

#### 04.09.1 **Overview 1994-2012**

- As the set-piece centre to this reach, Richmond Riverside's reinvention in the mid 1980s as a terraced setting for the riverside walk has continued to be highly popular in good weather, as an ampitheatre to watch the life of the river and passing crowds.
- London's Arcadia projects have further enhanced the area in the last 5 years.
- Open-air boat building and repair on the riverside outside Richmond Bridge Boathouse has been re-instated
- Improvements to Bridge House Gardens
- Loss of the Three Pigeons as a pub and Petersham Boat Services given over to residential use – but the Canoe Club, new and improved outdoor cafes, new little parks and the passenger boat pier all provide interest and activity along the way.
- The TLS character analysis and policies for the area were successfully used to support Richmond Council at appeal in refusing demolition of the Three Pigeons, although it was not possible to prevent the loss of the boatyard at Duck's Walk on the Middlesex Bank to housing.
- As part of London's Arcadia: Richmond Riverside, 2007 Completion of restoration of Richmond Riverside, St Helena Terrace and Cholmondeley Walk.
- New lights up Richmond Hill, (2007)
- Richmond Promenade. Improvements to the riverfront including landscape and access enhancements, new seating areas, lighting, interpretation (2007).
- Terrace Field re-location of fencing and planting to open up direct route and view. New planting to re-introduce native species

### LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

04.09.2 Richmond meets the Thames in a characteristic leafy elegance. There are distinct 'gateways' to the town along and across the river. From upstream, the mown lawns and tall plane trees of Buccleuch Gardens mark a clear entrance, contrasting with the long grass of the open water meadow. From downstream, the brick arch of the railway bridge acts as a gateway from the open expanse of the Old Deer Park to the more formal enclosure of the Palace waterfront. And from across the river, Richmond Bridge acts as a magnificent entrance to the town, with the terraces of Richmond Riverside to the west, gigantic plane trees to the east, and the lively neon of the Odeon cinema straight ahead. Pausing on the bridge, the view downstream looks at the White Cross Hotel, Asgill House and the succession of the railway, Twickenham and Richmond Lock bridges. Upstream the view rises up the slopes of Richmond Hill to the Terrace and the spire of St Matthias' Church.

04.09.3 On sunny weekends, Buccleuch Gardens takes on the atmosphere of a public beach. The south-facing lawns, sweeping down to the river's edge, are covered in deck chairs, rugs and sunbathers.



Buccleuch Gardens

This is one of the most popular spaces along the river, linked to the immaculate Victorian Terrace Gardens above by a replica of Pope's Grotto, and by the towpath to the centre of Richmond.

04.09.4 The footpath curves to the back of the Gardens, leaving mature trees, simple grass lawns and uninterrupted river views to create a very successful public space. The foundations of the old Buccleuch House provide an arcade and raised platform at the edge of the gardens where the deck chairs are stored. This structure could be adapted for performances and could house improved public lavatories, replacing the poorly-sited existing block. The banks of Buccleuch Gardens have been repaired with attractive wooden piling.

04.09.5 2012 Update: The Terrace Gardens have been restored by the London Borough of Richmond.

04.09.6 Between Buccleuch Gardens and Richmond Bridge, the waterfront is separated from the narrow Petersham Road by a row of attractive houses and hotels. Above the road, apartment buildings and the Poppy Factory rise up Richmond Hill, while below the Petersham Road houses, long gardens with tall trees create a shaded backdrop to the river path.

04.09.7 2012 Update: The Three Pigeons public house, a fine example of Victorian pub architecture, has now been converted to apartments. Further along, the former Petersham Boat Services and adjoining early 20th century properties have been replaced by housing. Although the canoe club retains its premises, the adjoining arches and doors which echo boat-house style in fact conceal a car park for the flats above.

04.09.8 2012 Update: The landing stage brings added activity to the extremely well-used promenade. The little pocket-parks and cafes along Richmond Promenade provide magnificent havens to escape the hustle and bustle of the towpath. They have undergone much improvement over recent years by the London's Arcadia project as have the paths and ramped access between Richmond Bridge and the Thames Path. An accessible entrance has been created at the Bandstand Gardens. The Bridge House, Rotary, Bandstand Gardens have been restored and re-planted and the row of cherry trees alongside Richmond Landing Stage has been gapped up. Ornamental cherries have traditionally been planted next to the landing stage as their flowering coincides with the first trip boats of the season. Richmond Bridge Boathouses uses one of the bridge arches for boat-building, and in the next arch is Tide Tables café; its graveled outside area with tables overlooking the promenade makes for a lively scene in good weather, complemented by the much-improved Bridge House Gardens on the slope above. The arched boathouses downstream of the bridge are used for boatbuilding; the building and repair of traditional wooden boats extends onto the Richmond Riverside, and attracts many passers-by to stand and watch. Rowing boats, camping skiffs and bikes can be hired from the boathouses. Despite an identified need, there is no visitor mooring in Richmond.

04.09.9 Further downstream of the bridge, the Richmond Riverside



Between the Bridges



Cholmondeley Walk to Asgill House in winter



Cholmondeley Walk to Asgill House in summer

was enhanced as part of the re-development of the Richmond Riverside in the late 1980s, and opened as a series of sunny terraces overlooking the water. There were divided views at the time about the Georgian-style architecture, but the riverside space is extremely successful with an exemplary quality of surfaces and furnishings although the riverside paving is now in need of repair. The brick and granite embankments, steps and slipways allow people to take full advantage of the river and spill out from adjacent pubs, wine bars and restaurants, and there is now a restaurant overlooking the slope on the ground floor of the offices. The White Cross Hotel and the arched boathouses in the base of St Helena Terrace retain the atmosphere of the old town, connecting back to the centre along narrow cobbled alleys. The arched boathouses were echoed in the new development.

04.09.10 2012 Update: Heron Square still generates little activity other than during the Saturday farmers' market.

04.09.3 From St Helena Terrace, Cholmondeley Walk skirts the edge of the old Richmond Palace. Improvement works as part of London's Arcadia have provided good quality new gravel and granite set surfaces, bollards and seats. Fine old trees screen the Queensberry House apartments and frame views of the Trumpeter's House and Asgill House. Paths connect back from the riverside to the Old Palace Yard and Richmond Green, creating an impressive sequence of spaces linking the river with the centre of the town, with the exception of the bald area of car parking at Friar's Lane car park behind St Helena Terrace.

04.09.11 2012 Update: The removal of trees from the riverside has reinstated traditional views. There is a new historical information board for visitors installed by the Richmond Society at the end of Old Palace Lane.

04.09.12 The Middlesex bank, originally set with villas and their parks, has been gradually developed for housing. The fine modern architecture of Haversham Grange continues the tradition of villas set back between trees, but the brick blocks of Richmond and Richmond Bridge Mansions advance on the river's edge. The development of apartments on the former ice-rink site has had considerable impact on the Richmond bank, although the design attempted to break up the mass with modelling and window detail. The asphalt path, sporadic rose beds, dried-out grass and municipal tennis courts do not make the most of what could be a spectacular waterfront promenade, looking across to Richmond and the Hill. A new line of riverside plane trees would mirror the trees on the opposite bank and help to reduce the impact of re-development.

04.09.13 2012 Update: Below the bridge, riverside sites are now entirely occupied by housing of widely varying design, including two timber-clad houses replacing the former boatyard used by the Sea Scouts and with associations with Commander Lightoller of Titanic renown. A gated development next door gives only very limited public access to the riverside. Houseboats and private moorings form a varied scene, and the restored early 20<sup>th</sup> century diesel launch Lillian is a fine



Boat building on Richmond Riverside adds much to the local character and is a source of much local pride

sight, but there is no longer any working boatyard activity on this side of the river.

04.09.14 Though partially screened by the willows on Corporation and Flower Pot Islands, this bank is prominent in the view from Asgill and Trumpeter's Houses and the Richmond Palace towpath. Suburban housing can be glimpsed behind the thin river edge. Thicker plantings of willows on the banks as well as the islands would do much to soften the view.

#### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

04.09.15 The manor of Shene, Richmond's Saxon name, was part of the royal manor of Kingston in Domesday, but was separated early in the 12th century. At the beginning of the 14th century, the manor reverted to the Crown and in the second half of the century Edward III converted the manor house into a palace. Edward lavished considerable sums on the project; and his successor Richard II created a summer pavilion on an island in the river, but when his Queen died there he had the palace demolished out of grief. A new palace, built by Henry V and Henry VI, was burnt down in 1497 and was rebuilt by Henry VII, who took advantage of the Tudor peace to break from defensive architecture. This time instead of battlements he could erect gothic towers and pepperpot domes on his palace and enjoy games of chess and cards in the galleries around his riverside gardens. It was to this palace, an 'erthely and secunde Paradise', which, because of its 'wholesome airs' became the royal nursery, that Henry VII gave his title as Earl of Richmond and the town soon took its name.



Richmond Palace in 1635

04.09.16 Henry VIII used the palace frequently before he acquired Hampton Court and there were sumptuous pageants with jousting on the Green and processions along the Thames. Elizabeth called it her 'warm winter box' eventually taking refuge there to die. James I created a new park, now the Old Deer Park. His son, Prince Henry, planned a Renaissance court at Richmond with magnificent gardens but died before his ideas, which included a huge Pratolino-type grotto giant on an island on the Thames, could be carried out. Reclamation of the riverfront for the project had already been completed by Inigo Jones. The palace, which covered 10 acres from what is now old Palace Lane to Water Lane, declined and Hampton Court rose in favour. It was



St Helena Terrace before restoration



St Helena Terrace after restoration



Richmond Ferry in 1726 before the bridge was built



Cambridge Park, 1803 Richard Owen

sold off by Parliament in 1650 and the main buildings were quickly demolished. All that now remains of the once favourite royal palace is the original gateway into the courtyard carrying the arms of Henry VII and Nos. 1,2,3 The Wardrobe in Old Palace Yard. Richmond's fortunes changed in 1718, when the future George II and Queen Caroline made Richmond Lodge in the Old Deer Park a royal retreat. An elegant terrace of houses was built for Caroline's Maids of Honour and other courtiers' houses appeared round the Richmond Green.

04.09.17 Defoe greatly admired the area, with 'houses surrounded by gardens, walks, vistas, avenues representing all the beauties of building and all the pleasures of planting'. He feared, however, that its status and popularity would decline if the Court ever left. By the time this happened, later in the century, Richmond had established itself in its own right as a healthy, scenically beautiful place to live in and a popular pleasure resort by river for Londoners to enjoy its chalvbeate wells, pleasure gardens, concert hall and theatre. In 1744 Thomson's friend, the poet and physician John Armstrong, had extolled, in The Art of Preserving Health, 'Richmond's green retreats' where 'an hundred villas rise'. Richmond's dominant character is still one of residential elegance, based on its long connection with the court and the out-oftown world of wit and fashion. Its latest riverside development highlights the town's determination to retain the atmosphere of its elegant past. A complex of buildings, designed by Quinlan Terry in Georgian style, evokes a memory of Richmond's royal past. One, with its pediment and portico is based on one of William Chambers' designs for a palace, never built, for George III in the Old Deer Park.

04.09.18 A pleasurable riverside promenade was made beside the Earl of Cholmondeley's mansion in the 1740s and in 1760 Asgill House was built 'after a design of Palladio' by Sir Robert Taylor for Sir Charles Asgill, recently Lord Mayor of London. Asgill House was painstakingly restored to its original proportions in the 1970s by Fred Hauptfuhrer.

04.09.19 In 1774-7 Richmond Bridge was built on the site of the old ferry, transforming the appearance of the town. The bridge, built by James Paine, who had designed ornamental bridges in landscaped gardens, was hailed not only as a great convenience but as 'one of the most beautiful ornaments of the river'.

04.09.20 At the foot of the bridge on the Twickenham side, Walpole's friend, Richard Owen Cambridge, removed the walls round his house and opened his lawns to the river to the delight of tourists who found them ideal for picnics. The area was developed as Cambridge Park at the end of the 19th century and later, before the days of planning legislation, factories, a bus garage and an ice rink were built beside Cambridge's old house, which was demolished in the 1930s.

04.09.21 2012 Update: Following the demolition of the Richmond Ice Rink the site was re-developed as housing including an attractive riverside walk.

#### NATURE CONSERVATION AND FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT

04.09.22 Corporation Island has a woodland of white, crack and weeping willows and also some hybrid black poplars that were planted in 1953 to mark the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. The banks of the island have reasonable nature conservation interest. Some of the stone-work appears to be collapsing and when replaced should be designed to allow vegetation to grow on it again. The island is an important nesting site for birds including ducks and herons. Cormorants can be seen sunning themselves in the tree tops and the occasional seal has been spotted on the sand bars that emerge at low tide. The island is used by Richmond Bridge Boathouses for skiff storage.

04.09.23 Flowerpot Islands are almost entirely covered by hard surfaces, with just one or two mature trees in the centre of each. However, mallards and Canada geese find them a convenient resting place. It would be helpful to break up the hard surface to allow plants to grow and to assist natural regeneration of the trees that are starting to topple over.

04.09.24 Though the towpath becomes more urban as it passes through Richmond, the substantial plane trees and small side parks continue the green corridor effect between Petersham and the Old Deer Park.

04.09.25 2012 Update: The TLS Towpath Management Plan has introduced a mowing regime for the revetments to encourage the growth of native riparian plants rather than the sea of Himalayan balsam and dock that had colonized the reach. The regime has proved particularly successful — all but eradicating the balsam allowing mallows, water mint and purple loosestrife to flourish.

04.09.26 2012 Update: Long stretches of the towpath flood on the spring tides. This does not however, cause disruption to the boat repair yards or businesses located in the flood risk zone. As the high tide approaches, flood boards are positioned to protect dry areas or the building is simply allowed to flood – being designed to be managed in this way. The high water, whilst providing much local amusement, does affect recreational patterns. The cobbled area near the White Cross is often under water and Richmond Waterfront, Promenade and Cholmondeley Walk are inundated on the highest tides. A series of accessible escape routes have been installed through the pocket parks and a dry route created along the Petersham Road. Signage has been installed to navigate the user through the town during inundation between Old Palace Lane and Richmond Bridge. Flotsam and jetsam is a particular problem in this reach and should be cleared up once high water has receded.

#### **PUBLIC ACCESS AND RECREATION**

04.09.27 The Richmond waterfront is one of the key gateways to the Arcadian Thames and one of the best-used promenades along the



Thames Water Kiosk, Old Palace



Low tide at Richmond



Richmond Riverside is designed to flood



'Waiting for the steamer'



Richmond Promenade



Restored steps at Bridge House Gardens



Bridge House Gardens

river, particularly on sunny weekends.

04.09.28 2012 Update: Two interpretation panels tell the story of the river, Richmond Lock and the area's waterman heritage. An additional map-based panel encourages visitors to explore further afield. The popularity of the area has had its downside. Litter is a constant source of local annoyance although in recent years a new initiative has greatly improved the appearance of the area and the Slug and Lettuce bar, located directly on the riverside, is meticulous in its efforts to keep the area clean and tidy. In addition to small side parks, cafes, pubs and restaurants, tourist boats from Westminster dock at the landing stage. Clear and easy connections back to the town centre link to the South West Trains railway network and the London Underground District Line at Richmond Station. St Margarets railway station is half a mile back from the Middlesex bank.

04.09.29 The Richmond Canoe Club, the Riverside and St Helena boatsheds and skiff hire from Richmond Bridge provide a range of sources for all the water recreation along the reach. Camping skiffs and bikes are also available for hire at Richmond Bridge Boathouses. The converted Oxford University Barge provides a popular floating restaurant. There are tennis courts in Cambridge Gardens and cricket is played on Richmond Green.

#### Boat building and repair:

Boathouses at Richmond Bridge (Mark Edwards & Bill Colley) Thames Wherry Trust boathouse at Richmond Riverside

#### Water recreation:

Richmond Canoe Club Richmond Pier and Landing Stage Skiff hire at Richmond Bridge Boathouses Turk's Pier passenger boats to Westminster and Hampton Court

### Land recreation:

Buccleuch Gardens
Cambridge Gardens
Fishing from Richmond waterfront
Museum of Richmond
Richmond Riverside and waterfront
Terrace Gardens
Thames Path

# Landmarks:

Asgill House
Odeon Cinema
Richmond Bridge
Richmond Lock
Richmond Railway Bridge
Richmond Riverside
Spire of St Matthias' Church, Richmond Hill
The White Cross Hotel
Tower of Church of Elizabeth of Portugal

#### **LOCAL INTEREST GROUPS**

Amenity and Local History:

Twickenham Local History Society

East Twickenham and Riverside Residents' Assoc.

Richmond Local History Society

Richmond Society

River Thames Society (Upper Tideway)

**Thames Wherry Trust** 

**River Thames Visitor Centre** 

Nature Conservation:

London Wildlife Trust

Richmond and Twickenham Friends of the Earth

## **PRINCIPAL LAND USES**

04.09.30 The Richmond waterfront above the bridge is divided between small parks and the gardens of the Petersham Road houses and hotels. The Canoe Club is a small but active part of the river edge. Below the bridge, the Riverside terraces are backed by offices, restaurants, apartments and the Old Town Hall. Further downstream, the river edge reverts to the private houses of St Helena Terrace and Cholmondeley Walk, and the gardens of the houses on the site of the former palace.

04.09.31 On the Middlesex bank, the old Richmond Ice Rink was demolished to make way for a continuous development of apartment blocks through Cambridge Gardens. Below the bridge, houseboat moorings share the riverside with private houses and a block of flats.

#### Review of Guidance, Project and Management & Maintenance

Projects and management proposals will evolve over time, with details and priorities set in the TLS Annual Action Plan and project briefs. The Action Plan provides greater detail for each project and provides the basis for ongoing monitoring. Please refer to the Appendix for a copy of the 1994 Policy, Project and Management Proposals.

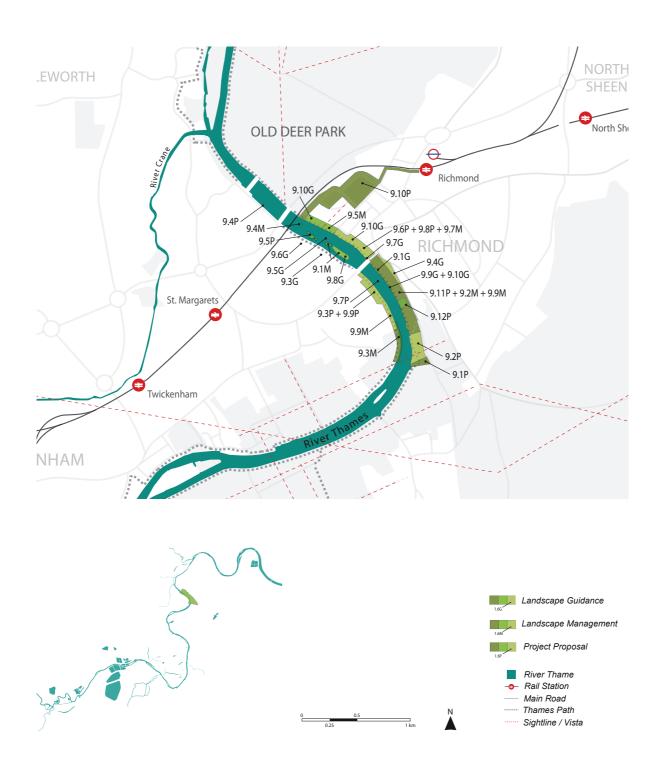
Key: Green: Taken from the 1994 TLS Report with minor

amendment where appropriate
Blue: New proposal for 2012 Review

Yellow: Deleted since 1994 due to completion or changing

policy or priority

# **Policy and Project Review**



Guidance Promoted by the Thames Landscape Strategy and How this Relates to Planning Policy			
TLS Ref.	2012 Guidance	Related Planning Policy Cross Reference	
9.1G	Conserve and enhance the special character of leafy elegance along Richmond's waterfront, with particular emphasis on the distinctive 'gateways' to the town along and across the river.	London Plan – 7.29 LBRuT – CP 11, DM OS 11, DM OS 12	
9.2G	Protect the visual links between: Richmond Bridge and Asgill House Richmond Bridge and Richmond Hill Richmond Bridge and the Railway, Twickenham & Lock bridges	London Plan – 7.12 LBRuT – DM HD7	
9.3G	Limit building heights on the Middlesex bank to conserve the prominence of Richmond Hill and retain an impression of a tree-covered landscape, with buildings largely hidden beneath the canopies.	LBRuT – CP 11, DM DC 3, DM	
9.4G	Conserve and enhance the critical trees in the private gardens between the Petersham Road and the towpath.	LBRuT – DM DC 4	
9.5G	Resist the loss of boat building and storage facilities and their replacement by uses not functionally related to the river and encourage ground-level boatsheds in future riverside re-developments	LBRuT - CP 11, DM OS 11, DM OS 12	
9.6G	Make riverside access and river edge tree planting a pre- condition of any re- developments along the Middlesex bank between Richmond Bridge and the railway bridge.	LBRuT – DM DC 4	
9.7G	Retain traditional Thames boat building activity on Richmond Riverside as an integral part in shaping the character of the open space.	LBRuT - CP 11, DM OS 11, DM OS 12	
9.8G	Conserve and enhance the nature conservation interest of the river and its corridor, with particular attention to Corporation and Flowerpot Islands.	London Plan – 7.19 LBRuT – CP 4, CP 11, DM OS 5	
9.9G	Continue to control vehicular access along Richmond Promenade. Monitor and control the use of motorized buggies used by food outlets during the evening.		
9.10G	Ensure that all light is of a soft white type between Richmond Lock and Buccleuch Gardens		
9.11G	Control parking on the draw docks to allow for boat movement at all times		

Project Proposals				
TLS Ref.	2012 Project	Other Stakeholders		
9.1P	Re-design the area at the junction between the Thames Path and the Terrace Field at Chitty Hole to make a more attractive and inviting connection between the Hill and the riverside walk	LBRuT , EA		
9.2P	Enhance the old foundation arches of Buccleuch House to accommodate performances, lavatories and maybe a cafe to serve the popular riverside lawns.	LBRuT		
9.3P	Redesign Cambridge Gardens and the Warren footpath as an elegant waterfront promenade of plane trees and benches, looking across to Richmond.	LBRuT		
9.4P	Encourage willow planting on the Middlesex bank between Richmond Bridge and the railway bridge.	LBRuT		
9.5P	Break up the hard surface on Flowerpot Islands and thicken the planting of crack willows.	Landowners		
9.6P	Consider installing more bike racks to serve Richmond Riverside	LBRuT		
9.7P	Investigate the potential for visitor boat mooring at Richmond Promenade.	LBRuT/ EA		
9.8P	Resurface Richmond Riverside to replace the broken paving slabs. Interpret the old waterman areas through the use of granite sets positioned in the ground.	LBRuT		
9.9P	Consider ways to soften the flood wall alongside Cambridge Gardens particularly when viewed from Richmond Bridge and Richmond Promenade	EA		
9.10P	Enhance the links between the river and the station via Cholmondeley Walk and Richmond Green	LBRuT		
9.11P	Re-surface Richmond Promenade in sealed gravel.	LBRuT		
9.12P	Investigate the potential for the restoration of Gothic Gardens.	LBRuT		
9.13P	Ensure that all light is of a soft white type between Old Palace Lane and Buccleuch Gardens			
Completed	Redesign the paths, retaining walls, benches and little side-parks along the waterfront between Buccleuch Gardens and Richmond Bridge, to create a more attractive promenade worthy of the use and setting. The side parks should relate to the water and be designed to create popular spaces off the busy towpath. Improve surfaces for wheelchair access.	Completed through London's Arcadia project except Gothic Garden and the re-surfacing of Richmond Promenade and area at junction of Buccleuch/Petersham Meadow. See 9.11P & 9.12P		
Completed	Upgrade the design and quality of the seasonal food outlets along the waterfront between Buccleuch Gardens and Richmond Bridge.	Generally achieved through development control and new ownerships		
Completed	Re-open boat storage areas under Richmond Bridge.	Done 1996 (see policy 9.7 above)		
Completed	Remove the wrought iron gazebo and restaurant marquee from the Richmond Riverside and improve the quality of lighting.	Done		
Completed	Improve the paving, seating and litter collection along Cholmondeley Walk, keeping the bank between the path and river free of trees.	Done 2001		
Delete	Plant trees to shade and soften the area of parking behind St Helena Terrace.	Possible development, but would include planting. Deleted by LBRuT.		

Managemen	Management and Maintenance Proposals			
TLS Ref.	2012 Proposal	Stakeholders		
9.1M	Manage the willows on Corporation and Flowerpot Islands for nature conservation and visually to separate the two banks.	Landowners		
9.2M	Control scrub growth between the towpath and the river and manage vegetation to prevent it becoming too rank.	LBRuT		
9.3M	Protect overhanging trees on the Warren Footpath close to the foreshore as habitat and fish refuge at higher tides	LBRuT		
9.4M	Improve facilities for fishermen with informal swims and bins	LBRuT		
9.5M	Coppice willows on Richmond Promenade and Cholmondeley Walk on a two year coppice re-using the withies as stakes for spiling.	LBRuT		
9.6M	Continue to carry out additional litter picks during busy periods. Extend the scope to Richmond Promenade, Buccleuch Gardens and Cholmondeley Walk.	LBRuT		
9.7M	Manage the grassed area in front of Trumpeters House and on the riverside at the immediate end of Old Palace Lane as an area of amenity grassland for picnickers to use.	Landowners		
9.9M	Control weed growth along the Warren Footpath, Richmond Promenade and Richmond Riverside that encroaches onto the footpath.	LBRuT		