

Environment & Waste Policy

Wildlife (Gibraltar) Ltd

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Table of Contents

1. Introduction	2
1.1. Purpose, Aims & Objectives	2
1.2. Policy Implementation and Review	3
2. Water	3
2.1. Sources of Water	3
2.2. Plant Selection	4
2.3. Irrigation	4
3. Waste & Recycling	5
3.1. Waste Collection & Management	5
3.2. Recycling	6
4. Green Waste	7
4.1. Chipping & Mulching	7
4.2. Excess Wood	7
4.3. Composting	7
Table 1. Actions and timescales	8

1. Introduction

Wildlife (Gibraltar) Ltd's (WGL) core responsibility is environmental management. Its oldest operation is the management of the Gibraltar Botanic Gardens (GBG). The Alameda Gardens were established in 1816. The land belongs to HM Government of Gibraltar, includes listed monuments and is protected from urban development. In 1991, management of the Alameda was outsourced to WGL, which established GBG. Today, the Gardens are a key destination for tourists and residents, but also conduct biological research and monitoring, as well as *ex situ* conservation of genetic resources and education. Aside from GBG, WGL also manages other public parks, a small zoological park (Alameda Wildlife Conservation Park; AWCP), a Yellow-legged Gull control programme, and carries out ecological and horticultural consultancy work. This policy document focuses on GBG as WGL's most complex operation, but relevant aspects of this document will be applied to WGL's other responsibilities.

1.1. Purpose, Aims & Objectives

WGL's activities are all environmental in nature and it is crucial for the organisation to act responsibly. WGL is committed to sustainability and environmental best practice. Our objectives are (adapted from the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew Environmental Policy):

- **Water:** to increase the effectiveness of water use, by employing methods for water conservation and focussing as much as possible on drought-tolerant plant groups in our horticultural operations.
- **Waste:** to reduce the amount of waste produced, make best use of green waste and increase recycling initiatives.
- **Energy:** to meet or exceed HM Government of Gibraltar targets for the reduction of energy used on our sites.
- **Pollution:** to continually monitor and improve processes to reduce emissions and discharges to air, water and land.

- **Procurement:** to ensure that all procurement by WGL is sustainable and ethical.
- **Communication:** to be a leader in enhancing awareness of environmental sustainability, as part of GBG's education policy for the public, and across the WGL staff base.

A number of environmental challenges are posed by Gibraltar's size and geopolitical situation, not least with regard to water and waste. This document provides a policy for the management of water, waste and recycling in GBG and WGL's other responsibilities.

1.2. Policy Implementation and Review

WGL will ensure that all staff and contractors are kept aware of this policy and their individual responsibilities within it. Managers of different sections will be responsible for its implementation in their respective departments. WGL will review this policy and assess its operations annually to ensure continual improvements across its operations.

2. Water

Gibraltar has no natural sources of fresh water. All fresh water in Gibraltar is desalinated. Desalination is costly and it relies on energy, which in Gibraltar is generated with fossil fuel.

2.1. Sources of Water

Most of the water used in GBG is potable water, with rainwater harvesting accounting for no more than 5-10% of water consumption, depending on the year. Water for irrigation is therefore costly and has an environmental impact. WGL's policy must be to increase the effectiveness of water use and reduce consumption as much as is possible across its operations, without compromising the aesthetic beauty of the gardens and parks that it manages. Where possible, the emptying of

ponds and water features for maintenance will be planned so that the water can be used for irrigation or other purposes.

2.2. Plant Selection

- Some areas of GBG are planted with sub-tropical and tropical plants. These are an important and attractive component of GBG's landscaping, but they are also the least water-wise. Such planting must not be extended to new areas of the gardens. Furthermore, options must continually be explored to conserve more water and integrate drought-tolerant species in these areas where possible, without compromising their tropical character.
- All areas in GBG that are currently devoted to succulents and other xerophytes must remain so. Such planting can also be extended to other beds, as this aids in water conservation and is consistent with GBG's 'Living Collections Policy'.
- The above is true also of plants from parts of the world with Mediterranean climates, which are adapted to summer drought conditions. In particular, South African and Mediterranean plants are encouraged.
- Planting in Queensway Parks focuses on species that are well adapted to Mediterranean growing conditions. This will remain the policy when considering new plant species for these parks.

2.3. Irrigation

- Water conservation must be the foremost consideration when planning new irrigation in GBG and Queensway Parks.
- The Propagation & Collections area in GBG shall have its own irrigation, consisting entirely of water from the mains. This ensures consistency and allows additions of fertiliser where necessary without first having to test the quality of the water.
- The rest of GBG will be watered with a combination of water from the mains and rainwater harvested from the roads along the Gibraltar Nature Reserve. This water will be regularly dosed with fertiliser and any other treatment as

deemed necessary. This water must be tested for conductivity on a daily basis, because Gibraltar's toilet water is salt water and contamination of GBG tanks due to leaks is possible.

- The most water-wise methods of irrigation will be used throughout GBG and Queensway Parks. In most cases, this consists of a drip system with mulch, but methods will be dependent on the types of planting and substrate in these spaces.
- An automated, smart system of irrigation shall continue to be used at Queensway Parks and extended throughout GBG, in order to efficiently programme watering, monitor for faults and leaks, and improve water conservation.

3. Waste & Recycling

WGL's policy is to reduce the amount of waste produced and increase recycling initiatives where possible across its operations. Details are outlined.

3.1. Waste Collection & Management

The following points are relevant throughout WGL's operations:

- Disposal of waste generated by WGL is at the municipal waste collection site along Europa Advance Road. Waste deposited at this site must be restricted to waste that cannot be recycled by WGL for actual or practical reasons.
- Disposal of green waste must be minimised (see '4. Green Waste').
- Trips to the waste collection site must be minimised in order to keep their carbon footprint to a minimum.
- Staff are responsible for picking up and disposing of any litter that is found around any of the spaces managed by WGL, as and when this is found.
- The waste bins within the staff area must be emptied as regularly as possible so that they do not attract vermin.

The following points pertain specifically to GBG:

- Cleaning responsibilities at GBG are divided between WGL and the HM Government of Gibraltar's (HMGOG) appointed cleaning contractor.
- The HMGOG cleaning contractor enters GBG once a week to sweep all paths accessible to its road sweeper (see end of document).
- Bins around GBG must be emptied by staff at least once a week, on Fridays. They must be monitored daily to ensure that they do not need emptying sooner, including during weekends.
- Litter rounds must be carried out by GBG staff every Friday, throughout the whole of GBG.
- Cleaning of public toilets in GBG is the responsibility of the HMGOG cleaning contractor.
- The Children's Play Park is the responsibility of the Gibraltar Sports & Leisure Authority (GSLA). GBG is responsible for maintenance of the landscaping within the park, but not waste collection, which is carried out by the HMGOG cleaning contractor.

The following points pertain specifically to Queensway Parks:

- Cleaning responsibilities at Queensway Parks are divided between WGL and the HM Government of Gibraltar's (HMGOG) appointed cleaning contractor.
- Cleaning of public toilets, lifts and stairs at Queensway Parks are the responsibility of the HMGOG-appointed cleaning contractor.
- Bins around Queensway Parks must be emptied as regularly as required. They must be monitored daily to ensure that they do not need emptying, including during weekends.

3.2. Recycling

All material that can be recycled by WGL and its staff will be recycled according to local waste collection management practices. The use of plastic products and bags will be kept to a minimum, and reusable products should always be given priority. Recycling bins shall be kept in all areas of WGL's operations where waste that is

managed by WGL is generated. WGL staff shall be reminded regularly by their Managers of the importance of recycling. Recycling bins shall be emptied promptly before they are full.

4. Green Waste

An insufficient amount of green waste is generated in Gibraltar and there is therefore no special collection of municipal green waste. This means that it is up to WGL to ensure that as much of its green waste as possible is recycled. Most of this waste is generated at GBG.

4.1. Chipping & Mulching

As much as possible of the woody material generated by GBG's activities must be chipped and used as mulch, in GBG and the AWCP. Exceptions may be made where material is allelopathic or poisonous.

4.2. Excess Wood

Excess wood should also be used to create wood piles as refuges for wildlife, particularly in areas of native woodland (see 'GBG Tree Policy'), or for enrichment in AWCP enclosures.

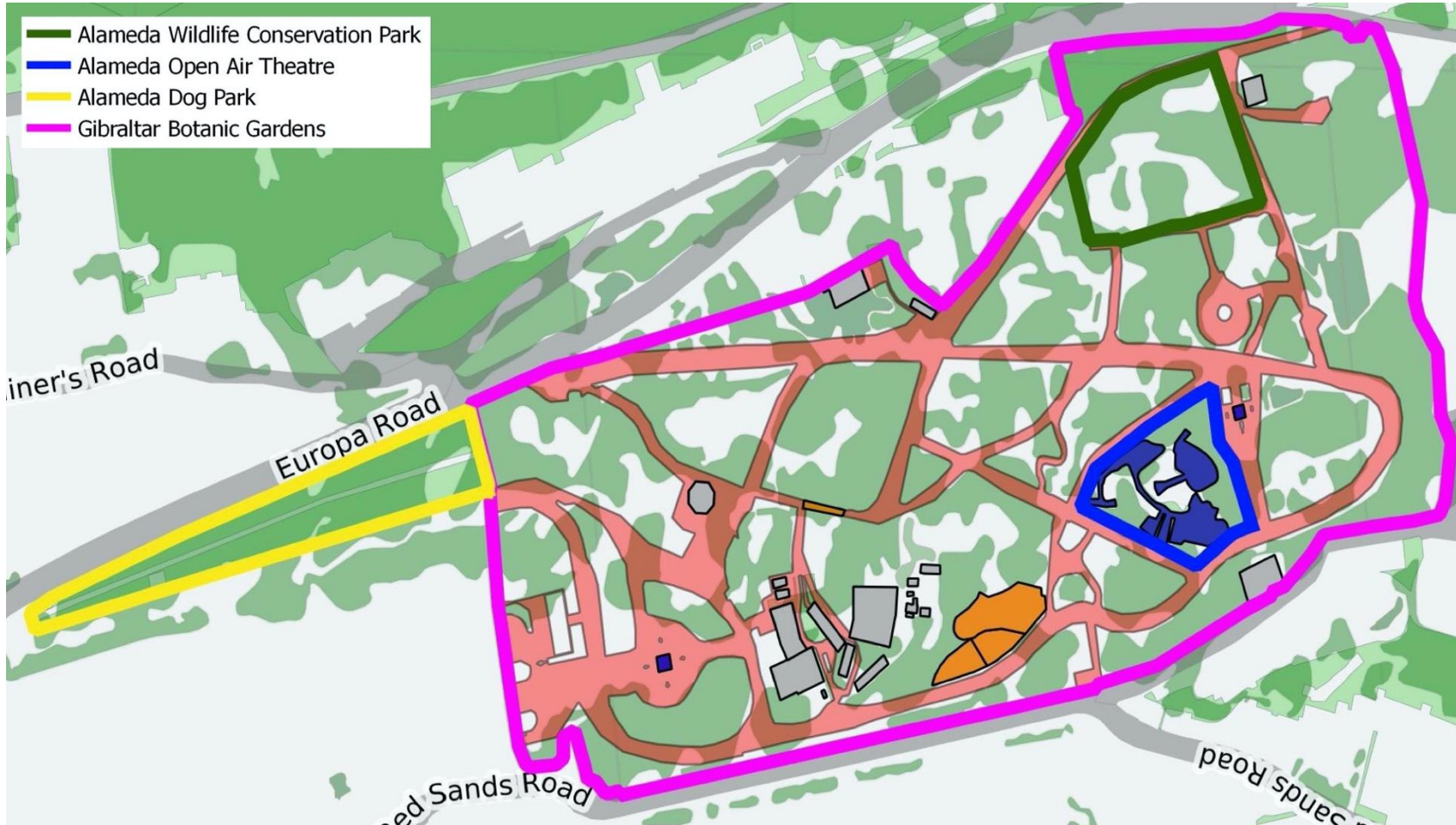
4.3. Composting

A possibility for green waste that is not suitable for chipping is composting. However, there is insufficient space in GBG for a large compost heap, nor do WGL's responsibilities on their own generate sufficient green waste for such a heap. Composting at a small scale relies on disproportionate use of water in Gibraltar's climate. Water in Gibraltar is expensive and is not environmentally friendly (see '2. Water'). Therefore, composting for GBG alone is not considered viable or advisable, except for educational purposes. GBG will continue to explore options for larger-scale composting in Gibraltar, using green waste generated throughout Gibraltar.

Table 1. Actions and timescales.

Item	Actions	Timescale	Who
Irrigation	Test conductivity of GBG water supply	Daily	Maintenance team
Irrigation	Check irrigation smart system for irregularities	Daily	Maintenance team
Waste Collection & Management	Empty bins	As and when required, at least weekly.	GBG staff
Waste Collection & Management	Litter rounds	As and when required, at least weekly.	GBG staff
Recycling	Empty recycling bins	As and when required.	GBG staff

Alameda Gardens Demarcation Map 2020



Map of paths cleaned by HMGOG cleaning contractor 2020

