other incidents may have gone unnoticed or unreported. If you see pollution entering our rivers, report it by phoning 0800 80 70 60.

Reported Water Pollution Incidents in the Brent catchment 2001-2011



REDUCING POLLUTION

There are different sources of pollution in the Brent catchment. The main ones are:

Households –

Without knowing it, many residential households are pouring polluted water straight into our rivers due to wrongly plumbed sinks, washing machines and even toilets that have been connected to the wrong drainage pipes. When this happens the dirty water goes straight into the river instead of to the sewage works.

In most parts of the UK, about 2% of homes are wrongly plumbed like this. But in the Brent Catchment this is estimated to be much higher at 8.3% of all households.

This means there are approximately 27,200 households in the catchment with illegal plumbing!

Industry

Factories and depots suffer from the same problems of wrongly plumbed pipes, while accidental spills can result in oils, paint, chemicals and other liquids being washed down surface water drains, straight into our rivers and canals.

Roads and railways

Spilled oil, fuel, anti-freeze and tiny particles from transport, such as brake linings, get washed down the drains when it rains and end up in our rivers.

Combined Sewage Overflows (CSOs)

When there is too much rain for the sewers to cope with, they are designed to overflow into the river system instead of backing up into residential and commercial properties. Unfortunately, storm overflows can also discharge sewage into rivers in dry conditions if the foul sewer becomes blocked, with fats, oils and greases (FOG) or items that shouldn't be flushed away, such as nappies, baby/hand wipes and feminine hygiene products.
Similar problems are caused by shared inspection chambers, where foul and surface water lines run in parallel within a manhole chamber. Blockages downstream of a shared manhole can also cause sewage to overflow into rivers.

All these sources of pollution are impacting upon the health of our rivers and their wildlife, and can be a health risk for people if they come into contact with dirty water.

Changes to our climate are likely to increase these problems. During periods of droughts, pollution becomes more concentrated, while more frequent, heavier downpours will overload the sewage system resulting in more sewage overflows.

By 2021, water quality in the Brent catchment has improved and has a 'moderate' ability to support wildlife

By 2027 it will have a 'good' ability to support wildlife

REDUCING POLLUTION

What is currently been done

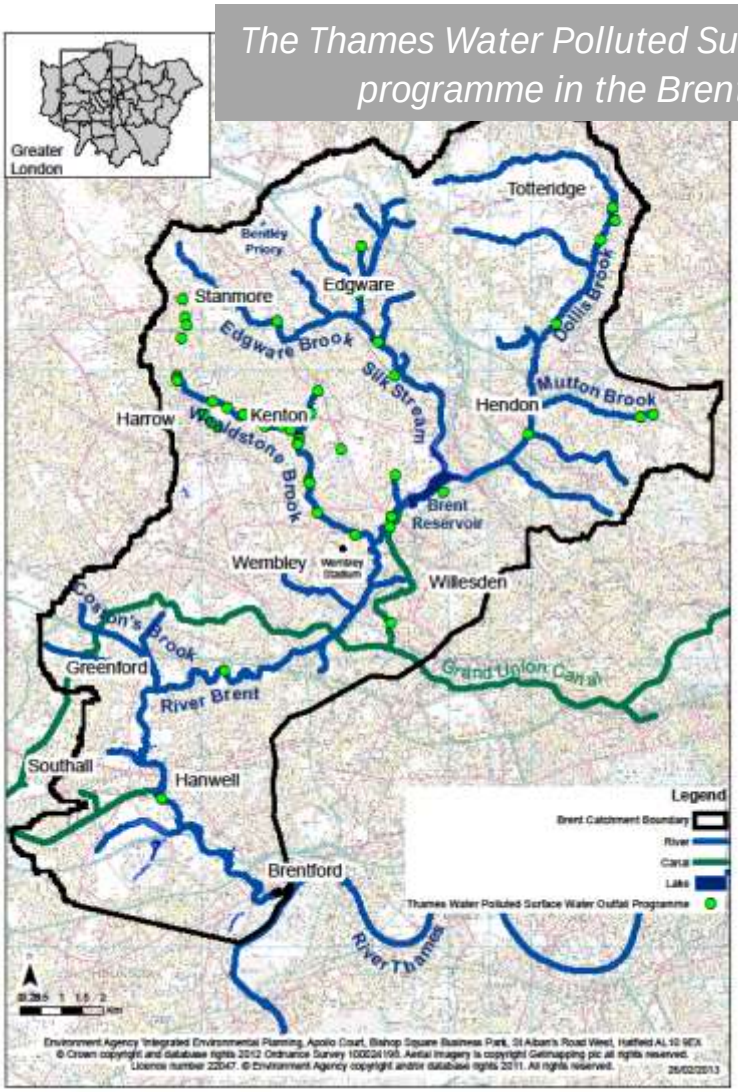
The Environment Agency

monitors water quality
works with local businesses and others to identify and prevent pollution
investigates reported pollution incidents, takes steps to stop them happening, and has the power to prosecute offenders.

Thames Water, Borough Councils and the Environment Agency are working together to find and correct misconnected drains.

The University of Middlesex measures levels of pollution as part of its research programme.

The Thames Water Polluted Surface Water Outfall programme in the Brent catchment



By 2021, water quality in the Brent catchment has improved and has a 'moderate' ability to support wildlife

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REDUCING POLLUTION

Everybody has a role to play

Stopping misconnections and the discharge of pollutants straight into our rivers and canals:

- Make sure you know how to connect to the right drain (Look out for the new training advice on the Thames Water website)

- Check home or workplace plumbing on the Connect Right website (http://www.connectright.org.uk/check-your-existing-connections/) or on the Thames Water website ((http://www.thameswater.co.uk/help-and-advice/8198.htm) and get it fixed if it is connected to the wrong drain

- 'Bin it - don't block it'. Make sure unwanted materials, such as: nappies, feminine hygiene products, baby/hand wipes and cotton buds are not put down the sewer. For advice, look at the Thames Water website http://www.thameswater.co.uk/help-and-advice/9137.htm

- Fats, oil and grease (FOG) are a common cause of blocked sewers. It is easy to help prevent FOG blockages. When you've finished cooking, just pour the hot liquid oil into a container, allow it to set and then dispose of it in your rubbish bin.

- Ensure your rainwater drainage is flowing into the appropriate surface water drainage. Or for a more sustainable solution recycle rain water via a water butt? http://www.thameswater.co.uk/save-water/9382.htm

- Prioritisation and resourcing of the Polluted Surface Water Outfall programme with closer working between Environmental Health Officers, Thames Water and the Environment Agency.

- Discharges from Combined Sewer Overflows (CSO), although necessary, should be minimised wherever this is technically and economically feasible. The Environment Agency will work closely with water utility companies to reduce negative environmental impacts of CSOs through a managed programme of identification, modelling, pro-active cleaning and infrastructure improvements.

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REDUCING POLLUTION

Everybody has a role to play

Improved land and network management

- Land can be better managed in a way that improves water quality. Review how your land management may impact water quality, and consider reducing your use of harsh chemicals, pesticides and herbicides.
- Prioritise Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems where they will be most effective at filtering out pollutants from water before it reaches our rivers
- Organisations can work with Thames Water and the Environment Agency to gather information and take action on pollution from road and railway track drainage

Business Management

- Make sure you know how your drainage works and how to maintain it properly
- Make sure you're aware of how to prevent pollution and have a plan you can put into place if a spill happens. (To get started, you can use the pollution prevention advice and guidance leaflets here: http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/business/topics/pollution/39083.aspx)

Raising awareness and getting involved

- Look out for pollution when you are near the rivers and canals, and report it to the Environment Agency on 0800 80 70 60
- Get involved in campaigning and spread the word to your neighbours, residents' association, place of worship, community centre, clients and colleagues
- Sponsor a pollution awareness campaign
- Get involved in monitoring pollution and its effects on invertebrate, plant and fish populations

Website, Facebook, Flickr, Twitter, posters, walks, Council publications , school visits, public events, talks for local forums, residents' associations, Rotary Clubs, places of worship are some opportunities for raising awareness about pollution.

By 2021, water quality in the Brent catchment has improved and has a 'moderate' ability to support wildlife

By 2027 it will have a 'good' ability to support wildlife

MAKING RIVERS MORE NATURAL

The rivers within the Brent catchment have been physically changed over time to make room for homes, businesses and transport networks. They were changed again to manage the increased risk of flooding. As a result they have become detached from communities, and are less natural. But city rivers can once again become attractive natural waterways at the heart of their communities. Recent river restoration and biodiversity projects have demonstrated how this can begin to happen more widely.

By working together we can help our local rivers look and behave more naturally to attract and support a wider variety of wildlife.

This will involve:

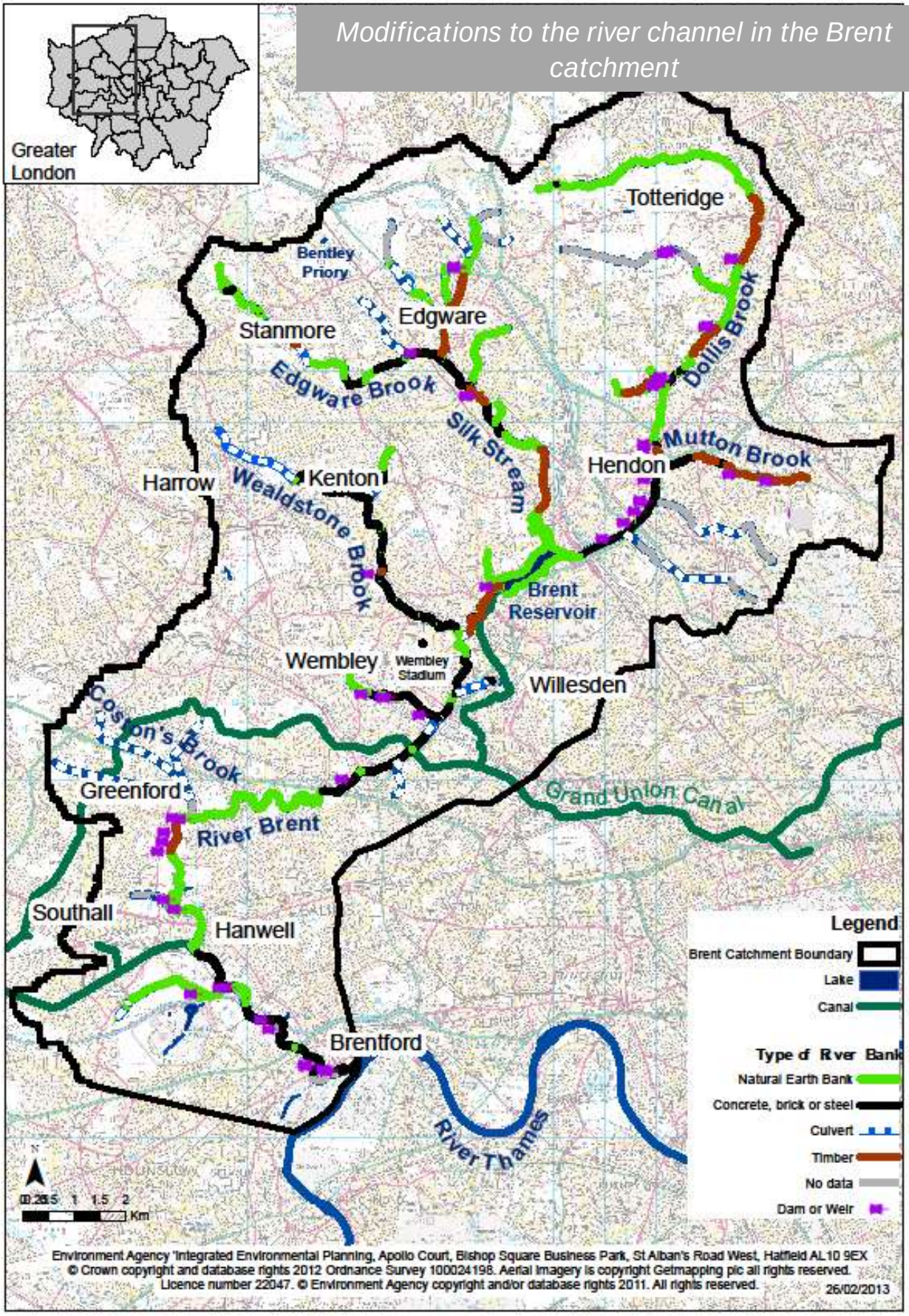
- removing unnatural structures such as weirs and wooden, steel or concrete bank and bed reinforcements, where they no longer serve a purpose removing or bypassing barriers to fish passage, such as weirs
- creating new and enhancing existing wetland habitats within the river corridor
- improving the presence of native aquatic plants and wildlife by restoring natural physical habitats throughout the river corridor
- making the river more sustainable to manage high flows and combat the problems of flooding and extreme weather associated with climate change

Whitchurch Playing Fields river restoration completed in January 2014 by the LB of Harrow with EA

Transforming up to 10 kilometres of heavily modified river to a more natural condition by 2021

MAKING RIVERS MORE NATURAL

Modifications to the river channel in the Brent catchment



MAKING RIVERS MORE NATURAL

Where has the river become less natural

Straight concrete channels (right) provide very poor habitat for wildlife

Many weirs (left), stop fish from moving up and down the river

Timber ‘toe-boarding’ (right) is unnatural too – but relatively easy to remove

Culverts (left) take rivers underground

Transforming up to 10 kilometres of heavily modified river to a more natural condition by 2021

MAKING RIVERS MORE NATURAL

What has already been done

The River Brent was trapped in a concreted channel at Tokyngton Park in 2000. A recent river restoration and habitat improvement project is Brent Council's pioneering river restoration scheme at Tokyngton Park in 2002-2003. A straight 500-metre stretch of concrete channel was replaced with winding river banks made of natural earth. Now, this stretch of river is recovering and provides better habitat for wildlife. But there is still much more to be done. Now - the River Brent winding through Tokyngton Park in Brent.

River Brent through Tockyngton Park a 500m section, part of a river restoration project completed 2002/3 costing £1.4m. Here the River Brent was taken out of its concrete confines and given a new slightly meandering route through the park. Either side of the park the river runs through culverts over 500m in length - Neasden Junction (U/S) and Stonebridge Junction (D/S)

Whitchurch Playing Fields river restoration completed in January 2014 by the LB of Harrow with EA

By transforming up to 10 kilometres of heavily modified river to a more natural condition by 2021

MAKING RIVERS MORE NATURAL

Everybody has a role to play

Taking opportunities through development

- Consult your local council planning department if you are planning any kind of development along or near a river
- Consult the Environment Agency for pre-application advice if you are planning any kind of development along or near a river. They will be able to provide advice and guidance on Flood Risk requirements, river restoration principles and Flood Defence Consent requirements
- Check the London Rivers Action Plan http://www.therrc.co.uk/lrap.php for river restoration projects that you could incorporate into your development
- Protect and enhance existing habitats close to the river (contact Greenspace Information for Greater London http://www.gigl.org.uk/ to find out the location of important habitats)
- Wherever possible, incorporate green roofs, natural buffer zones and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems as part of your design
- Close liaison between borough planning departments and the Environment Agency to realise opportunities for river restoration
- Inclusion of river restoration in Community Infrastructure Levy projects
- Reinstate natural banks wherever possible and become a champion of soft engineering best practice
- Installation of natural Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems where they will be most effective in holding back heavy rainfall before it reaches our rivers
- Incorporation of the outcomes in this Plan in flood risk management, by creating and linking open spaces with rivers and improving biodiversity and habitats, while reducing flood risk

Transforming up to 10 kilometres of heavily modified river to a more natural condition by 2021

MAKING RIVERS MORE NATURAL

Everybody has a role to play

Education and research

- There are opportunities for ongoing monitoring programme of sediments or plants for BSc or MSc students in partnership with the Environment Agency
- Speak to your Environment Agency contacts to discuss opportunities for placements or project work on river processes
- Use this document to identify a range of locations to support your environmental or geography curriculum

Raising awareness and getting involved

- Get involved in volunteering
- If your home backs on to a river advice is available here: http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/homeandleisure/floods/31626.aspx

Tree Planting Family Event

Transforming up to 10 kilometres of heavily modified river to a more natural condition by 2021

TACKLING PROBLEM INVASIVE SPECIES

Some river banks within the Brent Catchment are covered entirely by invasive non-native vegetation.

Some of these species are harmful to our local wildlife and community:

- Taking valuable resources like food and shelter from our native species
- Killing our native wildlife, either for food or to defend their territories
- Reducing the suitability of habitat for native species, such as degrading stream edges
- Making our open spaces visually unappealing
- Causing health problems

Tackling invasive non-native species across the Brent catchment will involve:

- Completing an action plan with all major stakeholders by 2015
- Educating the public and other relevant stakeholders about invasive species
- Establishing a procedure to record invasive species data by the end of 2013

Decreasing density and distribution of invasive non-native species in chosen locations by at least 20% by 2021
Having Giant Hogweed under a management programme in all parks, reserves and pathways by 2015

TACKLING PROBLEM INVASIVE SPECIES

What are invasive non-native species

Japanese Knotweed

(*Fallopia japonica*) has bamboo-like stems and grows in dense thickets. It is common in urban areas especially railways, roadsides and riverbanks. It is able to out-compete other species, adds to river bank erosion and causes structural damage to buildings, pathways and other built structures. Proper management is essential as it is easily spread through cutting.

Himalayan Balsam

(*Impatiens glandulifera*) forms dense strands along river banks and other damp habitats where it out-competes native species. It can slow water flow along these rivers, increasing the chance of flooding.

Giant Hogweed

(*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) grows up to 2 metres tall and forms dense stands along watercourses. It is a major concern as it can easily out-compete other species, and contact with the sap can result in blistering of the skin following exposure to sunlight.

Buddleja

(*Buddleja davidii*) is a shrub that grows more than 2 metres tall. It thrives in cracks in canal walls and other built structures. It is fast growing and hardy which allows it to out-compete other species. It contributes to flooding by slowing the movement of water through the waterways.

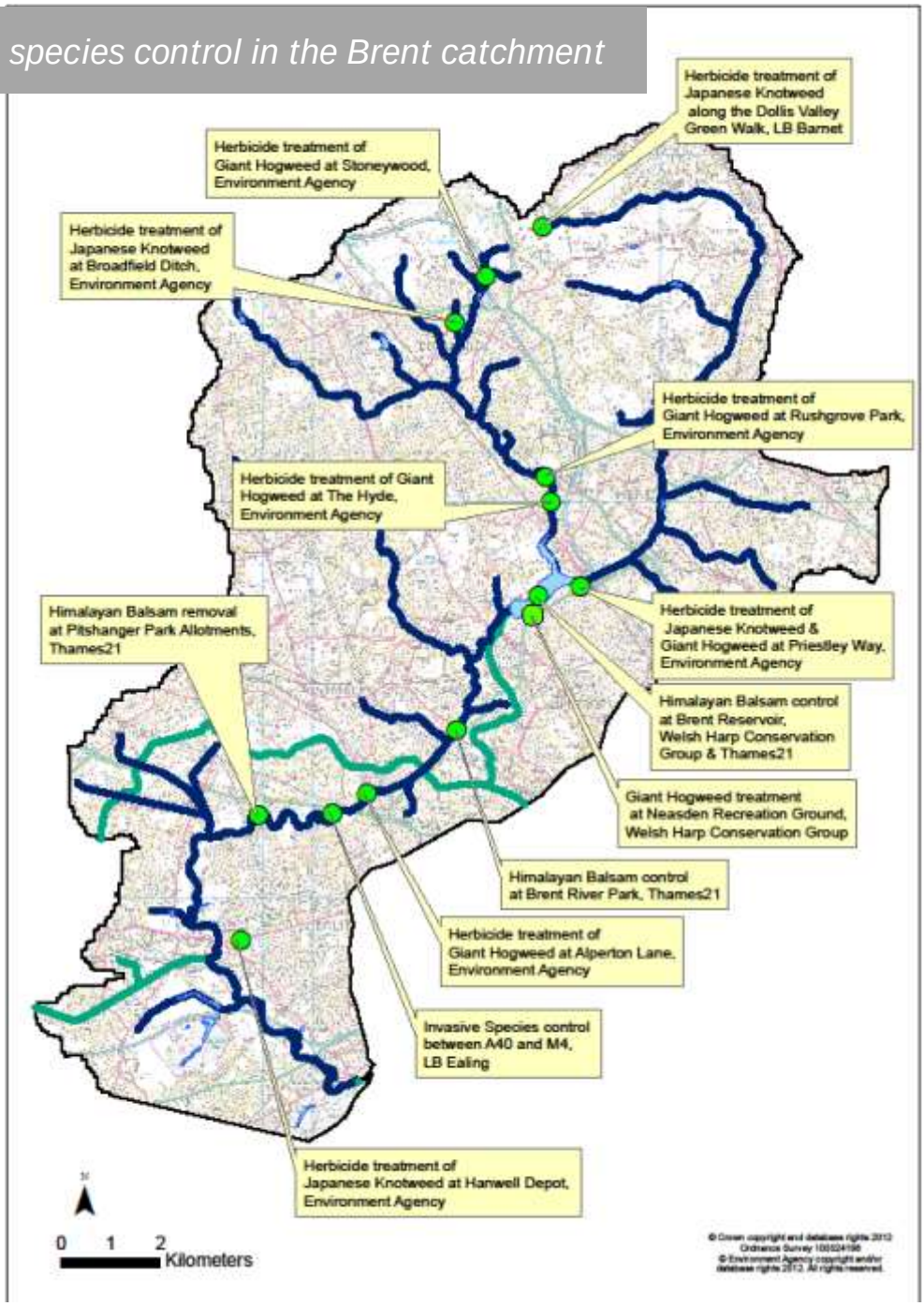
Decreasing density and distribution of invasive non-native species in chosen locations by at least 20% by 2021
Having Giant Hogweed under a management programme in all parks, reserves and pathways by 2015

TACKLING PROBLEM INVASIVE SPECIES

What has already been done

Action to control invasive species has been carried out at a local level and with varying degrees of success. The map does not show every location where management occurs, but it is a good indication. To ensure that management works are successful they need to be coordinated throughout the catchment.

Invasive species control in the Brent catchment



Decreasing density and distribution of invasive non-native species in chosen locations by at least 20% by 2021
Having Giant Hogweed under a management programme in all parks, reserves and pathways by 2015

TACKLING PROBLEM INVASIVE SPECIES

Everyone has a role to play

Monitoring and recording:

- Get to know your local area and actively collect data on the distribution of species using for example the phone application *Plant Tracker*. Share this data with *Greenspace Information for Greater London* (GiGL)
- Share information such as current management of invasive species within the Greater London area with the London Invasive Species Initiative (LISI) to build best practice and share knowledge
- Report any high priority sites to your borough or the London Invasive Species Initiative (LISI)

Raising awareness and getting involved:

- Learn to identify common and high risk invasive species in London
- Share information on identification of common and high risk invasive species with the community, landowners and community groups
- Get involved with volunteer invasive species programs where possible
- Land managers to organise and promote relevant volunteer programmes

Improved land management:

- Where possible address invasive species at a catchment wide level
- Land managers to look into resource sharing with neighbouring groups if possible
- Make sure that you dispose of all invasive species material carefully and in line with legal requirements

River Thames Planting

Decreasing density and distribution of invasive non-native species in chosen locations by at least 20% by 2021
Having Giant Hogweed under a management programme in all parks, reserves and pathways by 2015

CREATING BETTER OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACCESS AND RECREATION

The Dollis Brook through Barnet and the River Brent through Ealing are bordered by attractive green spaces with public pathways. Lots of people enjoy these pleasant settings for their attractive landscapes and wildlife. These green spaces contribute much to the quality of life in the city.

Stretches of river in the Brent catchment are not accessible for the public to enjoy. They are blocked by buildings, roads and railways, fenced off, or buried underground. Rivers have recently started to be valued again for the benefits they can add to our quality of life. Hundreds of thousands of people are missing out on those benefits.

Where people can get to the river, they are often disappointed to find it spoiled by litter or fly-tipping.

Improving access and recreation will involve:

- Many organisations working together through the Brent Catchment Partnership and ALGG Area Forum for the Brent Valley and Barnet Plateau
- Developing green spaces with multiple benefits, to make maximum use of the land available
- Opening up new access points and pathways to reconnect people and local communities to their river.

Canoeing at Clitherows Island

Dollis Brook

Completing a 24-mile riverside trail from Barnet to Brentford on the Thames
Creating or improving 12 miles of riverside access for walking, cycling and the disabled throughout the catchment
Creating at least two new green spaces along waterways in the Brent catchment by 2021

CREATING BETTER OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACCESS AND RECREATION

What has been done

Many projects have increased access and recreation along the Brent and its tributaries in recent years. Some of these are shown on the map. Organisations like Thames21 and the London boroughs improve people's experience of the river by removing litter and larger items that have been fly-tipped.

Litter Pick Up

Large Item Clean Up

The All London Green Grid (ALGG) has been developed by many organisations working together, led by the Mayor of London. The ALGG sets out a strategy and a whole series of projects for increasing access and recreation along rivers (blue corridors) and green spaces (green infrastructure) in the 'Brent Valley and Barnet Plateau'. Many of these projects will benefit people and wildlife by:

- Creating new access routes to riversides on foot or by bicycle
- Improving access alongside rivers for people to enjoy them and help to preserve them
- Providing green spaces along rivers to buffer the effects of pollution
- Creating habitats for wildlife along rivers
- Restoring riverside landscapes and heritage features
- Providing attractive new routes to work places

Completing a 24-mile riverside trail from Barnet to Brentford on the Thames
Creating or improving 12 miles of riverside access for walking, cycling and the disabled throughout the catchment
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CREATING BETTER OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACCESS AND RECREATION

Everyone has a role to play

- Responding to consultation on plans to improve the riverside or green spaces
- Joining your local friends of the river or friends of the park group
- Not leaving litter in or around waterways, even if it looks like a drain or already has rubbish in
- Preventing litter escaping from your home or business on to the street, as it can go down drains and into waterways
- Reporting any littering or fly tipping to your local council
- By building access and recreation along rivers and in green spaces into your planning applications, as this can increase the value of properties

Fly Tipping

Volunteer Group

Completing a 24-mile riverside trail from Barnet to Brentford on the Thames
Creating or improving 12 miles of riverside access for walking, cycling and the disabled throughout the catchment
Creating at least two new green spaces along waterways in the Brent catchment by 2021

HOW THIS WILL HAPPEN

This plan sets out new projects and proposals which can help to improve the river. Before the plan can move forward we must be sure of what the local community want to see happen on their river.

We have already started consulting local people about some parts of this plan. From now on we will gather the wider input of local people and organisations, so that we can then start implementing actions which they support and will help to deliver.

Many projects that could help make our vision a reality have already been identified in other plans, especially the All London Green Grid, the London Rivers Action Plan, and some boroughs' Surface Water Management Plans and Biodiversity Action Plans. The Brent Catchment Partnership will work with other partnerships, like the North West London Flood Risk Partnership and the ALGG Area Forum, to get the best for their rivers out of these projects.

Members of the Brent Catchment Partnership will promote the issues in this Plan through their own networks and activities, and will seek to incorporate them in relevant policies.

But even more must be done to deliver our vision. Many ideas for projects have been developed in the preparation of this plan. They are outlined in the table below.

These ideas for action will be most effective if people and organisations work together in a co-ordinated way. For some ideas to take off, different organisations will need to work together to find sources of funding.

To find out more please get in touch with francesca.campagnoli@thames21.org.uk to talk about ways of working together.

Delivering this plan will help to support local regeneration by making the area cleaner, greener and a more attractive place to live, work and start a business. These outcomes will help to improve the quality of life for everyone who lives in, works in or visits the area.

WHERE TO FIND OUT MORE

Stopping Pollution

Connect Right
http://www.connectright.org.uk/

Oil Bank Line
http://www.oilbankline.org.uk/

Reporting river pollution incidents - Call the Environment Agency on 0800 80 70 60
http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/contactus/36345.aspx

Making rivers more natural

London Rivers Action Plan
http://www.therrc.co.uk/lrap_zoom.php?c=3

River Restoration Centre's Manual of River Restoration Techniques
http://www.therrc.co.uk/rrc_manual.php

Greenspace Information for Greater London (GiGL) http://www.gigl.org.uk/

Pre-application advice for planning applications from the Environment Agency
http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/research/planning/33580.aspx

The London Wildlife Sites Board, chaired by the GLA, helps to inform and guide boroughs in the review of their Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation
http://www.london.gov.uk/priorities/environment/greening-london/biodiversity/sites-importance-nature-conservation

WHERE TO FIND OUT MORE

Tackling Problem Invasive Species

GB Non-Native Species Secretariat
https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/nonnativespecies/home/index.cfm

London Invasive Species Initiative
http://londonisi.org.uk/

PlantTracker App
https://itunes.apple.com/gb/app/planttracker/id528236850?mt=8

Creating better opportunities for access and recreation

All London Green Grid (ALGG) – Area Framework 11 - Brent and the Barnet Plateau
http://www.london.gov.uk/priorities/environment/greening-london/parks-green-spaces/green-grid/area-frameworks

The Water Framework Directive

http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/research/planning/33362.aspx

Getting involved in local action

Canal and River Trust
http://www.canalrivertrust.org.uk/volunteering

Thames21
http://www.thames21.org.uk/projects/

Or contact your local Borough Council to find out about getting involved in a 'Friends of' group.