Chelsea Creek
Submitted by St George (Berkeley Group)

Awards category
New housing development – large (more than ten units)

Lead or collaborating organisation(s)	**St George**
Location of SuDS	SW6 2FZ

1. SuDS overview

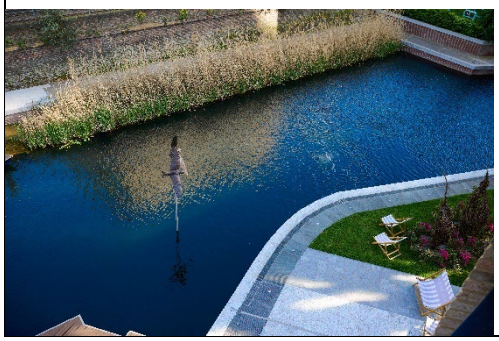
SuDS components used	Canal Attenuation
Size of the scheme and its local context	Chelsea Creek is an 8-acre site located in Imperial Wharf. 1,239 homes and 2,229 sqm of Commercial space.
Approximate age of scheme (years)	14 years old
Benefits of the scheme	• Manages local flood risk through stormwater attenuation • Provides attenuation for an 8-acre site comprising of 1,239 homes • New habitat provision • Improves local air quality • New recreational space (used for activities such as paddle boarding) • Improved quality of life / access to green spaces
Briefly describe the scheme	Chelsea Creek (CC) has seen a former brownfield gas infrastructure site, reopened to the public with a 4.5 acre network of public space which includes two new canals and marina. This new blue infrastructure feature forms the SUDS of the new 1,239 home development. The Kensington Canal was introduced back in 1828 as a minor tributary to the Thames aimed to bring goods from London docks to Kensington area. In order to preserve the local heritage, the dock wall was retained and extended to form London's first new canal network in over 100 years which now links the new development from north to south. The blue infrastructure feature provides a new freshwater habitat to the borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. 78m2 of seed mix has been planted to create reed beds which increase species diversity and encourages wildlife back into the area. Nesting moorhens, geese and ducks have already been identified amongst the reeds. In order to not place pressure on the local network, the canal acts as an attenuation tank, withholding stormwater. Any overflow can then slowly feed into the local network, helping to reduce flood risk in the area.

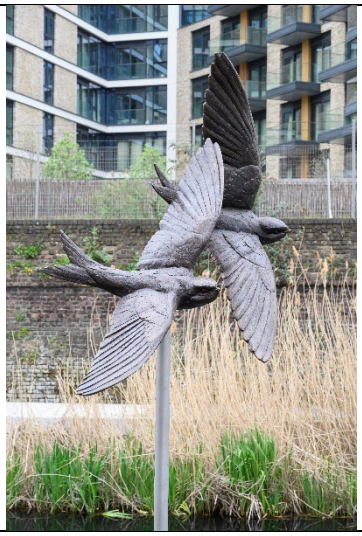
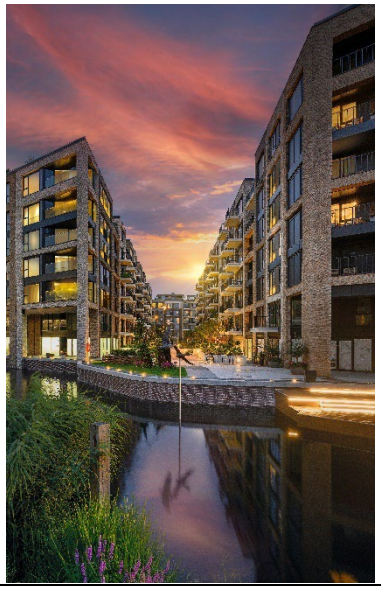
2. SuDS details

No.	Question	Answer
1	What difference has this scheme made to the local community or area?	The development has provided 4.5 acres of nature rich public space, 540 new trees, 452 affordable homes and a SuDS system which also provides a new aquatic habitat and recreational community space. The canal also supports a new public art feature 'Swooping Martins' to evoke a sense of identity and represent the close proximity to London's largest colony.
2	What is exceptional about this scheme beyond a standard approach?	Typical SuDS systems of developments, particularly in urbanised London, will be an underground attenuation tank system with little additional benefit. But the forward-thinking design incorporated at Chelsea Creek has delivered a new urban oasis. By utilising surface water as a resource not only does this SuDS create an aesthetically pleasing environment, but it provides intangible benefit to wildlife, residents and the wider community as well as encompassing and preserving local heritage. We believe this feature is an incredible example as to how the four pillars of SuDS design can be successfully achieved.
3	How much work went into getting this scheme realised?	A significant amount of well executed planning went into delivering this scheme, much more than a typical/ standard SuDS design. It was the harnessing of diverse expertise across multiple disciplines which facilitated the delivery of such an impressive SuDS scheme.
4	Is this scheme part of a masterplan or integrated into other initiatives?	This scheme is part of the overall masterplan of the Chelsea Creek development, which commenced construction in 2010 and completed in 2024.
5	What value does this scheme provide to the local area and beyond?	The scheme provides significant added value to the local area. The incorporation of blue infrastructure into a densely urban setting improves local air quality, regulates temperature, increases habitat provision as well as gives the community access to nature/outdoor space – which has proven benefit to human wellbeing.
6	What challenges/problems needed to be addressed to realise this scheme?	The most challenging part of this scheme was during the planning phase. Due to retainment of part of the Kensington Canal Wall, the small intersection of land between the site and the Thames, as well as neighbouring rail network there were multiple parties involved in obtaining planning approval. Coordinating diverse interests and negotiating agreements on land use was therefore the largest challenge to overcome, as well as obtaining the relevant permits and licences required to form such feature. Our expertise as a business allowed us to construct and logistically manage the construction of the new waterway, but undoubtedly this did not come without small challenges along the way – as does any innovative design scheme!

7	How does the scheme address related issues such as water scarcity, nutrient neutrality, or biodiversity net gain?	Whilst the scheme predates formal Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment scoring, it can be assumed that this feature would bring notable percentage change when compared to its former land use. Supported by surrounding pollinator rich landscaping, the feature provides a haven for flora and local fauna. Whilst not quantifiable, a noticeable return of wildlife to the area is recognised. The scheme has incorporated duck houses, three bee farms, bug hotels, 78m2 of reed bed and living roofs.
8	Is learning from the scheme continually captured and communicated? Please give examples.	The design team who worked on this scheme are now influencing and involved in the design of other SuDS across St George and therefore their learnings and expertise are strongly utilised and communicated internally. All of our schemes are incredibly diverse and with their own unique land conditions, opportunities and restrictions. It's therefore not possible to provide an example where this design has been replicated or directly learnt from. However, we have many developments in the pipeline with impressive SuDS designs including wetlands, landscaped attenuation ponds and waterfalls which will undoubtedly draw upon the learnings from Chelsea Creek.
9	What approaches/measures are taken to ensure the scheme is properly managed and maintained?	As of completion in early 2024, the scheme is now managed by a third-party estate's management company, who we work with closely across many of our developments. In addition, the land is owned as freehold therefore St George will maintain full oversight and responsibility of the long-term maintenance of this feature.
10	Have you collected any feedback on your scheme? What do people say about it? Can you provide any quotes?	In 2023 a social impact study was undertaken with Evoy. The study undertook a series of on-site surveys, from which the following responses were provided from local stakeholders: "Really lovely living and walking in the development, peaceful, calming, green space, great for meeting and socialising. Good views, cafes and pedestrian walkway" "Very welcoming. Makes the area more aesthetically pleasing. I've definitely been enjoying the community more" "A disused piece of land developed into an upmarket beautiful environment" A copy of the report can be provided upon request.

3. **Supporting materials**

Image (low resolution)	Caption	Image credit
	Artist impression of Chelsea Creek (pre-design)	St George Plc
	Design CGI	St George Plc
	As built photo	St George Plc
	Image of the reed bed planting alongside Swooping Martins sculpture	St George Plc

	Closer view of Swooping Martins sculpture	St George Plc
	Sunset View of Canal and development	St George Plc
	Photo of historic area before development. Chelsea Creek development approximate red line boundary (8 acres) which is situated adjacent to the wider Imperial Wharf Development	St George Plc

	Masterplan diagram of Chelsea Creek development illustrating extent of canal network within the development	St George Plc