

Background Information: London Blue Chain

We will create a London Blue Chain along the route of the Green Chain Walking Route in South London. It will both connect a corridor of freshwater habitats and connect local disadvantaged communities with their local heritage. The Chain consists of 11 sections spanning 50 miles. The route takes in 27 parks, 17 primary schools, 8 secondary schools/academies/colleges, woodlands, historical gardens, and buildings. It travels through Greenwich, Bexley, Lewisham, Bromley, and Lambeth. These boroughs have high percentages of ethnic minority communities, many of whom do not have English as a first language.

The main features of the project are:

- **Blue Chain Habitats:** working with local communities living within the Green Chain we will create a series of 100 blue habitats (freshwater). These will be broken down to 10 large ponds, Froglife will contract experienced contractors to create these ponds; 5 medium ponds and 85 small ponds, which will all be community and volunteer led pond creations.
- **Blue Chain Guardians:** training volunteer groups/local residents to become habitat guardians in each of the 11 sections. We will train 165 guardians.
- **Blue Chain Neighbourhood Wildlife Corridors:** working with allotment holders, local residents, housing associations, schools, academies, colleges and community gardens to create a wildlife corridor along the Green Chain. A minimum of 425 people will assist with the corridors with a minimum of 10 interventions per borough – total 50 interventions. These will include new/restored ponds, wildflower planting, building hibernacula, building and installing wildlife homes.
- **Blue Chain Learning:** delivering education sessions to primary and secondary schools along the Green Chain, plus providing training opportunities to college leavers to enhance employability. A total of 2,600 children and young people (2,170 school children and 430 college leavers) will take part through sessions in school grounds and college leavers attending habitat and training sessions at sites.
- **Blue Chain Links:** natural creative arts workshops; digital outputs and podcasts with Green Chain users. The podcasts will record ethnic communities' natural experiences in their home countries and how these translate to London's natural environment. Reaching and interviewing 540 local people.
- **Blue Chain Festivals:** events at each of the main habitat sites to include a Pond Doctor Advisory Centre. These events will reflect the cultural diversity within the boroughs and through discussions with those attending the events we will further gather ethnic communities' natural experiences in their home countries and how these translate to London's natural environment. Attendance of 30,000 people.
- **Blue Chain Trainees:** recruit 8 x 12-month Trainees over course of the project, providing opportunities for Trainees from disadvantaged backgrounds. Develop individual plans for their Traineeship and support them to gain the skills and experience they need to begin their career in the conservation sector.

The development phase of this project has gone really well, for further information, see:

<https://www.froglife.org/london-blue-chain/>

