

**Lee Green Assembly local plan annual review June 2017**

**“We will help make Lee Green a healthy, stimulating and safe environment in which all residents can live, work, learn and enjoy their leisure.”**

Lee Green Assembly’s local plan relates to Lee Green Ward. It is owned and decided by Lee Green Assembly members who choose the priorities. It is compiled and written by volunteers who live in the ward and reviewed annually. It covers these four overarching areas: safe healthy living; leisure and amenities; services; roads and streets.

**Priorities for past year**

We carried forward the first three priorities below from the previous year, as assembly members continued to regard them as important. We added the last two priorities as they became issues for our ward and the assembly:

* providing services for local people through Lee Green Lives
* improving our parks, green spaces and streets
* change and conservation: representing assembly members’ views on proposed building developments in our ward, and protecting our heritage
* protecting library services in Lee Green
* exploring ways of working together effectively.

We reviewed and reported on these priorities in June 2016 and October 2016. In January 2017 we provided a further update and consulted assembly members on future priorities.

In our ward there is a high level of resident involvement and engagement with key local issues, and there are many established voluntary and community groups with specific areas of interest or focus, (e.g. Lee Manor Society, friends and user groups of local parks, the library, and local shopping areas, Lee Green Lives), as well as organisations which cover all or most of the ward, such as Lee Forum or and Lee Green Assembly.

In the past year we have faced, and risen to, significant challenges as cherished services, such as the library, have been affected by funding cuts. We have begun to work together more often where it helps, with collaboration taking place among our many organisations, and plans to make this easier through the establishment of a consortium. We hope that we can build on the interest and pride our residents have in their locality to encourage more of them to become volunteers and help to keep Lee Green the pleasant, community minded place it is.

**Review of local plan June 2017**

**Lee Green Lives**

Lee Green Lives has continued to be a valued community organisation, based in the Leegate Community Centre, and has developed its range services for our community, using its grant from Lewisham Council and Lee Green Assembly, and funding from successful bids it has submitted.

It will be affected by cuts to LBL grant funding from the next financial year onwards, and has begun to offset this by finding other sources of funding, and support “in kind”.

The Citizens Advice Bureau’s services in Lewisham have been reorganised and it no longer operates from Lee Green Lives, but LGL volunteer’s direct clients to it as needed, as well as providing advice and support at the Community Centre if appropriate.

Lee Green Lives has reviewed its systems, has some new volunteers, and has held a half day training session for all volunteers. It has firm plans for further development and intends to become a charitable incorporated organisation in the near future. It will continue to operate from the community centre at Leegate until such time as redevelopment necessitates a move.

**Parks and green spaces**

Local user groups and other interested parties continued to keep our parks pleasant for us all to enjoy. Manor Park has been enhanced by the range of activities and concerts for park users and the community offered by the Arts Café. The community flowerbed in Manor House Gardens flourishes and thousands of people enjoyed last year’s annual festival. For the first time we had a Lee Green Assembly marquee so that community groups could publicise their work.

Our community garden in Micheldever Road continued to be very popular with residents of all ages.

The Friends and Users of Staplehurst Road Shops have transformed the waste ground on the approach to Hither Green Station, and a mural depicting the local area, funded by a Lee Green Assembly grant decorates the station foot tunnel entrance.

**Streets**

The CPZ changes and the new Lee Green West CPZ are bedding in and have enabled residents in the Zones to park. However, the CPZs have had a knock on effect on surrounding streets and parking is becoming an issue there.

LBL has begun work to instate a taxi rank outside the station (Staplehurst Road side) and there are further proposals under consideration in this area for pedestrian improvements.

Following final consultation on Manor Lane Streetscape, in which Assembly members’ views were represented, work began in January 2107. There have been some queries and some hiccups, but we have kept in touch with officers from LBL to resolve these. Work on re-laying pavement s is well under way. The works are extensive, and therefore lengthy, and the final effect will not be apparent until the road resurfacing is complete, but the completed pavements are already a big improvement. Vehicles are having to slow down in areas where work is taking place. We hope that on completion of the works traffic speeds and rat running will be reduced.

We have continued to liaise with our local police about speeding traffic, and the lack of observance of the 20mph zone. There are plans for residents to be trained to monitor traffic speeds.

We have also liaised with local police and Safer Neighbourhood Team about a spate of antisocial behaviour in the Ward caused by groups of youths riding bicycles. The boys have been causing damage to cars and street furniture, amongst other things, and have made the streets and roads less safe.

Fly tipping is an ongoing problem, but the enclosure outside Glastonbury House in Wantage Road has led to improvement there. We urge Assembly members to report fly tipping promptly.

A council garden wheelie bin collection started at the beginning of June. Several assembly members had asked for such a service, and following consultation, the subscription service began. LBL held further consultation on more changes to waste and recycling collection and Assembly members were briefed. Changes will be implemented in due course.

We have continued to encourage and fund tree planting, both to counter pollution and improve our streets. For the last three years we have encouraged a ward wide approach to tree planting so that trees are planted where they are most needed, and this year there has been collaboration between Lee Forum and Lee Green Assembly. An assembly and Lee forum committee member has carried out a review and mapping exercise of trees in the ward.

**Leegate**

The Assembly Working Group, other community groups such as Lee Manor Society, and Lee Forum, and local residents contributed to the long running consultations on the proposed development at Leegate. Members of the council’s planning committee voted in favour of granting planning permission. However, local people, including assembly representatives, expressed their concerns to the planning committee about the design of the public space, and impact of traffic, specifically with regard to pollution and congestion. Because of these concerns, the planning committee will scrutinise the developer’s plans for public space and traffic management as they are further developed.

The proposals for development were referred to the Mayor of London, who has now responded and told LBL that they are able to proceed. Discussions will therefore take place with LBL, the community and the developer about the community infrastructure levy and its use.

**Manor House Library**

An assembly working group commented on LBL’s proposals for Manor House Library to be run according to LBL’s community library model, and attended stakeholder meetings. We used the Lee Green Assembly website to seek the views and suggestions of assembly members. The users and friends of Manor House Library attended consultation meetings, relevant Safer Stronger Select Committee meetings, Mayor and cabinet meetings, and full council meetings. The users and friends of Manor House Library reported on all meetings, circulated information to residents and assembly members, provided information for the website, and set up an exhibition in the library lobby.

The council’s first bidding process did not result in the contract being awarded. Therefore, the process was rerun. A successful bidder, V22, was identified and a reduced, interim library service offered pending the start of the contract. The users and friends of Manor House Library kept a close eye on arrangements. V22 have now taken over the running of the Manor House and Library. Information and interviews are available on Lee Green Assembly’s website.

**Lee Green Assembly Community Showcase**

In June 2016 we staged our first community showcase at Manor House Gardens Festival to raise awareness of and engagement with local community groups. A wide range of local community groups attended: Lee Green Lives, Lee Manor Society, friends and users of Staplehurst Road shops, friends and users of Manor House Library, Lee Green Women’s Institute, 1st Lee South Girl Guides, Lee Forum and Lee Green Assembly’s website were all represented.

We produced and distributed a booklet about Lee Green Assembly and Lee Green’s community groups. The assembly’s community showcase was visited by many festival goers who showed considerable interest in the range of organisations and their work.

**Lee Green consortium**

Following the success of the showcase, assembly members agreed to a proposal to set up a consortium of local community groups and organisation, with the aim of helping communication and collaborative working when, where and if appropriate. The intention, to quote one of the founder members is to “engage, enthuse, inspire and enable people in their interests and work for the community”, not to create an additional layer of bureaucracy. The consortium hopes to identify areas where collaboration will help, to support volunteering, to encourage start up groups, to pool skills and knowledge e.g. to get access to funding and to help community groups strengthen the work they do.

The consortium has held two meetings so far at which at least 15 local groups and organisations have been represented. It has yet to decide what future structure or arrangements may be needed, but has agreed to meet 3 or 4 times a year, has agreed an acting chair/convener and acting minute taker and will confirm membership.

The consortium’s first actions will be to: organise and repeat the showcase at the 2017 FMHG Festival, using funding agreed by the assembly, hold a digital workshop for interested consortium members, and map local groups for the information of the community

**And also…..**

* we’ve provided reports from our local Safer Neighbourhood Team.
* we’ve acted as a sounding board and conduit for residents’ views.
* we’ve kept an eye on what happens in our Ward and initiated action or responded.
* The website has provided a platform for residents’ views, reported local events and promoted community engagement and action. Residents have used it widely.

**What next? Priority areas for 2017–18**

 In February we consulted assembly members about our next priorities. There is considerable continuity from one year to the next in what assembly members consider most important. The first four points below reflect this, but the last two points are new entries.

This is what mattered most to assembly members:

* Traffic and pollution: Traffic speeds, and rat running. (Traffic associated with schools and the Old Road Hostel was mentioned as well as HGVs, vans and diesel engine vehicles.)
* Parking in areas without restrictions: over parking causing problems for residents.
* Our environment: parks, green spaces, community gardens and streets featured strongly again. (Assembly members also deplored fly tipping, litter, and dog fouling . Neglected or empty buildings were also mentioned.)
* Community services, community centre and community events. (Assembly members wanted to see provision for all age groups, for a range of interests and needs, and events to bring the community together.)
* Anti-social behaviour and crime: misuse of bikes, noise, drug dealing
* Transport links and accessibility of railway stations in the ward

**Suggested actions**

* Monitor the implementation of previously agreed street improvements in ward
* Clarify status of other proposed street improvements
* Work with local police to monitor traffic speeds
* Monitor parking outside CPZs and seek solutions where over parking is a problem
* Encourage establishment of Edith Nesbitt Gardens users group
* Encourage recycling and care for the environment, respond promptly to fly tipping
* Work on behalf of assembly members to protect, maintain or develop services in the ward, including those services offered by Lee Green Lives, and Manor House Library
* Work on behalf of assembly members to protect or improve amenities in the Ward
* Build partnership working by holding a second community showcase and by establishing a consortium
* Secure Community Centre premises in light of Leegate development
* Influence proposed and planned building development in the ward for the benefit of assembly members
* Liaise with SNT about anti-social behaviour
* Lobby for improved station access