



THE
ROYAL
PARKS

SUSTAINABILITY
STRATEGY
2025-30

CONTENTS

Foreword	3
Executive summary	4
Introduction	6
The role of sustainability at The Royal Parks	7
Our definition for success – 2030 priorities	10
Overview	11
Conserving the parks	12
Sustainable park operations	15
Parks for people	20
Glossary	23
Appendix – Our 2030 objectives	26



FOREWORD

I am delighted to introduce *The Royal Parks Sustainability Strategy 2025–30*. Sustainability will remain a defining focus for the charity long into the future; this strategy marks an important step in that continuing journey. It sets out a clear and practical plan for the next five years. One that not only addresses the challenges we face today but also positions us to evolve and lead in the years to come.

Developing this strategy has not been without its challenges, but those challenges pale in comparison to the pressures created by our changing climate. When we declared a climate emergency in 2020, we recognised both the scale of the crisis and the unique opportunity for our parks to make a positive difference.

Since then, we have made real progress. We have reduced our carbon footprint, improved the sustainability of our operations and made progress to support the resilience of our natural and built environments. As this strategy demonstrates, there is still much more to do.

We are already witnessing hotter, drier summers and wetter, windier and warmer winters. To adapt, we must take a holistic view of how the parks function. From diversifying our planting; adapting our approach to water management; reviewing our approach to event delivery; considering our energy usage through to changing the way we carry out our day-to-day operations, sustainability must be woven into everything we do. That is a very long-term challenge, but this strategy is the first step in setting out how we will achieve that.

The Royal Parks belong to everyone, now and in the future. It is our responsibility to ensure they remain places of beauty, resilience and inspiration for generations to come. By working hand in hand with our partners, visitors and communities, we can ensure the parks withstand the pressures of climate change and adapt to future uses. We have an outstanding opportunity to demonstrate how urban green spaces can contribute to a more sustainable world.

This strategy is a commitment to The Royal Parks charity acting boldly, transparently and thinking forward as we continue to care for London's most treasured landscapes.



A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Andrew Scattergood". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Andrew Scattergood CBE
Chief Executive

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



There is unequivocal evidence that climate change is accelerating at an alarming pace and that action to mitigate its worst impacts must be swift and decisive. The Royal Parks charity plays a crucial role in mitigating the impact caused by the climate crisis in London, by providing green spaces that act as carbon sinks, supporting wildlife offering recreational areas for visitors.

Adapting the parks to fulfil their potential as vital assets to help protect London and Londoners from the impact of these escalating threats, will be a key challenge for the charity to anticipate, problem solve and prioritise now and for many years to come.

To address this challenge, the charity will require a coordinated effort across every team, working with our visitors and with our partners. Climate resilience must be at the forefront of our planning and core to our decision making. Therefore, we have developed a Sustainability Strategy which will be the starting point in our journey to building climate resilience.

The cornerstone of the strategy is 'creating climate-resilient parks for future generations'.

Supporting the cornerstone, The Royal Parks charity is taking decisive climate action under three key themes: 'conserving the parks', 'sustainable park operations' and 'parks for people'. Under each theme, a series of priorities and subsequent objectives have been outlined within the strategy to ensure broad and effective outcomes. Below is an overview of the three themes.

CONSERVING THE PARKS

We are conserving the parks and enhancing the natural landscapes to protect crucial habitats to support wildlife, build climate resilience and to create beautiful green spaces.

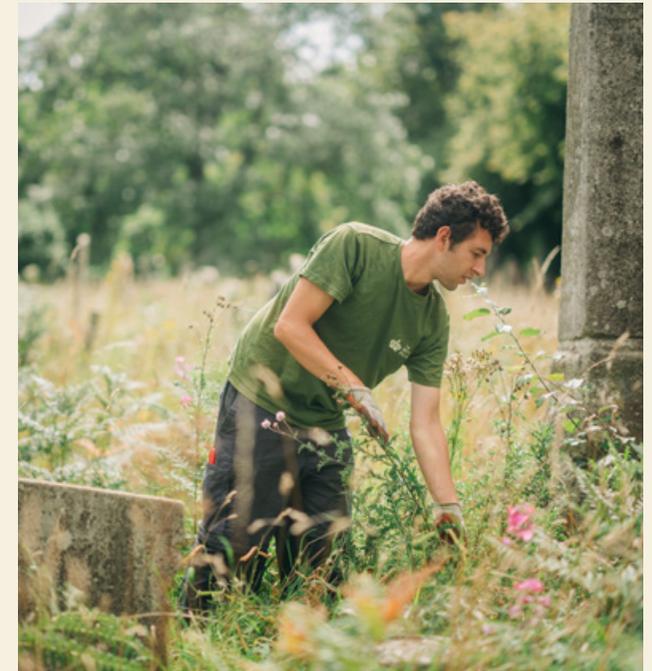
SUSTAINABLE PARK OPERATIONS

We are taking bold steps to ensure sustainable park operations by reducing our carbon emissions across everything we do, to effectively manage energy use and waste management, so that by 2030, we will eliminate all greenhouse gas emissions from our direct operations. But we are not stopping there. We are going further by starting to understand the carbon emissions produced by our supply chains and ensuring that we deliver resilient and responsible events too.

PARKS FOR PEOPLE

We are taking action through parks for people, so that the parks serve every visitor, now and in the future. These spaces offer a respite in an urban city environment and support the well-being of visitors. Providing beautiful, open green spaces that welcome every visitor is at the heart of all that we do. We are committed to creating climate resilience spaces and buildings, engaging local communities and those from further afield. We educate and share knowledge internally and externally.

We want to generate curiosity, discovery and enjoyment of everything the parks offer. Together, we will rise to meet the challenges of climate change so that London's Royal Parks are not only resilient but thriving for everyone, forever.



The Royal Parks is the charity which manages, protects and improves the parks in an exemplary and sustainable manner, so that everyone, now and in the future, can enjoy their natural and historic environments.

Creating climate-resilient parks for future generations



CONSERVING
THE PARKS



SUSTAINABLE
PARK OPERATIONS



PARKS FOR
PEOPLE

Photo: The Head Gardener in Brompton Cemetery.

INTRODUCTION

The Royal Parks is the charity that cares for the most famous collection of urban parks in the world. We exist to manage, protect and improve the parks in an exemplary, sustainable manner so that everyone, now and in the future, can enjoy their natural and historic environments.

As a charity, we look after eight Royal parks: Bushy Park, The Green Park, Greenwich Park, Hyde Park, Kensington Gardens, The Regent's Park and Primrose Hill, Richmond Park and St. James's Park. We also manage other exceptional public spaces in the city, including Brompton Cemetery in West London and Victoria Tower Gardens in Westminster.

We set ourselves the highest standards to make sure we protect and maintain these unique parklands responsibly, respectfully and sustainably while also welcoming millions of visitors every year.

Photo: Deer by the Longford River at Bushy Park.

CLIMATE EMERGENCY

The impact of extreme weather in the UK highlights the urgency of adapting to climate change. The record-breaking temperatures seen in summer 2022 brought unprecedented numbers of heat-related deaths, wildfire incidents and infrastructure disruptions. St. James's Park has registered historic high temperatures: 34.7°C in 2025 and 40.2°C in the heatwave of 2022. In 2024, for the first time recorded, the parks had to be closed multiple times due to high winds. Summer droughts, increasing winter rainfall, risk of wildfires and extreme weather events, (i.e. storms and flooding), are additional changing dynamics that are already impacting habitats, affecting local wildlife and plant species within the parks.

It's undeniable that the climate crisis is the most challenging emergency for mankind. The Royal Parks made a public commitment in 2020, recognising a global climate emergency and our opportunity to make a real difference. The Royal Parks plays a crucial role in mitigating the impact caused by the crisis, by providing green spaces that act as carbon sinks, supporting wildlife and offering recreational areas for the community. Adapting the parks to fulfil their potential as vital assets to help protect London and Londoners from the impact of these escalating threats, will be a key challenge for the charity to anticipate, problem solve and prioritise. It will start with this strategy and continue onwards into our future Corporate Strategy.



THE ROLE OF SUSTAINABILITY AT THE ROYAL PARKS

The core purpose of The Royal Parks is to deliver its charitable objects and our Corporate Strategy provides the mechanism to deliver them. The Corporate Strategy, (2022-27), is supported by this new Sustainability Strategy, (2025-30), which will set the foundation for the next iteration of our future corporate strategy. It is underpinned by a set of management plans that aim to capture the performance of all operational activities.

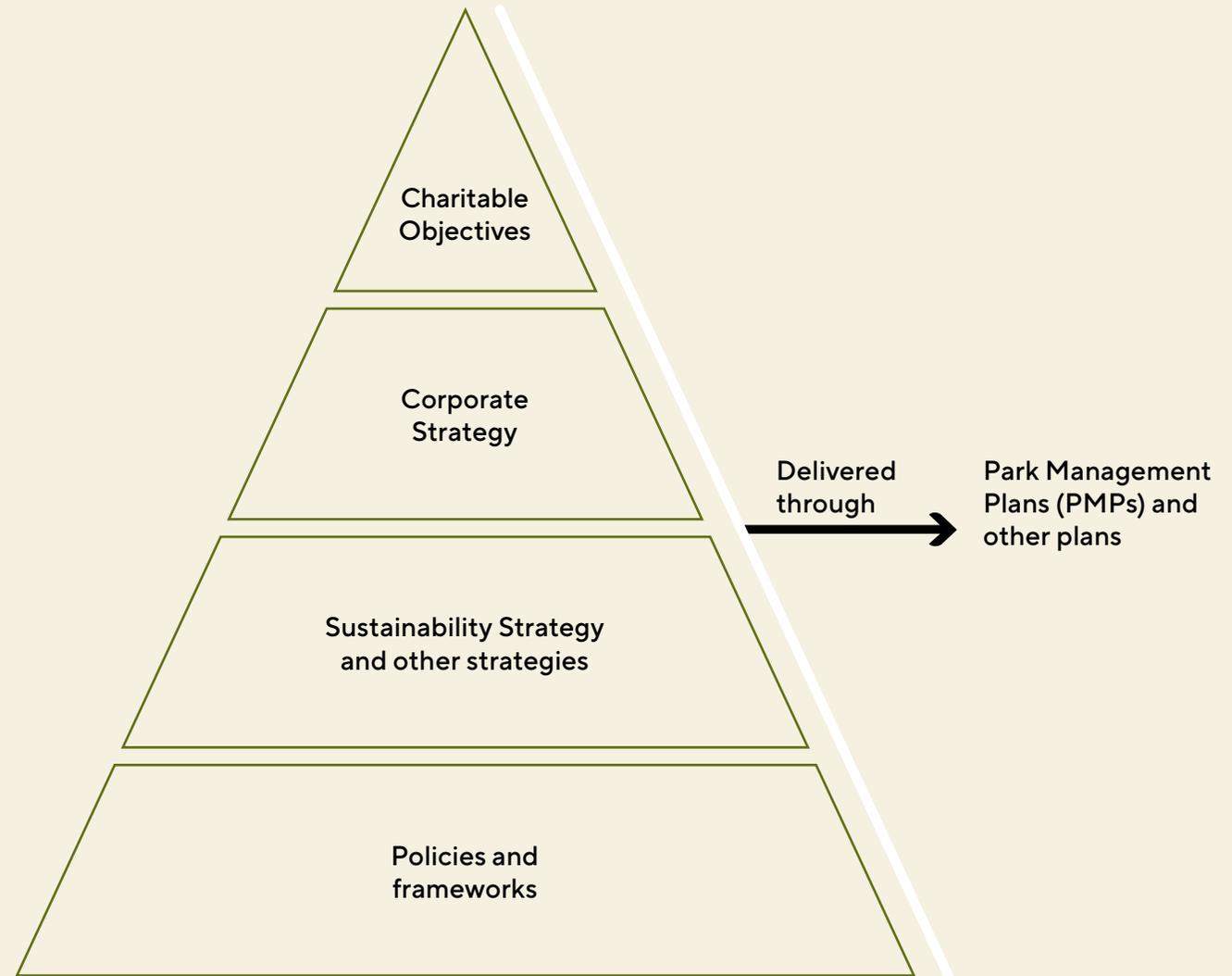


Figure 1: The Royal Parks' hierarchy for strategies and frameworks.

The Sustainability Strategy must help realise all five of the charity's charitable objects, as these are the fixed principles that define our purpose:

- To protect, conserve, maintain and care for the Royal Parks, including their natural and designed landscapes and built environment, to a high standard consistent with their historic, horticultural, environmental and architectural importance.
- To promote the use and enjoyment of the Royal Parks for public recreation, health and well-being including through the provision of sporting and cultural activities and events which effectively advance the objects.
- To maintain and develop the biodiversity of the Royal Parks, including the protection of their wildlife and natural environment, together with promoting sustainability in the management and use of the Royal Parks.
- To support the advancement of education by promoting public understanding of the history, culture, heritage and natural environment of the Royal Parks and (by way of comparison) elsewhere.
- To promote national heritage including by hosting and facilitating ceremonies of state or of national importance within and in the vicinity of the Royal Parks.

Photos: Bug hunting in Greenwich Park, volunteer rangers speaking to Richmond Park visitors and staff serving a customer at Primrose Hill Café.

In 2022, The Royal Parks' Board of Trustees approved a bold, new, five-year Corporate Strategy to ensure the ongoing improvement and the long-term protection of the parks. The Sustainability Strategy has been developed to align to its objectives:

- **Conserve and enhance:** We will protect the parks for future generations. Developing sustainable, resilient and biodiverse landscapes, whilst simultaneously maintaining the world-class horticultural excellence of the parks, is core to our ability to conserve and enhance these spaces. We must do all this whilst adapting to climate change and welcoming a growing number of visitors.
- **Welcome everyone:** The visitor will remain the key focus of our work. We want everyone to feel welcome in the parks, whatever their background. We want visitors to better understand what is available in the parks, where and how they might enjoy it. We will make sure people understand how they can play their part in that collective responsibility to keep the parks beautiful for future generations.
- **Building a secure future:** We will build a resilient charity, with a strong business model, that operates in a responsible, sustainable manner and has a focus on ensuring best value. We will add new sources of funding and grow existing income streams.





The Royal Parks is the charity which manages, protects and improves the parks in an exemplary and sustainable manner, so that everyone, now and in the future, can enjoy their natural and historic environments.

Creating climate-resilient parks for future generations



Delivering a complex strategy requires buy-in from all stakeholders. We have conducted a series of stakeholder engagement sessions enabling us to identify three key themes for action. These themes have been aligned to our charitable objects. Our approach to embedding sustainability across The Royal Parks, until 2030, is as follows:

The cornerstone of our strategy is ‘creating climate-resilient parks for future generations’. This one sentence is the backbone for our charity’s approach to sustainability. It needs to guide our vision for the charity for the next 150 years, to ensure we develop comprehensive

strategies to adapt our parks, so they promote environmental, economic, health and well-being benefits to all our park users, now and for future generations to come.

Creating climate-resilient parks for future generations will be enabled by three themes which will support the delivery of this ambition by addressing the multiple challenges of managing the parks.

- **Conserving the parks:** To protect, conserve and maintain the Royal Parks' landscapes and built environment to high standards, while also enhancing biodiversity and building climate resilience.

- **Sustainable park operations:** To fulfil our climate targets and efficiently manage energy and waste across the parks, whilst improving the resilience of our supply chain and delivering responsible events.
- **Parks for people:** To ensure that visitors continue to enjoy the parks’ inclusive spaces by future-proofing the green spaces and buildings in response to the changing climate, whilst advancing our sustainability agenda through accessibility, volunteering and education.

Photos: Staff tending to the Buckingham Palace flower beds, volunteer scything in The Green Park and visitors of Isabella Plantation at Richmond Park.

OUR DEFINITION FOR SUCCESS – 2030 PRIORITIES

To drive real change, we need clear, tangible outcomes. Our key themes and priorities underneath them for the next five years, define our vision of success and they will have dedicated objectives supported by a clear Sustainability Action Plan.

The Sustainability Strategy will be communicated to visitors, The Royal Parks' staff, our partners, suppliers and concessionaires, as well as our stakeholders to empower everyone to contribute to the delivery of its objectives. The priorities and outcomes of what we will achieve by 2030 are under each of the three themes for our Sustainability Strategy and are listed in the table below.



OVERVIEW

Creating climate-resilient parks for future generations



CONSERVING THE PARKS

Park management: We will have a strategic understanding of how the changing climate is likely to affect the parks. We will have a new approach to sustainable horticulture. We will continue to integrate climate resilience and sustainability practices into park management approaches to protect the long-term environment.

Preserving natural and designed landscapes: We will understand the impact of climate risks across different heritage sites. We will continue to explore and implement adaptation strategies for landscape preservation.

Enhancing biodiversity: We will have continued to implement actions within our Biodiversity Framework to make local habitats more resilient to climate change and to achieve wider sustainability objectives.

Protecting our water resources: We will understand how the changing climate is affecting the water supply and we will be proactively incorporating climate adaptation and mitigation strategies into water management practices across the parks.



SUSTAINABLE PARK OPERATIONS

Towards Net Zero: We will be operationally Net Zero. This means using cleaner energy sources and enhancing the energy efficiency of our own operations. We will aim to have a better understanding of our indirect greenhouse gas emissions, e.g. covering The Royal Parks' value chain and have set quantitative carbon reduction targets by 2030.

Resilient supply chains: For our key contracts, we will be implementing new sustainable procurement mechanisms to achieve greater integration of sustainability into every purchasing decision, as well as throughout the contract life.

Waste and circular economy: We will deliver effective waste management practices by reducing, reusing and recycling. We will prioritise waste minimisation and embrace circular economy principles, achieving zero waste to landfill.

Responsible events: We will continue to work with our event partners to improve sustainability across our events: protecting park assets, minimising waste, monitoring and reducing our carbon footprint whilst being welcoming to all.



PARKS FOR PEOPLE

Fit for purpose spaces and buildings: We will have a strategic understanding of how climate change is affecting buildings and public spaces, and we are implementing adaptive measures to ensure they remain fit for purpose.

Accessibility: We will continue to improve accessibility across all the parks, making them more inclusive and welcoming to all.

Volunteering: We will provide volunteers with training on the role of parks in London's climate resilience and The Royal Parks' sustainability aims.

Education and knowledge: We will have enhanced educational experiences by fostering a deeper connection with the natural environment, promoting hands-on learning and encouraging sustainable practices.

CONSERVING THE PARKS

- Park management
- Preserving natural and designed landscapes
- Enhancing biodiversity
- Protect our water resources



Addressing the impacts of climate change on the Royal Parks' landscapes is critical to ensure the enjoyment of the parks now and in the future.

Focusing on what we can directly control, we have selected four priorities under the theme of 'conserving the parks' to enable us to demonstrate our commitment to conserving the parks over the next five years.

PARK MANAGEMENT

The Royal Parks play an important role in enhancing London's climate resilience, by mitigating the urban heat island effect, managing flood risks, providing carbon storage, improving air quality and supporting biodiversity.

Each of the parks has a comprehensive ten-year management plan, (reviewed every five years), which enables us to responsibly manage the parks, maintaining the balance to conserve and enhance the unique environments, with the need to support education, culture and healthy recreation.

A key priority to addressing the full impact of climate change is defining new climate resilience principles and ensuring they are actioned into our management plans during the annual planning review. This includes developing sustainable horticultural practices and implementing opportunities for nature-based solutions.

PARK MANAGEMENT: OUR 2030 OBJECTIVES

- **Sustainable horticulture:** We will launch a new, park-wide approach to sustainable horticulture. This will focus on improving the visitor experience, better definition of planting styles that are more resilient to climatic extremes and improving overall quality.
- **Integrating climate resilience into park management:** Understanding how the changing climate is likely to affect the parks and have established a set of climate resilience principles. Through the annual planning reviews, integrating climate resilience and sustainability practices into the park management plans, to ensure long-term environmental stewardship.

PRESERVING NATURAL AND DESIGNED LANDSCAPES

The Royal Parks are of great value for their natural, built and cultural heritage, hosting buildings, statues and monuments of international significance. The impact of the changing climate on these historic, valuable assets presents huge challenges for future upkeep.

Most of the parks are Grade I-listed historic landscapes listed in the *English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England*. The exception is The Green Park which is Grade II-listed. All parks are located within conservation areas. Additionally, Greenwich Park is part of the UNESCO Maritime Greenwich World Heritage Site.

All the parks are also recognised for their nature conservation value. Both Bushy Park and Richmond Park are designated as of national importance as Sites of Special Scientific Interest. Richmond Park is also designated as a National Nature Reserve and recognised at the international level as a Special Area for Conservation. Furthermore, all parks are identified as Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) and the value of these SINCs is recognised in the [London Plan](#).¹ These often-multiple designations influence how projects are prioritised, designed and delivered.

Photo: Marbled white butterfly on common knapweed.

PRESERVING NATURAL AND DESIGNED LANDSCAPES: OUR 2030 OBJECTIVES

- **Preserving designated landscapes:** Maintaining nature conservation designations, characteristic and notable habitats and species in favourable condition/conservation status.
- **Conserving heritage:** Increase the resilience of natural, built and cultural heritage to adapt to climate change.

ENHANCING BIODIVERSITY

The Royal Parks delivers exemplary work to protect and support wildlife in public parks. The charity protects nature for its intrinsic value, whilst providing opportunities for visitors to connect with, experience and appreciate the natural world.

However, the wildlife in the Royal Parks faces significant threats due to the impact of climate change.

Biodiversity conservation accomplishments are led by The Royal Parks' Biodiversity team, supported by volunteer efforts and guided by objectives set in the Biodiversity Framework 2030. This strategy will support the delivery of those objectives by ensuring that newly developed climate resilience principles are incorporated within the Biodiversity Framework.



ENHANCING BIODIVERSITY: OUR 2030 OBJECTIVES

Through our [Biodiversity Framework](#),² which runs to 2030, we aim to make the Royal Parks "healthier, more resilient and better connected for wildlife and people in the heart of London," by:

- **Enhancing biodiversity:** Increasing resilience against the impacts of climate change, within the Royal Parks.
- **Protecting, conserving and enhancing priority and characteristic habitats and species:** Through the delivery of effective habitat management and creation projects in the Royal Parks.

¹Source: london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/the_london_plan_2021.pdf

²Source: royalparks.org.uk/park-management/biodiversity-conservation/biodiversity-framework

PROTECTING OUR WATER RESOURCES

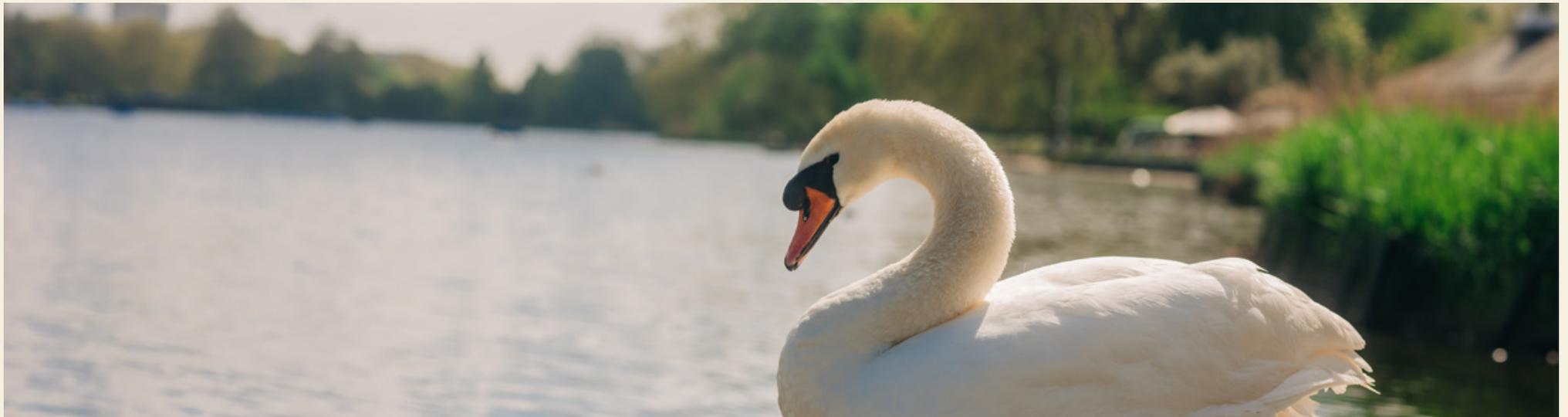
The lakes, rivers and ponds are some of the best-loved spaces in the parks. It is our duty to help nature thrive through responsible management of waterbodies, by keeping the park ponds, lakes and streams clean, maintaining water levels and improving water quality.

Climate change is predicted to cause more frequent periods of flooding and drought during the year. Storing water and managing water flow through the parks, will be increasingly important to help prevent local flooding and to protect the parks' natural landscape and wildlife within. Over the next five years, we aim to improve water quality and drive sustainable water management through the objectives below.

PROTECTING OUR WATER RESOURCES: OUR 2030 OBJECTIVES

- **Assessing climate change risks:** Evaluating the potential impacts of climate change, such as droughts and flooding, on our future water supply.
- **Driving continual improvement in water quality:** Continuously reviewing the quality of water bodies, implementing projects to improve water quality, implementing biosecurity measures and preventing contamination.
- **Implementing sustainable borehole management:** Abstracting from groundwater boreholes, wells and rivers, under Environment Agency licensing. Reducing the use of mains water, where possible. Continuing to use a proactive leak detection process to minimise water wastage and ensuring there is minimal environmental impact.
- **Surface water and catchment management:** Continuing to improve infrastructure to enhance water management and promoting sustainable practices in order to effectively manage surface water.

Photo: A swan by The Serpentine in Hyde Park.



SUSTAINABLE PARK OPERATIONS

- Towards Net Zero
- Resilient supply chains
- Waste and circular economy
- Responsible events



To build a resilient charity, we must adopt sustainable practices across our operations. We are committed to mitigating our impact on climate change from managing energy and waste across the parks to drive sustainability throughout our supply chains and events. To demonstrate our commitment to 'sustainable park operations' we have identified four key priorities.

TOWARDS NET ZERO

We have reported emissions associated with our operational activities since 2019-20 and we declared a climate emergency in 2020, supporting the global ambition for Net Zero by 2050 to limit global warming to 1.5°C. The UK has enshrined the Net Zero target by 2050 in law by revising and amending the *Climate Change Act 2008* in 2019, thus becoming the world's first major economy to set a legally binding Net Zero target.

Transparent reporting of our carbon footprint and ambition of achieving Net Zero was a key priority highlighted through stakeholder engagement. We have defined Net Zero as reducing greenhouse gas, (GHG), emissions by at least 90% and neutralising any residual GHG emissions on an ongoing basis. Discussions through our governance meetings

emphasised the need for high ambition, but also the desire to maintain honesty in our route to Net Zero, whilst acknowledging the challenges and reporting our progress. Noting the increased challenges with Scope 3, (indirect greenhouse gas emissions), we are prioritising the reduction of our direct and energy-related emissions first, to achieve immediate, measurable progress where we can make the most significant impact.

We have analysed how our core business emissions could change between now and 2030, considering upcoming changes within the organisation and outside factors like the expected decarbonisation of the National Grid. This analysis has identified key interventions that will be the first steps in reducing our Scope 1 and 2 emissions during this period.

OUR COMMITMENT

Achieving Operational Net Zero by 2030.

Working towards Net Zero by 2050.

We are also committed to explore opportunities that can strengthen our inhouse energy generation, by implementing solutions that create clean renewable energy

in our parks, in a non-disruptive manner that combines with the park’s landscape. These opportunities are an important step in our climate journey as they increase our energy security, reduce our greenhouse gas emissions but will also be important to the charity’s financial resilience, through reduced energy bills and protection against energy price fluctuations over the years. We will also consider the commercial aspect; investigating the possibility of selling energy to other users local to or operating within the parks.

ACHIEVING OPERATIONAL NET ZERO BY 2030: CORE COMMITMENTS

Our core commitments reflect continued progress in reducing operational carbon emissions, building on actions delivered to date. The focus is on actions that deliver immediate impact.

Our core commitments to ensure The Royal Parks achieve Operational Net Zero by 2030 include the following:

- Ensuring that all electricity purchased by The Royal Parks is from renewable sources, backed by Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin, (REGO), which provides full transparency about the proportion of electricity that suppliers source from renewable electricity. Securing these certificates in the future provides us with confidence in our claims and enhances transparency in our carbon reporting.
- Securing a supply of green gas, (biomethane), to cover all our heating needs. This supply will be supported by Renewable Gas Guarantees of Origin (RGGO).

- Continuing to use hydrotreated vegetable oil, (HVO), whilst exploring alternative solutions.
- Continuing the transition of our vehicles to an electric fleet.
- Exploring opportunities to reduce energy consumption across buildings and park assets.
- Exploring options for low-carbon fuels for incinerators at Richmond Park and Bushy Park, or outsourcing activities.

Figure 2 presents the trajectory of our core commitments to reach operational Net Zero by 2030.

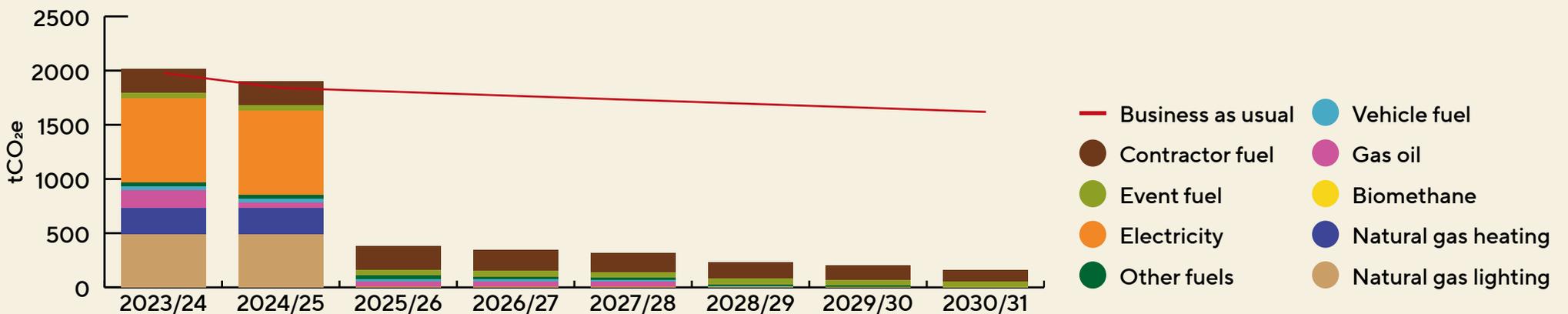


Figure 2: Operational Net Zero – emission profile 2030.

OPERATIONAL NET ZERO: BROADER AMBITION

To support our public-facing commitment to achieving operational Net Zero we have a broader ambition that considers several interventions that require capital investment.

The impact of the carbon mitigation of our core commitments is sufficient for the organisation to reach Operational Net Zero by 2030. Our broader ambitions include interventions that will further reduce residual direct emissions but will also have a positive impact on our Scope 3 emissions, which are a key area of focus as The Royal Parks works towards achieving Net Zero by 2050.

To ensure that the charity works towards reaching Net Zero by 2050, the electrification of our operations is key, as that will eliminate our dependency on fossil fuels and biofuels.

The interventions that we are exploring as part of this broader ambition are:

- Securing a dedicated mains electricity supply to the Hyde Park Parade Ground to power major events and improve local air quality.
- Working with contractors to transition to electric vehicles and equipment.
- Converting the nursery's energy source to electricity.

WORKING TOWARDS NET ZERO BY 2050

To achieve Net Zero by 2050 we must also address our Scope 3 emissions. This can be challenging due to their indirect nature, the complexity of data collection and the necessary effort for engaging with our sizeable supply chain. Our focus for the next five years will be to engage with our supply chain to achieve carbon reductions by improving our understanding of their data. Within the next five years of this strategy, we aim to set a quantified Scope 3 target which will support our long-term Net Zero ambition. We will also work to understand what the broad financial implications will be for this journey for the charity, exploring various funding opportunities available to us.



TOWARDS NET ZERO: OUR 2030 OBJECTIVES

We have an ambition to be Net Zero by 2050. On our journey to achieve this for the next five years, we will focus on:

- **Achieving operational Net Zero:** This represents emissions within our direct control, associated with heating and lighting our estate, vehicle fleet, park lighting and event power.
- **Engaging with our supply chain:** Achieving carbon reductions while

improving our understanding of data. We aim to set quantified Scope 3 targets within the next five years.

VISION BEYOND 2030

- **Indirect emissions targets:** Measuring progress against quantified Scope 3 reduction targets.
- **Continuing to engage with our partners in climate matters:** We want to have a Net Zero supply chain by 2050.

Photo: Nursery in Hyde Park.

RESILIENT SUPPLY CHAIN

Our action on sustainability is not just about our own efforts, but it is also about collaboration with our suppliers, partners and key stakeholders to achieve our collective goals. Our existing procurement approaches already consider environmental performance, but we are committed to strengthening this focus. Our ambition is to achieve a greater integration of sustainability into every purchasing decision and throughout the duration of the contract.

RESILIENT SUPPLY CHAIN: OUR 2030 OBJECTIVES

- **Establishing a Sustainable Procurement working group:** Establishing a Sustainable Procurement Working Group to evaluate our suppliers' performance against a set of sustainability criteria. These will be periodically reviewed.
- **Connecting with our suppliers:** Working closely with our suppliers throughout their contracts to review and continually enhance sustainability performance, guided by our sustainability criteria.
- **Conducting sustainability audits:** Auditing suppliers' obligations through our procurement platforms, using these databases we can evaluate our suppliers' environmental, ethical and health and safety performance.

WASTE AND CIRCULAR ECONOMY

With millions of visitors to the parks every year, waste management is a key aspect of our operations. In recent years, we have been dedicated to improving waste management practices within the parks and will continue with these efforts. Our focus is on managing the waste we generate by prioritising reduction, reuse and recycling, in line with the waste hierarchy. Although we cannot directly control all waste generated by visitors, it is essential that we manage it effectively.

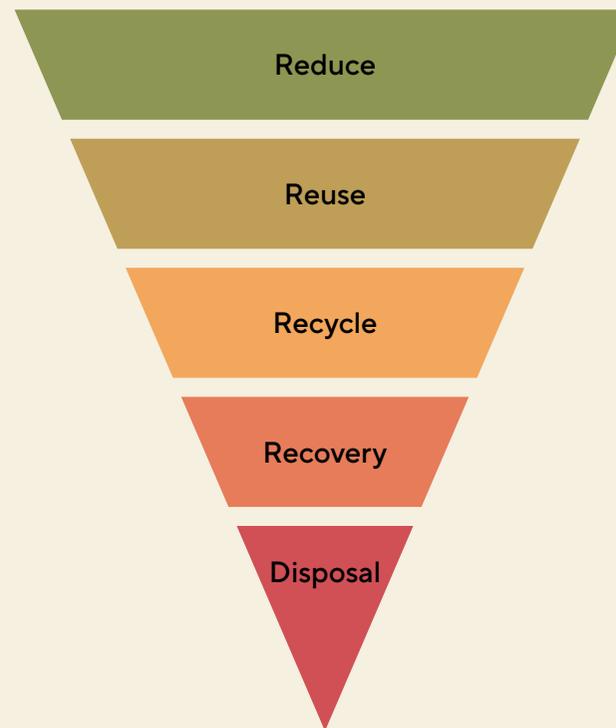


Figure 3: The waste hierarchy.

WASTE AND CIRCULAR ECONOMY: OUR 2030 OBJECTIVES

- **Moving up the waste hierarchy:** Actively seeking opportunities to reduce waste (e.g. working with our catering and retail outlets to reduce single use plastics and coffee cups).
- **Increasing recycling rates:** Maximising recycling efforts by implementing waste segregation (including recyclable and food waste).
- **Enhancing public engagement:** Connecting with stakeholders and visitors through in-park engagement, and through our community programmes to support our waste reduction initiatives.

RESPONSIBLE EVENTS

The parks have a long and historic tradition of hosting events. We host around 20 major events and hundreds of small events every year, excluding ceremonials, as well as licensing other activities, such as fitness training, horse riding and sporting activities. The unique settings of the parks are a major attraction to event organisers and there is high demand to host events in the parks.

We also provide a *Sustainable Events Best Practice Guidance* for event organisers, to review how they can embed sustainability into their events planning, delivery and derig.

Over recent years we have made great progress in the sustainability of our events. Our ambition is to build on this success and further embed sustainability across all events.

RESPONSIBLE EVENTS: OUR 2030 OBJECTIVES

- **Embedding sustainability into the planning and delivery of events:** Ensuring sustainable initiatives are incorporated for current and future events.
- **Ensuring continuous improvement:** Connecting with our event organisers to ensure the principles of ISO 20121 (Event Sustainability Management Systems) and ISO 14001 (Environmental Management Systems) are met and improved upon each year.
- **Enhancing waste management:** Prioritising the avoidance of waste at our events and providing facilities to ensure that recycling rates are increased where waste is unavoidable.
- **Addressing Modern Slavery risk:** Event organisers must carry out a modern slavery risk assessment for their event to identify and address any risks or concerns.

Photos: Hyde Park Winter Wonderland and a British Summer Time (BST) Hyde Park concert.



PARKS FOR PEOPLE

- Fit for purpose spaces and buildings
- Accessibility
- Volunteering
- Education and knowledge



The Royal Parks provide numerous benefits to both Londoners and visitors from further afield, offering spaces for recreation that promote physical and mental well-being, while also serving as key tourist attractions. Public parks are increasingly recognised as indispensable assets in the global effort to build climate-resilient cities, and the parks should be seen in this way for London. We must start planning ahead to anticipate how the parks will respond to and recover from the many different impacts of climate change, so that the parks can continue to serve visitors now and for many generations to come. The charity will need to be proactive, ensuring that the parks remain functional and continue to benefit everyone, no matter their background.

As a charity The Royal Parks offers free access to its parks and they are visited by tens of millions every year – they are vital locations for advancing climate adaptation. They are uniquely positioned to play a central role in responding to climate challenges through the charity's delivery of ambitious sustainable approaches.

This strategy is, for the first time, acknowledging this considerable challenge but also the opportunity under this theme 'parks for people'. We must act now to plan, develop and deliver effective approaches to climate adaptation, and ensure that we always put the future visitor experience at the heart of our design and decision-making.

We understand that to tackle this challenge, we must carefully invest in the delivery of fit-for-purpose spaces and buildings, whilst simultaneously enhancing public awareness and education of the impacts of climate change in the parks by fostering a deeper connection with the environment and encouraging hands-on learning and promoting sustainable practices. We have four key priorities to deliver under the theme of 'parks for people'.

FIT FOR PURPOSE SPACES AND BUILDINGS

The changing UK climate will impact the way in which people use the parks. Hot summers will likely attract more visitors, but this will bring a greater demand for shading and air conditioning within the cafés and buildings. We must consider how to adapt the buildings and public spaces to ensure they remain functional and welcoming.

We are building resilience by conducting a strategic review of climate risks across the parks, so that we can identify and implement mitigation measures to cope with the impact of climate change.

ACCESSIBILITY

Green spaces are exceptionally valuable within urban environments. They support biodiversity, enhance air quality, provide recreational spaces and contribute to mental and physical well-being. With growing urbanisation, it is even more vital to protect urban green spaces and to make the parks more accessible, welcoming and inclusive for everyone.

Our ambition is to ensure that the parks continue to be more accessible to all, accommodating the needs and enjoyment of diverse visitors.

FIT FOR PURPOSE SPACES AND BUILDINGS: OUR 2030 OBJECTIVES

- **Reducing consumption and improving efficiency:** Continually improving the energy efficiency in all The Royal Parks' buildings and offices.
- **Striving for sustainability excellency:** Exploring BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) or similar schemes both for new projects and for refurbishment projects.
- **Investigating potential for water recirculation:** Exploring ways to

improve water storage in all parks to help reduce pressure on sewers and other catchment areas, while simultaneously improving habitat for wildlife, without negatively affecting visitor enjoyment or access.

- **Continuously evaluating the most effective ways to adapt the buildings and cafés to climate change:** Working with our catering partners and other key stakeholders to build on the work delivered previously, to ensure that we always integrate the needs and expectations of visitors into the design of all spaces.

ACCESSIBILITY: OUR 2030 OBJECTIVES

- **Engaging local communities:** Continuing to connect with local communities and diverse audiences to co-design outreach activities, reflecting the needs of the public, fostering an inclusive approach.
- **Increasing programme participation:** Increasing programmes and activities

that cater to visitors with different abilities and backgrounds.

- **Enhancing accessibility:** Developing a new wayfinding strategy and providing more welcoming visitor information, making it easier for people of all backgrounds and abilities to access and navigate the parks, and enjoy their recreational and well-being benefits.

VOLUNTEERING

We have over 5,000 volunteers, who generously give their time across the parks, giving us the opportunity to go above and beyond to enhance the parks we care for.

Engaging with our volunteers through various channels such as newsletters and talks allows us to increase awareness and naturally communicate our current projects and our future ambitions with visitors and embed sustainable thinking at the heart of all volunteering.

Our Volunteer Rangers, in particular, present a further prime opportunity for communicating with the public about The Royal Parks' ambitions around sustainability as well as the critical role the parks play in local climate resilience. To equip our Volunteer Rangers, we are embedding The Royal Parks' Sustainability Strategy and climate risk as well as other sustainability topics into their training program. All new Volunteer Rangers receive induction training, regular webinars and walks and talks to maintain knowledge.

VOLUNTEERING: OUR 2030 OBJECTIVES

- **Improving our volunteers' understanding of our sustainability challenges:** Providing sustainability-oriented training to all volunteers across the parks.

EDUCATION AND KNOWLEDGE

The Royal Parks offer the opportunity for lifelong learning for visitors of all ages from all backgrounds. Outdoor hands-on learning can inspire a deeper understanding and appreciation of the environment and the role The Royal Parks play in supporting wildlife biodiversity and climate resilience.

Education can encourage positive sustainable visitor behaviours and long-term support for the conservation of all natural spaces, including the Royal Parks. This will be achieved through the learning programme, evidence-based research, establishing new partnerships and widening opportunities for participation to under-represented communities. Empowering communities through education can have wide ranging positive social impacts.

- **Directly engaging with our Volunteer Rangers on sustainability:** Creating workshops and briefings sessions with our volunteers to discuss the expected outcomes of the Sustainability Strategy and create bespoke information packs to better help them engage with park visitors.

EDUCATION AND KNOWLEDGE: OUR 2030 OBJECTIVES

- **Delivering Carbon Literacy training:** Introducing Carbon Literacy for all Royal Parks' employees.
- **Improving climate resilience awareness:** For Royal Parks' staff and volunteers to have a shared understanding of the impact of climate change, so that they can share key messages with colleagues, volunteers and visitors.
- **Delivering accessibility training:** Providing accessibility training to key staff to increase their knowledge of accessibility challenges in public spaces.
- **Inspiring young people:** Engaging primary and secondary school children and explaining the challenges of managing the Royal Parks. This will improve their understanding of science, climate change and communication challenges associated with the parks.

FEEDBACK

We'd like to thank all our stakeholders for contributing to our Sustainability Strategy.

If you have any feedback or questions on our approach to sustainability, please contact us: royalparks.org.uk/get-in-touch

GLOSSARY

TERM	DEFINITION
Accessibility	Accessibility refers to the design and provision of products, services, environments and facilities that can be accessed and used by everyone, of all abilities, gender, limited mobility or diverse backgrounds.
Biosecurity	As defined by RHS, the word 'biosecurity' means policies, processes and practical measures used to prevent the introduction and spread of harmful organisms, such as those that cause plant diseases (e.g. fungi, bacteria, viruses, aphids, mites, plant parasitic nematodes) and invasive plants.
Carbon dioxide equivalent (CO ₂ e)	This metric is used to describe different greenhouse gases in a common unit. For any quantity and type of greenhouse gas, CO ₂ e signifies the amount of carbon dioxide which would have the equivalent global warming impact.
Carbon emissions	See greenhouse gases.
Carbon footprint	Total amount of greenhouse gases (GHGs) emitted directly and indirectly by our activities, measured in carbon dioxide equivalent (CO ₂ e).

TERM	DEFINITION
Carbon sequestration	As defined by the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), carbon sequestration is the process of capturing and storing carbon in a carbon pool.
Circular economy	As defined by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation, circular economy is a "system where materials never become waste and nature is regenerated. In a circular economy, products and materials are kept in circulation through processes like maintenance, reuse, refurbishment, remanufacture, recycling, and composting."
Climate change	As defined by the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), climate change is a change in the state of the climate that can be identified (e.g. by using statistical tests) by changes in the mean and/or the variability of its properties and that persists for an extended period, typically decades or longer. Climate change may be due to natural internal processes or external forcings such as modulations of the solar cycles, volcanic eruptions and persistent anthropogenic changes in the composition of the atmosphere or in land use.

TERM	DEFINITION
Climate resilience	The International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) defines resilience as “The capacity of social, economic and environmental systems to cope with a hazardous event, trend or disturbance, responding or re-organizing in ways that maintain systems’ essential function, identity, and structure while also maintaining the capacity for adaptation, learning and transformation.”
Green Flag Award	The Green Flag Award® scheme recognises and rewards well managed parks and green spaces, setting the benchmark standard for the management of recreational outdoor spaces across the United Kingdom and around the world.
Greenhouse gases (GHG)	As defined by the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Greenhouse gases (GHGs) are gaseous constituents of the atmosphere, both natural and anthropogenic, that absorb and emit radiation at specific wavelengths within the spectrum of radiation emitted by the Earth’s surface, by the atmosphere itself, and by clouds. This property causes the greenhouse effect.
Global warming	As defined by NASA: “Global warming is the long-term heating of Earth’s surface observed since the pre-industrial period (between 1850 and 1900) due to human activities, primarily fossil fuel burning, which increases heat-trapping greenhouse gas levels in Earth’s atmosphere.”
Key contracts	We are defining key contracts as the top 80% of annual spend.

TERM	DEFINITION
Nature-based solutions	Defined by the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) as "actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural or modified ecosystems, that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits." NBS can align conservation and human well-being needs by simultaneously protecting climate, people and biodiversity. NBS explicitly focused on carbon sequestration are sometimes referred to as natural climate solutions.
Net Zero	The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change defines Net Zero emissions as when “anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases to the atmosphere are balanced by anthropogenic removals over a specified period.” Our ambition is working towards Net Zero by 2050.
Scope 1	As defined by the Greenhouse Gas Protocol, Scope 1 emissions are Direct GHG emissions that occur from sources that are owned or controlled by the company (for example, emissions from combustion in owned or controlled boilers, furnaces, vehicles, etc.), or emissions from chemical production in owned or controlled process equipment.
Scope 2	As defined by the Greenhouse Gas Protocol, Scope 2 emissions released into the atmosphere associated with the consumption of purchased electricity, heat, steam and cooling. These are indirect emissions that are a consequence of the organisation’s activities, but which occur at sources it does not own or control.

TERM	DEFINITION
Scope 3	As defined by the Greenhouse Gas Protocol, Scope 3 emissions that are a consequence of the organisation's actions, which occur at sources which it does not own or control and which are not classed as scope 2 emissions.
Sustainable procurement	As defined by the UK Sustainable procurement policy (2019), sustainable procurement is "a process whereby organisations meet their needs for goods, services, works and utilities in a way that achieves value for money on a whole life basis in terms of generating benefits not only to the organisation, but also to society and the economy, whilst minimising damage to the environment."
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	An area that's of particular interest to scientific interest and may entail specific conservation and preservation boundaries aligned to this, for example sites which contain rare fauna or flora or important geological or physiological features.

TERM	DEFINITION
Supply chain	The system and processes which are required for a business or firm to deliver goods and services of value to an end customer.
Value chain	Progression of activities that a business or firm performs in to deliver goods and services of value to an end customer.
Urban Heat Island (UHI)	As defined by the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the relative warmth of a city compared with surrounding rural areas, associated with heat trapping due to the close proximity of tall buildings, the heat-absorbing properties of urban building materials, reduced ventilation and heat generated directly from human activities.

APPENDIX - OUR 2030 OBJECTIVES



CONSERVING THE PARKS

PARK MANAGEMENT

- **Sustainable horticulture:** We will launch a new, park-wide approach to sustainable horticulture. This will focus on improving the visitor experience, better definition of planting styles that are more resilient to climatic extremes and improving overall quality.
- **Integrating climate resilience into park management:** Understanding how the changing climate is likely to affect the parks and have established a set of climate resilience principles. Through the annual planning reviews, integrating climate resilience and sustainability practices into the park management plans, to ensure long-term environmental stewardship.

PRESERVING NATURAL AND DESIGNED LANDSCAPES

- **Preserving designated landscapes:** Maintaining nature conservation designations, characteristic and notable habitats and species in favourable condition/conservation status.
- **Conserving heritage:** Increase the resilience of natural, built and cultural heritage to adapt to climate change.

ENHANCING BIODIVERSITY

Through our [Biodiversity Framework](#), which runs to 2030, we aim to make the Royal Parks "healthier, more resilient and better connected for wildlife and people in the heart of London," by:

- **Enhancing biodiversity:** Increasing resilience against the impacts of climate change, within the Royal Parks.
- **Protecting, conserving and enhancing priority and characteristic habitats and species:** Through the delivery of effective habitat management and creation projects in the Royal Parks.

PROTECTING OUR WATER RESOURCES

- **Assessing climate change risks:** Evaluating the potential impacts of climate change, such as droughts and flooding, on our future water supply.
- **Driving continual improvement in water quality:** Continuously reviewing the quality of water bodies, implementing projects to improve water quality, implementing biosecurity measures and preventing contamination.
- **Implementing sustainable borehole management:** Abstracting from groundwater boreholes, wells and rivers, under Environment Agency licensing. Reducing the use of mains water, where possible. Continuing to use a proactive leak detection process to minimise water wastage and ensuring there is minimal environmental impact.
- **Surface water and catchment management:** Continuing to improve infrastructure to enhance water management and promoting sustainable practices in order to effectively manage surface water.



SUSTAINABLE PARKS OPERATIONS

TOWARDS NET ZERO

We have an ambition to be Net Zero by 2050. On our journey to achieve this for the next five years, we will focus on:

- **Achieving operational Net Zero:** This represents emissions within our direct control, associated with heating and lighting our estate, vehicle fleet, park lighting and event power.
- **Engaging with our supply chain:** Achieving carbon reductions while improving our understanding of data. We aim to set quantified Scope 3 targets within the next five years.

RESILIENT SUPPLY CHAIN

- **Establishing a Sustainable Procurement working group:** Establishing a Sustainable Procurement Working Group to evaluate our suppliers' performance against a set of sustainability criteria. These will be periodically reviewed.

- **Connecting with our suppliers:** Working closely with our suppliers throughout their contracts to review and continually enhance sustainability performance, guided by our sustainability criteria.
- **Conducting sustainability audits:** Auditing suppliers' obligations through our procurement platforms, using these databases we can evaluate our suppliers' environmental, ethical and health and safety performance.

WASTE AND CIRCULAR ECONOMY

- **Moving up the waste hierarchy:** Actively seeking opportunities to reduce waste (e.g. working with our catering and retail outlets to reduce single use plastics and coffee cups).
- **Increasing recycling rates:** Maximising recycling efforts by implementing waste segregation (including recyclable and food waste).
- **Enhancing public engagement:** Connecting with stakeholders and visitors through in-park engagement, and through our community programmes to support our waste reduction initiatives.

RESPONSIBLE EVENTS

- **Embedding sustainability into the planning and delivery of events:** Ensuring sustainable initiatives are incorporated for current and future events.
- **Ensuring continuous improvement:** Connecting with our event organisers to ensure the principles of ISO 20121 (Event Sustainability Management Systems) and ISO 14001 (Environmental Management Systems) are met and improved upon each year.
- **Enhancing waste management:** Prioritising the avoidance of waste at our events and providing facilities to ensure that recycling rates are increased where waste is unavoidable.
- **Addressing Modern Slavery risk:** Event organisers must carry out a modern slavery risk assessment for their event to identify and address any risks or concerns.



FIT FOR PURPOSE SPACES AND BUILDINGS

- **Reducing consumption and improving efficiency:** Continually improving the energy efficiency in all The Royal Parks' buildings and offices.
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The Royal Parks is registered in England and Wales

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