



HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORDS IN THE WANDLE VALLEY An investigation by Wandle Valley Forum September 2022

1. This note summarises the results of an investigation by Wandle Valley Forum into the Historic Environment Records held by the riparian local authorities in the Wandle Valley – Croydon, Sutton, Merton and Wandsworth Councils.

2. Historic Environment Records provide “a primary source of information for planning, development-control work, and land management” ([Historic England](#)) and the Government's National Planning Policy Framework states that “Local planning authorities should maintain or have access to a historic environment record” (paragraph 192).

3. Wandle Valley Forum submitted Freedom of Information requests to the four local authorities in July 2022 asking them each to “provide a copy of the Historic Environment Record”. This prompted a range of responses (links in headings below):

[Croydon](#)

4. Croydon was initially unaware of what constituted an Historic Environment Record asking Wandle Valley Forum to “clarify in greater detail exactly what records you are seeking for Historic environment? This is a vast area and we are required more specific information in order to search for the records”.

5. Croydon’s final response was “The Historic Environment Record (HER) that covers the London Borough Croydon is the 'Greater London Historic Environment Record' which is managed by Historic England”. A link was also provided to other relevant information held by Croydon Council.

[Sutton](#)

6. Sutton’s response was “The Council’s HER can be found in the follow places:

- Local Plan Appendices (Appendix 8)
- Planning Policy evidence on Historic Environment

In addition, the online policies map shows historic environment designations too”.

7. A request for clarification as to whether the Historic Environment Record also included the Greater London Historic Environment Record accessed through Heritage Gateway was responded to as follows “The Historic Environment Record for the London Boroughs, including LB Sutton, are covered by Greater London Historic Environment Record (GLHER)”.

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Please respond to Chair, Wandle Valley Forum, c/o 43 Bramcote Avenue, Mitcham CR4 4LW

Merton

8. Merton's response was *"This information is not held by the London Borough of Merton. The Records are held by the Heritage Gateway"*

Wandsworth

9. Wandsworth's response was *"The Greater London Historic Environment Record maintains the records of all London Boroughs"*. It provided links to other relevant information held by Wandsworth Council

10. All the local authorities responded to the Freedom of Information request within the expected 21 days.

Outcome

11. The results present a mixed picture. All the boroughs eventually acknowledge that the Greater London Historic Environment Record contributes to the Historic Environment Record. Sutton Council considers that its Local Plan appendices and evidence base are part of the Historic Environment Record and needed prompting as to the role of the Greater London Historic Environment Record. In Croydon and Wandsworth additional information was identified but not as part of the Historic Environment Record. Merton only references the Greater London Historic Environment Record and does not believe it to be responsible for any information related to its Historic Environment Record.

12. It is important that there is clarity over what constitutes the Historic Environment Record in any part of the Wandle Valley. To ensure this Wandle Valley Forum recommends that each of the four Boroughs specifically identifies its Historic Environment Record online and confirms what information it includes.

13. Wandle Valley Forum provides support and an independent voice for over 140 community groups, voluntary organisations and local businesses and for everyone who shares a passion for the Wandle.