



# Tower Habitats Newsflash

*Latest news on nature conservation and wildlife in Tower Hamlets*

March 2020

**New wildlife habitats in school grounds** – three schools have enhanced biodiversity in their grounds thanks to [Tower Habitats grants](#) from the Tower Hill Trust. William Davis Primary School has created a new Early Years nature garden, with nectar-rich flowers for bees and butterflies, bird feeders and boxes, and an insect investigation area. [Read more here](#). Olga Primary School has excavated a new wildlife pond ([more here](#)). And Cannon Barnett Primary School has installed bird boxes and feeders, insect boxes and planters full of nectar-rich flowers ([more here](#)).

**Big Climate Fightback in Mile End Park** – over a hundred volunteers helped plant native trees and spring bulbs on Haverfield Green in Mile End Park at the end of November 2019 to extend the Mile End Park Woodland Trail. The event was organised by the Council's Parks Service and Green Team as part of the Woodland Trust's Big Climate Fightback campaign. [Read more and see photos](#).

**Rare spiders found in Cemetery Park** – two nationally rare spiders have recently been found in Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park during surveys by local spider expert Edward Milner. They are *Cryptachaea blattea*, a scarce cobweb (or tangle web) spider, and the money spider *Lessertia dentichelis*. These and other recent finds bring the spider list Cemetery Park to 157 species. [Read more about \*Cryptachaea blattea\*](#) and [Lessertia dentichelis](#) and see photos.

**Bringing back the poplar** – twenty Black Poplars, the tree that gave Poplar district its name, have been planted in Tower Hamlets during the autumn and winter. The Council planted six each in Mile End and Victoria Parks and one each in Meath Gardens and Ion Square Gardens. The Friends of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park planted three there, and Trees for Cities and EastendHomes planted three on the Glamis Estate. [Read more about Britain's rarest native timber tree](#).

**Reeds transplanted in the Regent's Canal** – the Lower Regents Coalition has started a new reed bed near Ben Jonson Road, using reeds that needed to be removed from the navigation channel further along the canal. [Read more about this new approach to canal improvements](#).

**A revamped community square on the Malmesbury Estate** – Malmesbury Residents Association has completed yet another greening project on the estate. They have transformed a rundown tarmac square by Ambrose Walk, planting a wildflower meadow, fruit and nut trees and loads of nectar-rich flowers. [See more about the new square](#).

**Community tree planting on Jolly's Green** – Trees for Cities organised a community planting day, attended by nearly 60 volunteers, at Jolly's Green in October. A total of 26 native trees were planted, including some planted by corporate volunteers and local schools a few days earlier. [Read more about the planting day](#).

**2019 was a great year for butterflies** – Butterfly Conservation reports that its surveys show that last summer was the best for butterflies for over 20 years. Common species such as Meadow Brown, Red Admiral, Painted Lady, Brimstone and Orange Tip, along with several rare and threatened species, all showed large population increases, though Common Blue, Large White and Green-veined White fared less well. [Read more on the Butterfly Conservation website](#).

**Join in with Bee-fly Watch 2020** – even if you can't get out and about much, you can still contribute to Bee-fly Watch in your garden or when exercising in your local park. Watch out for these round, furry flies with very long noses, which hover in front of flowers when they feed. To find out more and submit your records, see the [Bee-fly Watch website](#).

For more information on these and other stories, see [www.towerhabitats.org](http://www.towerhabitats.org)

If you have news on wildlife or biodiversity conservation in Tower Hamlets, please e-mail the Biodiversity Officer [john.archer@towerhamlets.gov.uk](mailto:john.archer@towerhamlets.gov.uk) or phone 020 7364 7478