



THE *Dulwich*
ESTATE

SHAPING OUR FUTURE CELEBRATING OUR PAST

Sustainability Strategy 2050

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S FOREWORD



London is striving to become a greener, more livable city in the face of climate change, population growth, congestion and urbanisation. The Dulwich Estate has a role to play in helping to address these increasing environmental and social challenges. Therefore we have revisited our long-term sustainability strategy to focus on three areas where we believe there is more to be done, evolving the way we work and contributing to a more sustainable future for all.

Edward Alleyn purchased the Manor of Dulwich in 1605 and later founded the College of God's Gift which provided education and housing for the poor. Dulwich remained a rural, sparsely populated 'meadow where the dill grew' until the 19th century when urban development began its march, and transformed the area into the thriving hub it is today.

The Dulwich Estate emerged in 1995 as an independent charity from Alleyn's original foundation. In one form or another, the Estate has been steward of 1500 acres of land and a diverse portfolio of residential, commercial and educational property for more than four centuries.

The charity distributes income from its land and property to seven schools, an Almshouse providing homes for older people, and Christ's Chapel of God's Gift.



The Dulwich Estate also runs the Scheme of Management, which is non-charitable. It is a planning system which is designed to protect the special character of the area. Just over 4000 private properties are in the Scheme.

Today the area's ancient woodland at Dulwich Woods, its parks, meadows, allotments and sports fields make up around a third of the Estate. This includes seven designated Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation and one Local Nature Reserve. The tree canopy provided by the area's mature trees reaches 23 per cent ground cover. Our trees are a valuable and essential part of the local ecosystem, cleaning the air, providing a habitat for wildlife, and a cooling system for all of us, as well as greatly enhancing our well-being. We will do all we can to protect and enhance this irreplaceable natural asset.

Future-proofing and retro-fitting housing and commercial property stock on the Estate is no small challenge. The mainly privately owned and some Estate-owned Edwardian and Victorian housing is beautiful, but not designed for energy efficiency and heat loss is a challenge; likewise, the privately owned iconic mid-century modern architecture for which Dulwich is renowned. We will adapt and invest to future-proof approximately 400 properties over the timeframe of our new plan, in line with energy-related legislation and residents' desire to increase energy self-sufficiency. Our Scheme of Management planning system will be updated regularly to provide the latest sustainability guidance to private homeowners.

The third pillar of our plan is partnership. Forging collaborations is crucial for sustainability – it brings together perspectives, expertise and resources. No one single entity can achieve its ambitions by itself. We are committed to working with other charities, local Government, business owners, residents and membership organisations, to deliver better spaces, better buildings, better sustainable solutions for the benefit of all.

It is our duty to care for Alleyn's green and social legacy, while keeping an eye on the future. We must support our beneficiaries through the upholding of best land management practice, by future-proofing our buildings and in the process facilitate community access to space. This long-term plan is our commitment to those principles.

Simone Crofton, Chief Executive

INTRODUCTION



The Estate's sustainability strategy follows an in-depth materiality review to understand legislative and stakeholder priorities. Responding to these, the strategy sets out three areas for long-term work, responding to and mitigating the impacts of a rapidly changing world on the Estate's historic and diverse land and property portfolio and ensuring it remains fit for purpose. We will meet these challenges by continuing to ensure best practices in governance and operational management.

Future-proofing our built environment

The Estate's owned portfolio consists of approximately 150 commercial and 250 residential rental properties, the freehold of 8 residential tower blocks and 27 low-rise apartment blocks, 10 sports grounds and 40 acres of allotments, as well as various roads.

The challenges of new carbon and energy-related legislation, high energy costs and the desire to increase self-sufficiency in energy is propelling the need to future-proof our portfolio through retrofitting enhanced insulation and new glazing, replacing fossil fuel heating systems with electrified systems, and integrating renewable energy such as solar where we can. Retrofits are of particular focus in our residential rented portfolio, where over 80% was built before 1950 and 50% before 1900.

Rising temperatures and extreme weather events threaten the usability and structural integrity

of historic properties and are driving a need to implement climate adaptation measures where we can across the portfolio. Enhancing the tree canopy to provide more cooling is one such measure which will provide a significant return on investment and help ensure the portfolio's resilience in the medium to long term.

The Estate is committed to ensuring future-proofed designs in its own developments, and staying ahead of the curve by anticipating changing legislation (e.g., the Future Homes Standard, as well as new Greater London Authority (GLA) and Southwark environmental policies).

Scheme of Management guidelines which ensure sympathetic refurbishment development within the Estate boundary, will continue to protect the common amenity while also supporting future-proof designs.



Photo thanks to JAGS



Investing in our natural environment

The extent of green space and number of trees preserved in Dulwich is unique. Through investment we will ensure continual protection and improvement.

We need to maintain and increase a variety of our habitats across our 450 acres of green space, to reverse the loss of biodiversity vital to the ecosystem services we all rely on. These include pollination, soil creation, cleaning our urban air and supporting our climate resilience by providing substantial cooling and rainwater attenuation.

Working in partnership for an engaged community

Though The Dulwich Estate is a small charity, its work provides housing and essential services, supports employment and the local economy and cares for the common amenity to foster neighbourhood well-being.

In this role we are committed to ensuring that local urban development also cares for the area's heritage and cultural assets. The historic Christ's Chapel and Almshouse at Edward Alleyn House will need to meet contemporary needs while retaining architectural integrity. We will continue to tell the story of these and

other local treasures, in a variety of ways, using new and old technologies.

A partnership approach, involving community, institutions, charities, membership organisations and local Government will ensure that the evolving use of the high street will meet local needs into the future, withstanding social and environmental change through engagement and sustainable design.

Increasing access to homes, services, workplaces, green spaces and community spaces to support the wellbeing of all who live, work and visit the area, is how we will ensure Dulwich thrives long into the future.

Beth Ambrose, Head of Sustainability

VISION STATEMENT

Future-proofing the built environment, enhancing nature and working in partnership to build long-term resilience across the Estate.

VALUES

To commit to quality

In every aspect of our development, management and service we strive to achieve a standard of quality that creates an exceptional neighbourhood.

To act with respect

In all we do and the decisions we make we aim to demonstrate respect and empathy for people and our local environment.

To communicate with clarity

We focus on open and honest collaboration in our work and aim to communicate proactively, in and outside the Estate.

GOALS TO 2050

Three pillars of work capture our priorities to ensure a sustainable future for the Estate. Each theme has a set of goals and each goal has an action plan. Delivery is an all-team approach, with progress reported on monthly to the internal steering group.



Future-proofing our built environment

GOAL 1

We will strive for our portfolio to be energy-efficient and operationally low-cost, and to achieve our net zero carbon target

GOAL 2

Our portfolio will be adapted where feasible to cope with expected climate change

GOAL 3

We will work with our supply chain, tenants and local residents to respond to a changing world and local priorities



Investing in our natural environment

GOAL 1

We will map and monitor our natural environment

GOAL 2

Our local ecosystems will be supported, protected and enhanced

GOAL 3

We will facilitate community engagement with nature



Working in partnership for an engaged community

GOAL 1

We will champion the high street

GOAL 2

Increased accessibility of green spaces and enhanced housing provision

GOAL 3

Promotion of architectural standards and local heritage for education and visitor engagement

GOAL 4

We will train our staff in sustainability best practices and exchange knowledge and experience with other organisations



FUTURE-PROOFING OUR BUILT ENVIRONMENT



The three major challenges facing the Estate's portfolio over the coming decades are decarbonisation, energy security risks, and climate change adaptation.

Our goal is to reach Net Zero Carbon by 2050, aligned with Southwark Council's Climate Emergency declaration and the UK government's legally binding net-zero target. As the majority of our portfolio's emissions falls into the 'Scope 3' category where we have indirect influence, we will have the highest impact by refurbishing properties to a future-proof specification.

New glazing, enhanced insulation and electric systems to replace fossil fuel will be prioritised in the rental portfolio. During relevant commercial lease negotiations we will ensure our buildings reach required energy efficiency standards and fossil-fuel free status as quickly as possible. We will also install or facilitate the installation of solar panels and batteries wherever feasible to provide further low-carbon power for homes, businesses and for electric transport.

Across the Estate's offices and operations, we will implement energy saving measures and continue to roll out new energy contracts, shifting to certified renewable electricity.

In order to address the resilience of our buildings and infrastructure to climate change, we must respond to the predictions of extreme weather patterns and develop adaptation plans.

In addressing these three challenges we will review our supply chains and work closely with residents and tenants to encourage the adoption of industry best practice.



GOAL 1

We will strive for our portfolio to be energy-efficient and operationally low-cost, and to achieve our net zero carbon target

PRIORITIES 2030

- Develop a phased roadmap for our 2050 Net Zero Carbon portfolio target. Establish a database and carbon data management process and develop the first set of asset decarbonisation pathways. Implement Phase 1 of the roadmap up to 2029, then re-baseline for 2030 onwards
- Seek to achieve a 40% reduction in Scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions, against a 2024 baseline. Reduce energy use and shift to low-carbon energy contracts
- Work towards the reduction target for our Scope 3 carbon emissions, which will be set in line with our new Net Zero Carbon roadmap, against a 2024 baseline

GOAL 2

Our portfolio will be adapted to cope with expected climate change

PRIORITIES 2030

- Undertake a climate risk assessment across the portfolio and develop building and infrastructure-specific adaptation plans for all relevant Estate-owned assets by 2027
- Implement climate adaptation measures in 100% of major refurbishments in the residential rented portfolio from 2026/27 onwards

GOAL 3

We will work with our supply chain, tenants and residents to respond to a changing world and local priorities

PRIORITIES 2030

- Shift supply chains towards a low carbon and low waste model by updating our tender and contracting requirements for 100% of direct contractors and suppliers
- Implement sustainable design and construction practices for new developments and refurbishments. Each development originated from 2025 will strive to achieve 15% minimum biodiversity net gain; to meet or exceed the relevant embodied carbon benchmarks and be low carbon in operation; and to be climate-resilient
- Embed future-proofing within the Scheme of Management guidance
- Roll out green lease clauses with tenants, and promote sustainability best practice through all channels



INVESTING IN OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Ancient woodland, grassland, water bodies, veteran trees and scrubland provide a magnificent and essential environment here in Dulwich. These diverse habitats are home to populations of nationally and internationally scarce flora and fauna and provide vital ecosystem services upon which we all depend. They also provide outstanding recreational and educational resources to people of all ages. This in turn supports good physical and mental well-being. It is also the backdrop for the Estate's assets which provides charitable benefit in a range of ways.

Like all areas of London, the green areas of the Dulwich Estate face the urban pressures of increased access and vehicle pollution, climate change, pests such as oak processionary moth, diseases such as Ash dieback and invasive species such as cherry laurel. UK-wide, pollinators have significantly declined over the past 20 years, with 50% of UK bumblebee species, 66% of moths and 71% of butterflies now in decline.

It is vital that we invest time and resources to add to our bank of natural capital to ensure its resilience. We have set three goals here: firstly to ensure we have a good understanding of everything that we hold in our natural portfolio; secondly to find cost-effective ways to make additional investments in the upkeep and enhancement of our habitats and thirdly, in engaging the local community in environmental education and in biodiversity conservation via our partnership with the London Wildlife Trust, which will help to conserve these ecosystems and amenities for everyone's benefit.

GOAL 1

We will map and monitor our natural environment

PRIORITIES 2030

- Conduct habitat and biodiversity audits to create our 2025 baselines and agree key metrics to track going forward
- Build an ArcGIS Habitat & Biodiversity Map of the Estate to visualise our progress in tree-planting, habitat restoration and species recovery over time
- Implement ongoing monitoring systems over the period to 2030



GOAL 2

Our local ecosystems will be supported, protected and enhanced

PRIORITIES 2030

- Set out a long-term natural environment investment plan, aligned with existing local plans, and implement a five-year programme of ecological restoration and climate adaptation projects. It will include improving three priority green spaces and ensuring rare and protected species have management plans
- Invest in the Estate's tree population to enhance amenity value and ecosystem services. It will include planting at least 50 additional trees per year and up to 5km of hedgerow over five years
- Value our natural capital effectively and explore biodiversity credit and habitat bank opportunities to bring in further investment
- Support the delivery of the 3-year programme of works with London Wildlife Trust to reunite and improve Dulwich and Sydenham Hill Woods

GOAL 3

We will facilitate community engagement with nature

PRIORITIES 2030

- Engage local people in conservation volunteering via our partnership with London Wildlife Trust and others
- Support the continued provision of space for allotments, greenhouses and community gardens to encourage growing and wellbeing





WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP FOR AN ENGAGED COMMUNITY

As caretakers of this special area, The Estate will play its full role as one important partner in a network of many, working to build engagement and ensure a resilient neighbourhood in the long-term.

Changing consumer habits are driving changes on the high street, which serve as a vital element of local economies. We will continue to try and secure a diverse blend of retail, services and spaces that reflect the changing needs of our local communities. We will enhance the public realm and seek to create accessible, well-used common areas for all to enjoy. Working with our commercial partners is a priority.

Where we can work in partnership to increase access to some of our buildings and green spaces, we will do this in order to reach broader audiences and create a wider sense of community. Christ's Chapel of God's Gift and areas of underused green space will be reviewed for greater use and access.

We also anticipate the continued enhancement of our provision of homes and spaces for businesses via our sustainable property refurbishment and developments in the years ahead.

Promoting local history and architecture is vital for preserving community identity, fostering a sense of belonging, and encouraging economic growth and educating future generations. We will continue to open access to our archives and history in a number of ways, highlighting local landmarks, creating educational resources and signage and digitising historic records.

GOAL 1

We will champion the high street

PRIORITIES 2030

- Curate commercial opportunities to meet long-term community and business needs
- Support seasonal events to support footfall and community links
- Improve the public realm where possible and increase accessibility through design

GOAL 2

We will increase accessibility to green space and enhance housing provision

PRIORITIES 2030

- Increase access to spaces by considering meanwhile use where possible, reviewing underused green pockets and engaging with the tenants of our sportsgrounds to enhance access
- Progress our refurbishment and development programme to ensure that we return any available site or vacant building to the most productive use as quickly as possible, subject to viability and planning
- Facilitate increased use of the Chapel for community events

GOAL 3

We will promote local history and architectural standards

PRIORITIES 2030

- Develop building design and retrofit guidance. Work with the Scheme of Management guidelines on sustainability standards
- Create a catalogue of historic documents to make relevant information about The Dulwich Estate easily available to researchers and public
- Develop and publish interpretations and maps

GOAL 4

We will train our staff in sustainability best practices and exchange knowledge and experience with other organisations

PRIORITIES 2030

- Develop and roll out sustainability training programme for internal staff and long-term contractors
- Connect with local organisations to share knowledge, experience and ideas in tackling our common sustainability challenges



GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT



The implementation and strategic oversight of our sustainability strategy is laid out as above.

Delivery and implementation of the Sustainability Strategy is delegated to the Head of Sustainability, working with colleagues across the Estate’s operations and with the Scheme of Management team.

The Sustainability Steering Group facilitated by the Head of Sustainability and reporting to the CEO reviews progress on the detailed Sustainability Action Plan on a monthly basis against Key Performance Indicators. The Board of Trustees reviews progress three times a year and approves the annual budget in line with their fiduciary duties to support delivery against the Estate’s charitable purpose.

The Estate’s organisational responsibilities include robust governance, risk management and workplace practices, as well as operational policies and procedures.

Finally, we will ensure we communicate regularly with our stakeholders on progress against our goals and targets.

MEMBERSHIPS



We are proud members of the Better Buildings Partnership and the UK Green Building Council. These provide excellent opportunities for colleagues to learn about the latest sustainability best practice in the built environment and engage with the wider buildings industry to discuss future-proofing challenges and opportunities.

We are also a member of the Southwark Biodiversity Partnership, which is proving invaluable in supporting our land management, ecosystem restoration and biodiversity enhancement work.



