

PRESS RELEASE

Parks for London launch Integrated Weed Management guidance to help drive down the use of herbicides

On 11th March 2020, Parks for London will launch their new Integrated Weed Management guidance, produced in collaboration with the Amenity Forum and with support from the Mayor of London. The launch will be hosted by Lambeth Council at Lambeth Town Hall. Representatives from London boroughs, statutory bodies, parks contractors, developers and other land managers will learn how to use the new guidance and find out how several London boroughs are already implementing programmes to reduce herbicide use.

As part of the annual audit for the Good Parks for London report, <https://parksforlondon.org.uk/good-parks-for-london/> in 2018 Parks for London asked all 32 London Boroughs and the City of London parks services if they had integrated pest management programmes in any of their parks and green spaces. None did; so Parks for London approached the Amenity Forum to collaborate in developing a set of integrated weed management documents that local authorities could adapt and use to focus on managing the limited number of plant species which are either invasive; damaging to structures or sports pitches; or create health and safety problems, and to help drive down the use of herbicides such as glyphosate.

Legislation regulating the use of herbicides requires all users to assess the options for control so that herbicide use is minimised. The guide is designed to help land managers to consider the options available in the least harmful way to people, water, wildlife and the wider environment. The guidance covers the range of horticultural, mechanical, thermal and biological solutions for managing weeds alongside chemical control. It also describes the process of preparing **detailed integrated weed management plans** and includes templates for a range of specific landscape uses. The IWMP templates have been produced in a digital format so that they can be accessed on mobile devices making them easier to use and apply on site.

A **policy template** has been created for Local Authorities and other organisations as a generic policy framework to underpin the development of integrated weed management plans (IWMPs).

A **reference guide** has been produced as an interactive pdf document to help landowners and land managers to prepare IWMPs. Users can navigate the guide using the tabs and links to key information and useful resources. The guide covers what weeds are and why in certain circumstances it is necessary to manage them. It begins by asking managers to consider if weeds can be tolerated; recognising that apart from a handful of very invasive non-native species, most 'weeds' are actually native wildflowers which can be an important ecological resource in areas devoid of natural habitats.

Tony Leach, CE, Parks for London says "Land-managers need to reduce their use of herbicides both to meet more stringent regulation and to allay increasing public concern about the use of chemicals in public places.

Although parks are our key area of interest, we recognised early on that weeds respect no boundaries so limiting the audience to just parks managers would miss an opportunity to develop a holistic approach to management of weeds across the public realm. We hope that introducing integrated weed management in parks services will be the first step towards all local authority services adopting the approach. We hope these documents could also be of use to local authorities beyond London; they can be adapted for use by unitary, county, town and parish councils. We also

anticipate that the documents will be useful to other managers of public realm such as Transport for London, Network Rail, estate management companies and highway and landscape contractors.”

**THE GUIDANCE DOCUMENTS WILL BE AVAILABLE FROM 16TH MARCH 2020, TO
DOWNLOAD FROM OUR WEBSITE FROM 16TH MARCH 2020.**

Notes to editors

About Parks for London

The Charity, [Parks for London](#), seeks to ensure that London’s green infrastructure continues to thrive now and in the future. The charity enables the people who plan, design, manage and have an interest in London’s parks and green spaces, to share their knowledge and experience and create good practice through collaboration.

Our mission is to ensure that London has a strong network of parks and green spaces, which are of high quality, safe, accessible, stimulating, innovative and able to meet challenges such as climate change, air pollution and health issues to serve a growing population.

Resources permitting, we hope to produce similar documents for integrated **plant disease** management and integrated **pest** management over the next few years.

Parks for London annually produces the [Good Parks for London](#) report.

A list of organisations supporting parks for London can be viewed [here](#)

About the Amenity Forum

The [Amenity Forum](#) is the UK’s industry led voluntary initiative, promoting best practice and the safe and sustainable management of weeds, pests and diseases across this very diverse and important sector. It is the collective body representing the Amenity Sector, it encourages best practice and co-ordinates training. Parks for London is a Member of the Amenity Forum.

Mayor of London

In the London Environment Strategy¹, the Mayor of London included commitments to provide support and advice to improve London’s green spaces, conserve London’s biodiversity and to reduce the use of pesticides on land owned and managed by the GLA Group. Supporting the production of the IWMP guidance by Parks for London contributes towards the delivery of these commitments.

¹ https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/london_environment_strategy_0.pdf