

Foreword



Improving the public realm is a priority for the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames. Sustainability, safety and access for all, as well as visual excellence are all part of good design. We particularly recognise the need to reduce carbon emissions and make the Borough more sustainable, through such measures as the careful sourcing of materials, use of native tree and plant species contributing to biodiversity and permeable drainage to reduce water run-off. We are also committed to preserving the special character of the different places that make up our Borough and ensuring the highway infrastructure and associated signage and street furniture are compatible with it.

This guide is based on the approach we have been taking for some time to the public realm. We have worked hard to ensure a coordinated response across Council departments, ensuring that design is given a high priority. Leading the way in best practice the Public Space Group, comprising of highway and design professionals, meets regularly to review projects that will impact on the Borough's streets and open spaces.

Section 12 highlights some of our recent success stories where we have achieved a balanced approach, meeting highway requirements, in projects that have improved the quality of the environment through their considered design.

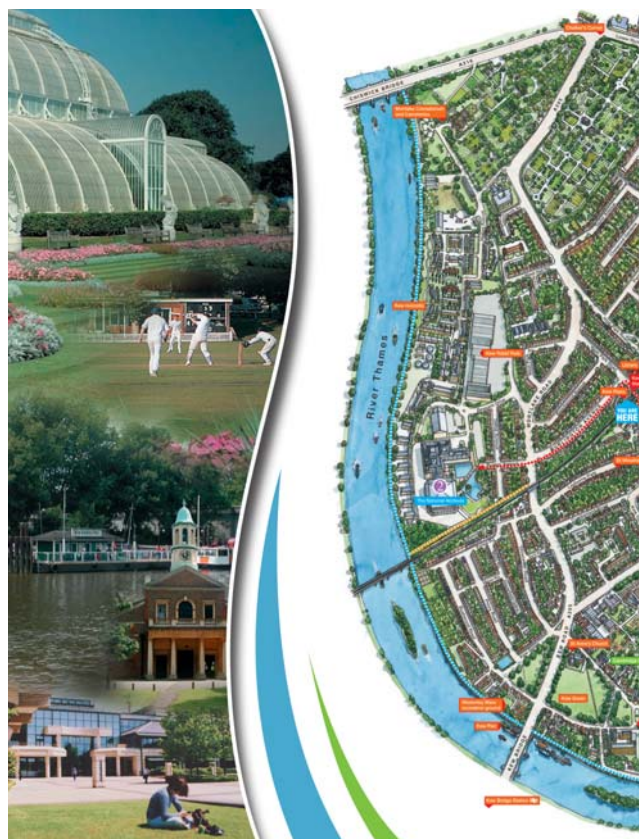
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London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames

The document includes updates to December 2006.

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1 Introduction, Vision & Aims





1 Introduction, Vision & Aims

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE GUIDE

Background

The first Richmond upon Thames Street Design Guide was produced in 1995 and was one of the first examples of its kind. It aimed to coordinate aspects of the street scene and improve the level of design. This Public Space Design Guide is a completely new document, although it builds on work started with the previous guide.

Aims

The overall aim is to provide guidance to help deliver the goal of improved streetscape and public spaces. The aims of this current Guide are to:

- Improve the quality of the street scene and public spaces
- Guide changes so that they reinforce the character of the location
- Enhance the townscape and landscape
- Improve and coordinate the management of the public realm to promote integrated townscape management

Why have a guide?

The Guide is designed to provide information and guidance on the main issues affecting the street scene and public spaces in this Borough. It is recognised that the Borough is not just made up of one type of environment, and that its diversity should be reflected in the form which public space design takes. It is envisaged that the Guide will also be useful for private developments in order to link these in with the prevailing environmental character.

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Findings from the preparation of the Guide

- The overall environmental quality is very high, an amalgam of buildings, public spaces and landscape
- Street clutter, including signage and road markings, often originating from different organisations, is a continuing problem
- The Borough is made up of very diverse environments and projects have reflected this with varying success
- A good start has been made in many areas in improving the street scene and public spaces.

The section on Context Issues elaborates on some of the issues raised.

A separate section provides an outline assessment of the different character areas of the Borough, with environments ranging from urban to semi rural/pastoral. It is considered that different approaches are needed in areas of distinctive character, although some elements should be used throughout the Borough to strengthen its overall identity.



Develop quality



Reinforce character



Enhance townscape

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1.2 CONTEXT ISSUES

Sensitive areas

This Borough has a particularly high density of sensitive areas. The term is used in the Guide for areas which may include the following elements:

- Listed buildings and Buildings of Townscape Merit
- Conservation areas
- Key views and riverside locations
- Adjoining open spaces

Design

Richmond upon Thames promotes good design and wishes to reflect this in the public realm.

This can include both traditional and modern design. Traditional furniture and elements are known to work well in the Borough, such as lighting, seating and bollards. However, modern elements can also work well in traditional settings.



Enhance landscape



Designs for sensitive areas

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Modern with traditional



Quality materials and finish



Reinforce local area distinctiveness

Simplification

It is very easy for public spaces and the street scene to become cluttered with unrelated elements often installed by different bodies that can detract from the appearance of the area. The aim is to reduce unnecessary clutter as far as possible.

High quality

Quality of both materials and workmanship are seen as being particularly important to developing good streetscape and public spaces.

Local distinctiveness

One of the main aims of the Guide is that works in the public realm should reflect the diverse character of different parts of the Borough. It is considered that some elements in the street scene should reflect the Borough as a whole, but that others need to relate to the distinctiveness of the local area and reinforce it.

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Dark green



Dark blue/grey

A separate section provides an outline assessment of the different characters of the Borough, ranging from urban to semi rural/pastoral. It is considered that interventions in the street scene and public spaces should reflect these distinctions.

Colour

The approach taken in relation to colour and street furniture is to have a restricted range of styles and colours in the Borough with some unifying elements, but with a limited range of colour variation to reflect local distinctiveness. The approach is considered particularly appropriate in this Borough because of strong distinctions between urban and less urban areas and the marked character differences between local areas.

This is reflected in choice of street furniture and paving, and also in street furniture colours. Whilst there are some distinctive unifying elements such as dark green light columns generally used throughout the Borough, variations in street furniture colour have been used in Twickenham, Ham and Petersham, and Richmond areas, for example.

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Where distinctive colours are used on street furniture		
BS14C40	Dark green	General
BS18B29	Dark blue/grey	Twickenham town centre
BS20C40	Dark blue	Twickenham town centre seats and other riverside locations
BS12B15	Light olive green	Alternative to dark green- some landscape areas
	Silver-grey	Twickenham town centre lighting
RAL7021	Black	Richmond town centre and selected other locations
	Dark grey	Posts/bollards to limit areas of black
BS16C33	White	Richmond Green, other greens, some riverside, Petersham and Ham
	Light blue/green	Isleworth Promenade, Ranelagh Drive – reflects bronze patination on Twickenham Bridge

* see Appendix Map 2



Light blue/green



Light olive green



Silver-grey lighting

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Access

The Disability Discrimination Act makes it essential to incorporate access for all in any proposals. Careful siting of street scene elements, and grouping of street furniture to avoid obstructions need to be considered in relation to those with sight and mobility problems, as well as ensuring ease of movement in surfacing schemes. Consultation with relevant organisations should be made for new schemes.

Safety

The safety of public spaces is a key concern, and this Council has established a Community Safety Team to address this issue. CCTV is being introduced to a number of locations, and measures are being taken to improve lighting and ensuring that spaces are easy to survey. The avoidance of seating where there is a significant risk of anti-social behaviour is sensible, although a compromise may be necessary to cater for the needs of those who would benefit from the provision of facilities. There is evidence that seating encourages use and that well used areas are safer than those which are underused. The Council has produced Supplementary Planning Guidance on Security by Design.



Black



Dark grey



White