
South Thamesmead Garden Estate

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THAMESMEAD 

 Peabody

The South Thamesmead Garden Estate project is all about investing in the open spaces around South Thamesmead to make them more welcome, accessible and useful for the local community.

Our plan is simple. It's about getting closer to nature by improving outdoor areas. We are working with local people to design and create these spaces with us.

We are investing £3.9million into the South Thamesmead Garden Estate project so that we can bring more nature to our streets and open spaces while improving biodiversity and adjusting to the effects of climate change.

Having collaborated with members of the local community to decide which improvements we'll be making to which areas, we're pleased to present this booklet. This provides an overview of the development of our designs, including what some of these spaces will look like once works are complete.

Our planned improvements include:

The transformation of Abbey Way from an underused space to a flourishing park which is a pleasure to walk through and spend time in.

Improvements to a new walking route from the east (Maran Way) to the west (Abbey Way), including better lighting and decoration of the underpass.

A new continuous pedestrian route along Maran Way with newly planted trees and rain gardens.

Outdoor classrooms around Southmere Lake.

New lighting on Maran Way, Abbey Way, the multi-use games area at the end of Abbey Way, and some of the pedestrian bridges.

Refurbishment of the multi-use games area.



2023

When is the work happening?

The works will begin in April 2023 and we expect them to complete by the end of the year.

What work have we completed so far?

We have already completed work along Mangold Way and Red Poll Way in Parkview; and Portmeadow Walk in Southmere, where we focused on improved paving and new planting, lighting, play equipment and seating. We also introduced raingardens to help with surface water drainage.



Edible Garden

We recently created an edible garden to test out your ideas for opening up the enclosed space on Maran Way and creating more opportunities for people to grow food in a sociable space.



Wildflower Meadows

We participated in Plantlife's 'No Mow May' 2021 campaign, and said 'no' to mowing the grass on Abbey Way in order to encourage more wildlife. At the same time we planted wildflower meadows that help to provide nectar for bees, butterflies, moths and other wildlife.



Who is involved?

Peabody

The Peabody Group is responsible for over 104,000 homes and 220,000 residents across London and the Home Counties. Our purpose is to help people flourish.

We are leading the long-term regeneration of Thamesmead. This aims to bring about 20,000 new homes; thousands of jobs; a host of leisure, cultural and commercial facilities; much improved green spaces, lakes and canals, and better connections with central London.

Clever Cities

CLEVER Cities is an action research project that is looking at how greener cities work better. The London team is made up of representatives from Peabody, Mayor of London and Groundwork. The CLEVER Cities team set up Making Space for Nature, now a Thamesmead-wide programme to get people out and about enjoying local nature. It also established the Community Design Collective to test new ways of working with residents. CLEVER Cities is a European Horizon 2020 funded research project, working with eight other cities, and will run from 2018 – 2023.

MUF Architecture/Art (MUF)

muf architecture/art (muf) is the design studio leading the improvement works. Its team has worked closely with the Community Design Collective to ensure local voices and views are incorporated into the regeneration plans. muf is trained in architecture, design and art, and specialises in creating flexible green public spaces.

Community Design Collective

The Community Design Collective members are local residents – each committed to helping make Thamesmead greener – and their role is integral to this project as part of the Peabody team. They helped to shape the scheme, working alongside muf, Peabody and the Making Space for Nature team to find new ways for residents to enjoy Thamesmead's green spaces.



21 Design discussion meetings



5 TRAINING SESSIONS



5 Site visits

How our plans have progressed

Listening To Residents

Since September 2020 we've met with lots of residents through a series of conversations, workshops, on-site tests and drop-in sessions so that they could help us decide what areas to improve.

The timeline on the next page shows some of the key milestones from the project so far.





2020

August

muf team starts planning the South Thamesmead Garden Estate project

November

Local community researchers complete an audit of nature in South Thamesmead

2021

February

muf tests lighting in underpasses and on Abbey Way and gets local feedback

Community Design Collective is established

March

100 co-design kits including gardening tools delivered to residents interested in taking part in the project

May

'No Mow May' on Abbey Way starts and extra wildflowers are planted that provide nectar for bees, butterflies, moths and other wildlife

July

muf and the Community Design Collective mow out paths and outdoor rooms on Abbey Way to test where pathways and seating areas might go

Edible Garden launch event and play opportunities tested on Abbey Way

October

Kew Gardens visit with the Community Design Collective and the Thamesmead Nature Forum

Open session to test outdoor cooking, dancing and seating at Abbey Way

2022

February

muf tests lighting in the multi-use games area at the end of Abbey Way and on the bridge

Refining The Designs

We had some great ideas and feedback from residents who attended online events during those initial stages, and we continued to work with our Community Design Collective to develop our designs further.

We also showcased our initial designs on the project website, www.shapingthamesmeadnow.org.uk and invited local residents to share their thoughts on what we were proposing.



Scan the QR code or visit the project website to see all of the designs and the feedback we received.



Lots of people said they'd like to grow their own food, so we piloted the community edible garden on Maran Way and held a launch event which gave us the opportunity to talk to lots of you about the designs in more detail. We also trialled some play equipment on site and asked young people about the sort of things they'd like to do and play with in the area.

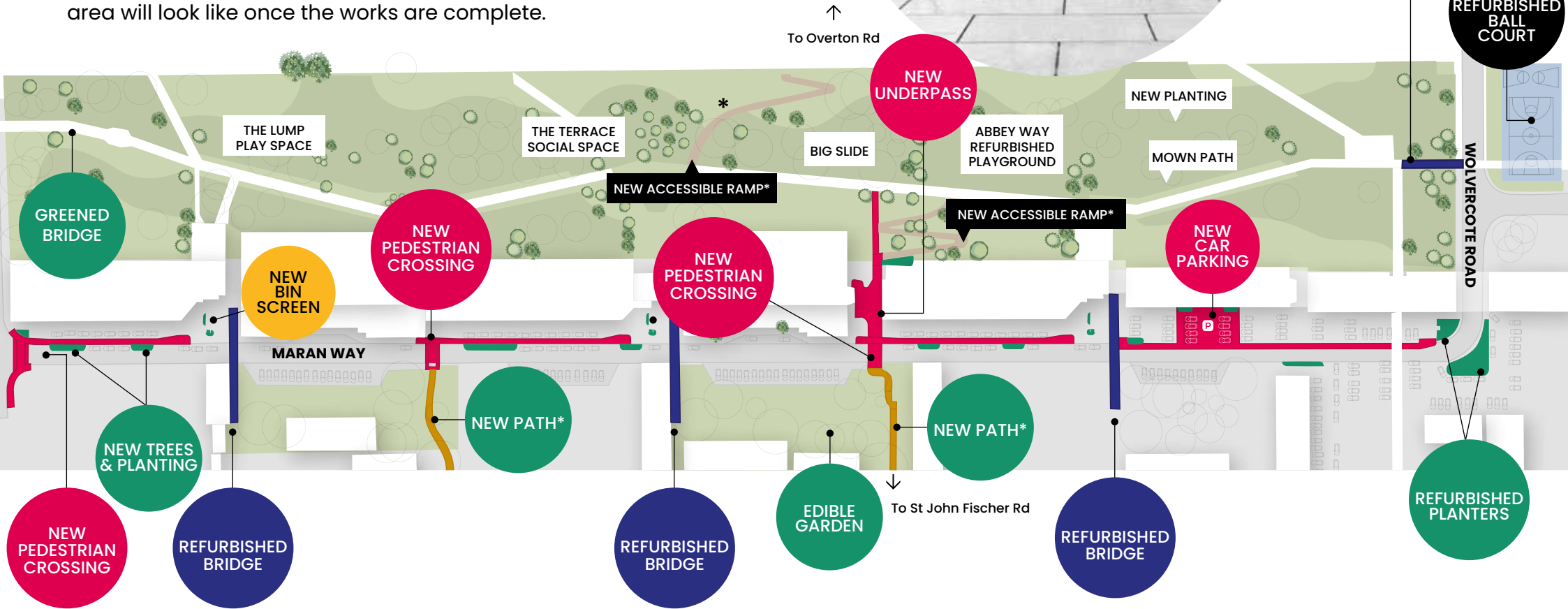
We worked with many groups including children from a local art club to create ideas for play. As a result of this we designed a play foot which will feature around The Lump. See what this will look like below.



The final designs

Thanks to all of the residents who gave us feedback. The designs are now finalised and we'll be appointing a contractor who can carry out the works, starting in Spring 2023.

Continue reading to see our plans for what each area will look like once the works are complete.



*Subject to planning permission

Abbey Way – Green Chain Walk from Lesnes Abbey to Southmere Lake

The Slow Path

Alongside the normal tarmac path, which will remain as it is, we will be adding a new 'slow path' which will be a winding pathway taking you through the planting and green space along Abbey Way. You'll be able to enjoy leisurely walks among a variety of trees and plants or relax on the new seating which we will also be adding.



The Terrace

The terrace is the larger area of tarmac along Abbey Way, where a number of paths meet. Here we will install new paving and planting to create the feeling of being inside a room, but outdoors. This 'room' will include new seating, a BBQ area and table for eating. There will also be a multi-use paved area where you can do anything from play games to dance

We will complement this area with picturesque planting, new trees (including fruit trees), a steel flower-shaped pergola and some hammocks to relax in during warmer seasons. We will also be installing new lighting to brighten up the terrace at night.

The Lump

The Lump, as we have named it, is located along Abbey Way and once supported a wooden play boat. Here we intend to use the current concrete structure and recreate a play area for children. The theme of this area is the prehistoric times and is a nod to the prehistoric history of Lesnes Woods which is known for its old fossils. This area will include a large swing and a new lighting column. The concrete will be replaced with a play-safe rubber coating which will be much softer on the skin should anyone fall over. We will also introduce some prehistoric-style plants, a large prehistoric foot sculpture and footprints that wouldn't look out of place in Jurassic Park!





The Playground

Rather than create a whole new playground, we are going to upgrade the one that is already on Abbey Way. We'll be introducing lots of new play equipment in this space, including a net climbing frame, ropes to balance on, new swings, a new slide and new in-ground trampolines.

There will also be new seating installed, perfect for adults to sit on comfortably while the children are playing. The current concrete surface will be replaced with rubber so that it is more child-friendly. Lighting will also be upgraded to make the space feel friendlier at night and allow children to still use it after school during the darker winter months.



The Cage – Multi-Use Games Area

We know how important the multi-use games area on Wolvercote Road is to the local community and how well used it is. Therefore we're refurbishing the space with muf. Improvements will include new sporting equipment, lighting and seating – making it a vibrant, accessible and welcoming place for people to enjoy.

We'll be resurfacing the play area, upgrading the current basketball hoops, refurbishing the steps to the entrance near Harrow Manor Way

and upgrading the entrance nearest Radley House. Additionally, we'll be repairing the damaged fencing around the courts, adding bike racks and a bike pump, and installing a new drinking water fountain as well as adding new seating on one side of the basketball court.

We'll also be upgrading the lighting to make the whole place feel more welcoming and will be adding in more planting around the perimeter, including some trees to provide shade in the summer months.



In March 2022 former Thamesmead resident Joseph Ijoyemi won a £12,000 art commission to design the floor of the basketball court.

His artwork, 'Believe and Achieve' aims to bring in local people from the community, and promote confidence, hope and unity. It will feature vibrant colours and silhouettes of local people playing games, which Joseph has captured through workshops. His final art piece will be unveiled in Summer 2023.

His design was chosen by The Cage TM group, made up of local residents, who have been involved in the entire commissioning process since 2019.



Maran Way

If you've ever travelled along Maran Way with small children, a wheelchair or mobility scooter, you will know that there is no continuous path from one end of the street to the other. We want to change this and make walking down Maran Way easier and safer for pedestrians and those with buggies, wheelchairs and mobility scooters.

We also want to make the street feel greener by introducing planting which is good for the environment, provides shade and helps to absorb surface water when it rains.

We will be creating a pavement pathway along the length of Maran Way. This will be on the same side as the houses with new paving. We'll also be getting rid of the large concrete planter opposite the edible garden and adding in new planting beds for rain gardens.

To allow room for the new footpath we'll be rearranging parking spaces which we hope will make parking feel more organised. This means there will be fewer parking spaces on the Alsike Road end of Maran Way but we intend to create additional spaces on the other end of Maran Way behind the shops to make up for this.



We will also be adding raised crossings to help pedestrians cross safely and to slow down the traffic along Maran Way. There will be three new raised crossings – one on the end near Alsike Road, and two in the middle of Maran Way.

Maran Way

We will be refurbishing the underpass with a new painted ceiling and better lighting.



Abbey Way

New trees will also be planted alongside beautifully planted rain gardens. These will help to soak up surface water when it rains so that it can be used to water plants.



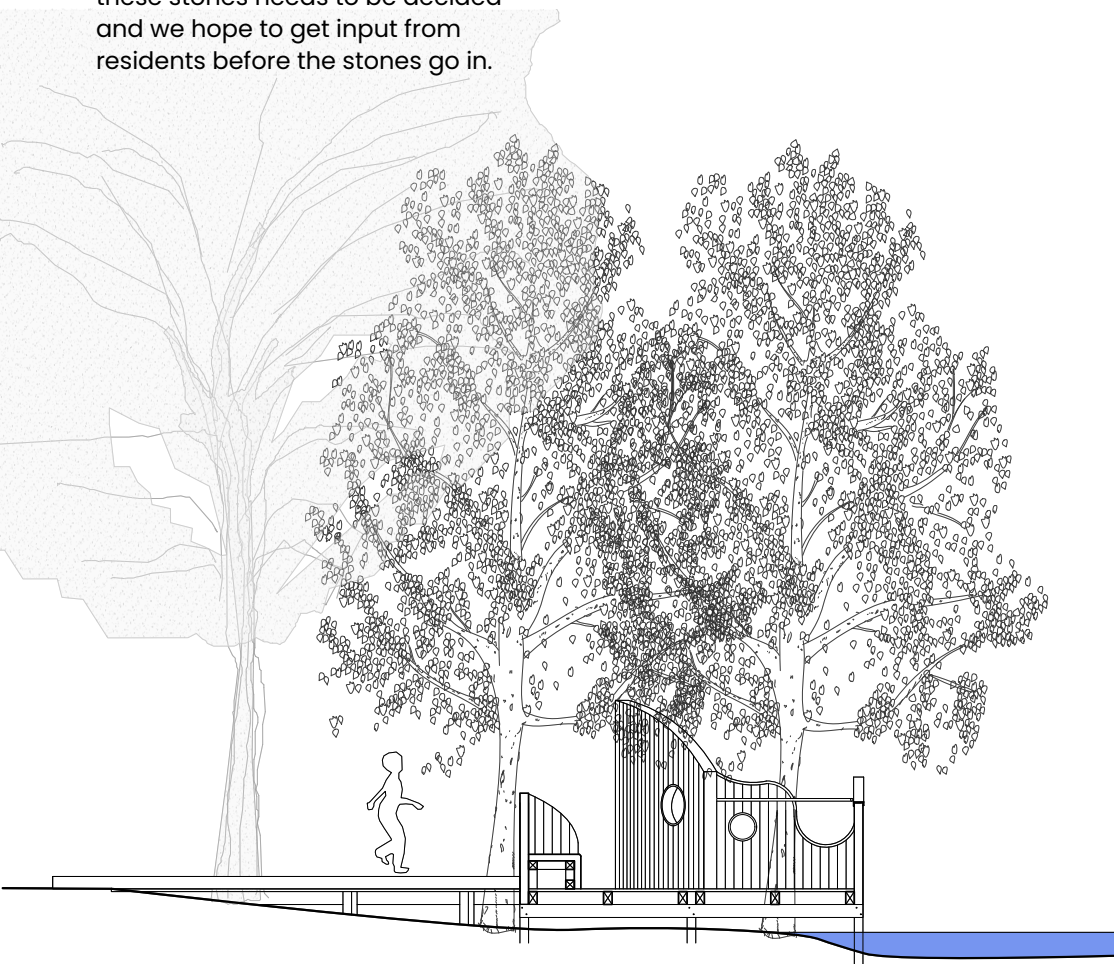
Benches will be installed at the bottom of both footpaths which people can stop at to rest. To make sure that these paths feel safe during the evening and winter months new lighting columns will be installed.

Southmere Park

Outdoor Classroom

We will be creating an outdoor classroom area on the top of the hill in Southmere Park. This will be made of Tideway Stones from the Thames River embankment and will provide new seating in a circular classroom shape.

The exact location and formation of these stones needs to be decided and we hope to get input from residents before the stones go in.



Bird Hide

We will be building a bird hide which will perch on the south side of Southmere Lake overlooking the island. It will be a great location for bird watching!



Health and Wellbeing

Improved health and wellbeing is something else we hope you'll benefit from as part of this project. It's proven that spending time in nature can be massively beneficial for mental health and overall wellbeing.

We hope that this project will provide you with more opportunities to get closer to nature and reap the benefits.

Tackling the Climate Emergency

The South Thamesmead Garden Estate has been designed to help mitigate the effects of climate change so that the natural environment can thrive. Some of the ways we hope to achieve this are by:

- Planting new trees that over time will grow to provide shade and help clean our air.
- Creating rain gardens to divert and slow down the flow of rain running into sewers which will help to prevent them from overflowing. Rain gardens also help to filter pollutants from roads, creating cleaner lakes and canals; and help keep plants watered so that they are healthy for bees and other insects.
- Adding a range of different plants on Abbey Way, which will attract bees, butterflies and other insects.



What happens next?

Works will begin in April 2023..
We'll be writing to you with specific
dates closer to the time to let you know
when you should expect work to begin.

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