



The Green Belt Threats and Future

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Chair

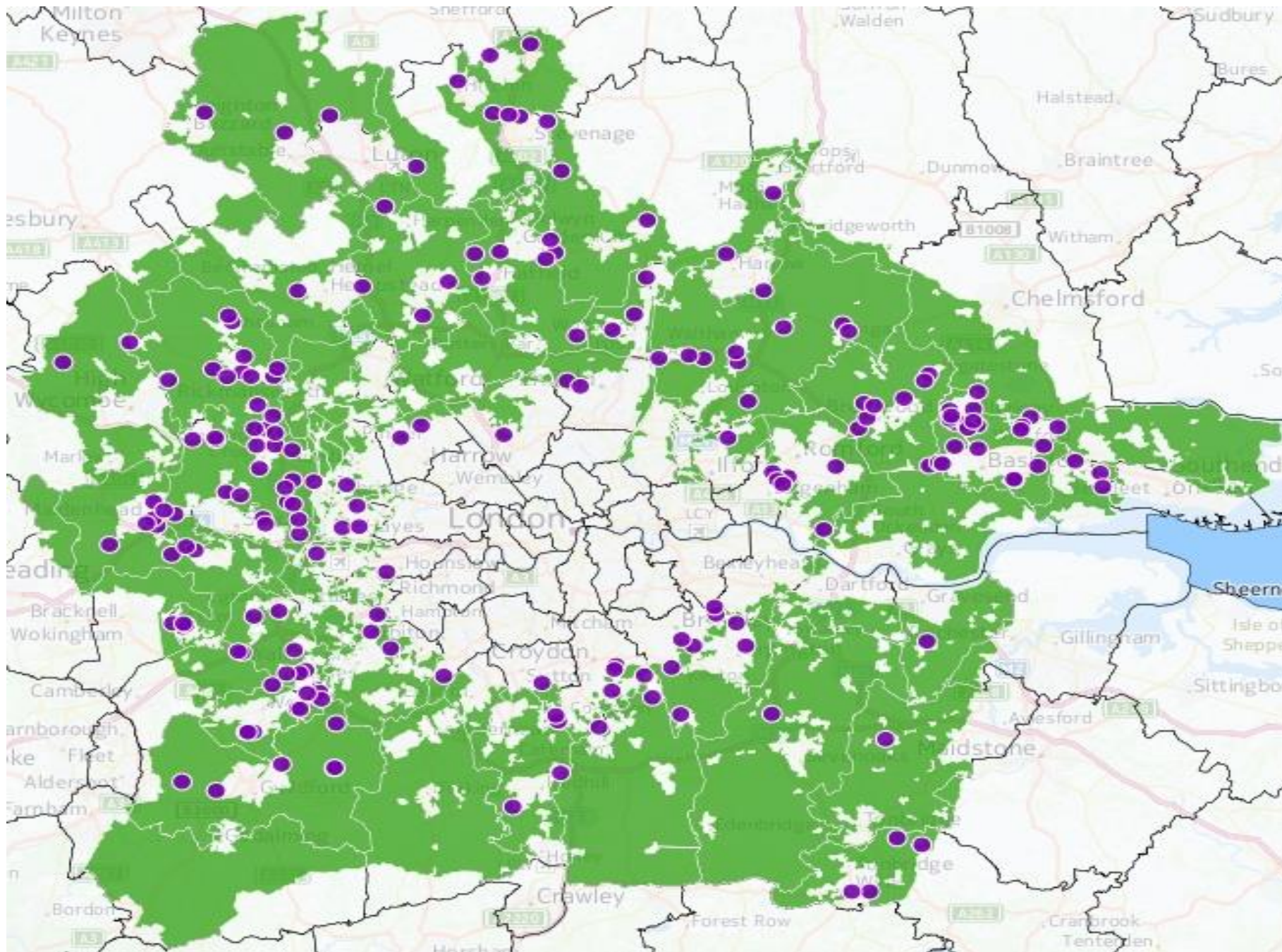
London Green Belt Council

April 2018

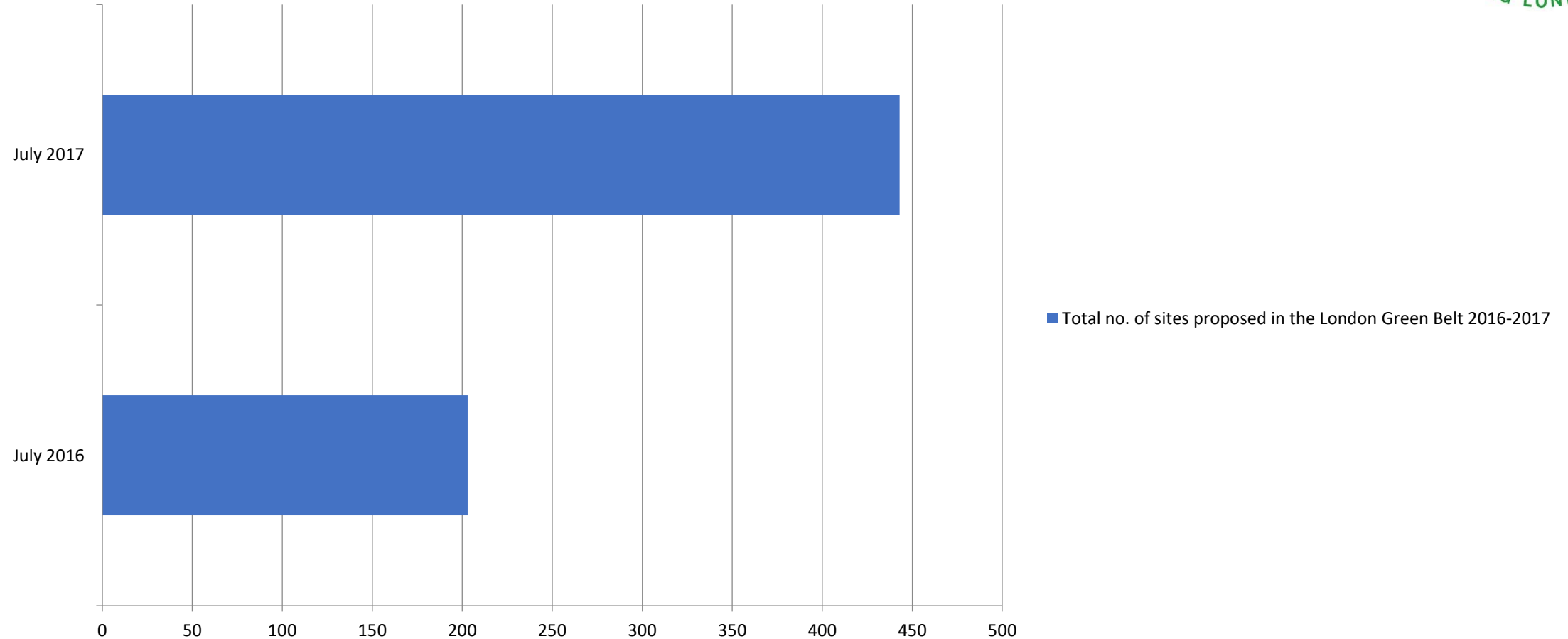
London Metropolitan Green Belt



“Under greater threat than ever before”



Increase in the number of LMGB sites under threat from development since the 2016 survey





Vision



“Men, women and children want more than food, shelter and warmth. They want, if their lives are to be full and good, space near their homes for exercise, quiet, good air, and sight of grass, trees and flowers...”

Octavia Hill (1838 – 1912)

Create a positive role for the LMGB by:



- Creating a 25-year strategy for preserving and improving the LMGB
- Plan to enhance the natural heritage and landscape
- Creating opportunities for improving human health
- Encouraging sustainable farming close to London so preserving BMV agricultural land
- Encouraging improved biodiversity
- Build on a diverse range of economic and social activities including food production, tourism and recreation
- Build environmental benefits for London including resilience to climate change



What is the purpose of the LMGB

The five purposes (para 80 NPPF)

- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas
- To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another
- To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment
- To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns
- To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and urban land



But could it be more?

***Our life on this planet is so brief that every step we take
must be a further contribution to the ideal space of
Utopia. Let us build the space together: it is the only way
to make it possible.***

Cesar Manrique (1919 – 1992)

Improving the quality of life of Londoners



- Easy & quick access to the countryside
- Clean air
- Access to biodiversity
- Scenic landscapes
- Greater opportunities for recreation and sport
- Improve access especially for low income families



Improving the landscape

- Much of the LMGB is already considered to be quality landscape – this needs to be acknowledged and protected
- “Openness” is part of the importance of the LMGB
- “Poor quality” land – action to enforce its renovation and stop deliberate action to deteriorate landscape
- Enforcement powers
- Maintain and enhance natural self-sustaining vegetation
- Encourage connectivity
- Keep stream channels in a free-to-grow, low maintenance condition
- Locate new natural self-sustaining vegetation in areas that maximize the ecological functions and value of the area.
- Encourage flood mitigation measures
- An important component of complete communities within the LMGB



Promoting a healthier lifestyle

- A system of parklands, open spaces, water bodies and trails necessary to provide opportunities for recreation, tourism and appreciation of our cultural and natural heritage.
- Provide important environmental protection, improved air quality and climate change mitigation
- Recreational opportunities for all age groups
- Provide educational assets such as nature trails and farm visits
- Open countryside is known to assist with those with mental illness
- Create new footpaths including long distance routes
- Encourage new bridleways
- Encourage new cycle routes



Promoting better health

- Mental health is the single largest source of disease in London.

More than cancer and heart disease.

- London has the UK's highest anxiety level per head of population.

50% have anxiety

33% unhappy

According to the Department of Health(2011) the mental problem of anxiety is costing to the UK economy

£9 Billion a year



Promoting better health

Cost of illness to the NHS annually:

- £26bn on treating depression in London
- £8.6bn cost of treating depression to industry
- £15bn obesity cost in the UK
- £5m on antidepressant drugs in London



Promoting better health

Physiological health aspects of urban green space:

- Helps immune system
- Induces physical activity
- Reduces obesity
- Reduces cardiovascular
- Helps diabetes
- Improves pregnancy
- Through sunlight cures vitamin D deficiency
- Reduces air pollution



Promoting better health

Psychological health benefit of urban green space:

- Improves relaxation
- Helps curing depression
- Improves mental health
- De stresses
- Improves mental fatigue
- Improves neighbourhood social cohesion
- Reductions in crime
- Reduces violence and aggression



Promoting better health

- University of Wageningen (2016):
“Regular exposure to nature has a positive effect on mood”
- Mind:
“Connecting with nature can help people manage their existing mental health problems and prevent depression”
- WHO (2017):
“Having access to green spaces can aid in the treatment of mental illness”
- Government’s Paper “A green future – Our 25 year plan” (Jan 2018):
“We will help people improve their health and wellbeing by using green spaces including through mental health services”
“Encourage children to be close to nature – disadvantaged areas”

Promoting better health



Economic gain of development on greenfield site = real economic gain
Economic cost to NHS of loss of resource



Providing fresh food for London

- Provide London with all its needs in perishable food
- Fresh – not frozen improving the quality and flavour
- Encourage speciality crops
- Reduce packaging
- Prime agricultural areas will be identified
- All types, sizes and intensities of agricultural uses and normal farm practices should be promoted and protected.
- All agricultural related uses should be encouraged



Providing fresh food for London

- BMV soil will be identified and improved
- Improve soil fertility naturally as opposed to using toxic fertilizers
- Minimise the application of pesticides and fertilizers
- Continuous, productive and permanent agricultural land base
- Support and encourage pollinators
- Water conservation
- Towns and villages will not be able to expand into designated prime agricultural land



Private land owners

- Encourage and co-operate with private land owners to provide recreational benefits.
- Give protection for private landowners to stop trespassing on farm properties and to avoid risks to farm biosecurity and crop damage
- Walking / cycling / riding
- Woodland walks
- Identify key sites for further opportunities that avoid sensitive landscapes
- Preserve the continuous integrity of corridors
- Promote clear demarcation where public access is permitted.

Providing environmental benefits for London



- CO2 absorption by encouraging tree planting
- Absorption of water preventing flooding in London
- Scenic landscapes
- Planning and design of storm water managements schemes
- Reducing carbon footprint by shortening transportation of food from LMGB



Long term strategy for the LMGB

- Certainty & clarity of planning strategy
- Establish a 25 year land use strategy
- Permanent protection for future generations
- Protected agricultural land base for local food production
- Preserve and improve the scenic value of the landscape
- Build ecological protections
- Thriving economy of the LMGB including recreational and tourism uses
- Social equity – available for all
- Establish a low carbon LMGB
- Long term investment in improving the LMGB



Goal



To create an authority for the LMGB

To develop a 25 year strategy for the LMGB including investment in order to:

- Protect this important resource
- Open up the LMGB to all those who wish to use it
- Build environmental protection and enhancement
- Develop an economic strategy
- Improve and maintain the landscape of the LMGB
- Provide environmental protection for London
- Create an infrastructure which provides quick and easy access
- Preserve and improve biodiversity