Cities & Health

ISSN: 2374-8834 (Print) 2374-8842 (Online) Journal homepage: www.tandfonline.com/journals/rcah20

Wild ways: understanding the behavioural drivers of urban rewilding in London's private gardens using the COM-B model

Siân Moxon, Justin Webb, Alexandros Semertzi & Mina Samangooei

To cite this article: Siân Moxon, Justin Webb, Alexandros Semertzi & Mina Samangooei (20 Jul 2026): Wild ways: understanding the behavioural drivers of urban rewilding in London's private gardens using the COM-B model, Cities & Health, DOI: 10.1080/23748834.2026.2686413

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/23748834.2026.2686413

CITIES & HEALTH
https://doi.org/10.1080/23748834.2026.2686413

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

ORIGINAL SCHOLARSHIP

OPEN ACCESS Check for updates

Wild ways: understanding the behavioural drivers of urban rewilding in London's private gardens using the COM-B model

Siân Moxon [a], Justin Webb [a], Alexandros Semertzi [a] and Mina Samangooei [b]

[a]School of Art, Architecture and Design, London Metropolitan University, London, UK; [b]School of Architecture, Oxford Brookes University, Oxford, UK

ABSTRACT

Urban rewilding in private gardens improves biodiversity, climate-change resilience and wellbeing, yet little is known about the behavioural factors that influence residents' engagement in rewilding. This qualitative study explores the Capability, Opportunity and Motivation of Londoners to rewild their gardens, using the 'COM-B' behaviour model to address this gap. Twenty interviews were conducted with residents across 13 London boroughs and thematically analysed. Findings show rewilding behaviour is shaped by practical constraints, environmental conditions, personal values and social influences. Psychological Capability – desire to learn, trial-and-error experiences and ability to navigate information – is key. Opportunities are shaped by time, space, cost, local wildlife, pets and community dynamics, while environmental concern, health benefits, species preferences and garden-maintenance habits drive Motivation. The unfulfilled potential of schools in fostering early ecology values and local authorities in supporting residents is identified. The study highlights the importance of tailored communication and locally relevant interventions – from policymakers, councils, conservation organisations, built-environment designers and schools – to build skills, support positive habits and address concerns among residents, and strengthen community and governance structures. The findings will facilitate the design of effective urban-rewilding initiatives to contribute to biodiversity, climate and health goals in London and other cities.

ARTICLE HISTORY
Received 17 December 2025
Accepted 1 June 2026

KEYWORDS
Behaviour change; biodiversity; urban greening; urban rewilding; wildlife gardening

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
SDG 11: Sustainable cities and communities

Introduction

Rewilding in cities involves restoring natural processes, habitats and species within urban environments so that nature can recover and thrive alongside people. Instead of tightly controlling or tidying green spaces, rewilding allows ecosystems to regenerate – through actions such as creating wildflower meadows, planting native species, re-establishing wetlands and making space for wildlife in private gardens and on public land (Pettorelli *et al.* 2022). By increasing biodiversity, urban rewilding helps address the ecological crisis, supporting pollinators, birds and other wildlife whose populations have declined (Burns *et al.* 2023). It also contributes to climate-change resilience: wilder urban landscapes store more carbon, reduce flood risk through improved water absorption, provide cooling during heatwaves and improve air quality (Finnerty *et al.* 2025). At the same time, nature-rich spaces offer benefits for people's wellbeing, creating healthier, more 'liveable' cities while supporting wider environmental recovery (Finnerty *et al.* 2025). Rewilding London would help mitigate current environmental problems in the region – including air pollution and inequality of access to public green space – alongside future threats of overheating and flood risk resulting from climate change (Greater London Authority 2018)

Private residential gardens can contribute to a city-wide aim of urban rewilding, 'reinstating vegetation, water, and other wildlife habitat in towns and cities to enhance biodiversity, climate-change resilience, and human wellbeing' (Moxon 2024), not least in London, where rewilding is defined as 'an activity that seeks to reinstate natural processes and, where appropriate, missing species allowing nature to shape the landscape to provide wider benefits for wildlife and people' (Greater London Authority 2023b). Private gardens make up 23% of the Greater London region's land area (Greenspace Information for Greater London CIC 2023). Vegetated gardens have the potential to form habitat corridors for wildlife between larger, public green spaces (Vergnes *et al.* 2013). Further, private gardens could connect many Londoners with nature, as 79% of the city's residents have access to a private outdoor space (ONS 2020a).

However, London's private gardens are becoming less vegetated and therefore less hospitable to wildlife (Smith 2010), reflecting a UK-wide trend: a national survey found one in ten householders had replaced

CONTACT Siân Moxon s.moxon@londonmet.ac.uk School of Art, Architecture and Design, London Metropolitan University, 16 Goulston Street, London E1 7TP, UK

Supplemental data for this article can be accessed online at https://doi.org/10.1080/23748834.2026.2686413.

their lawn with artificial grass and one in four had paved over their front garden (2022). Nevertheless, the Royal Horticultural Society's (RHS's) predictions on future gardening trends offer hope, highlighting 'greening grey spaces,' 'going wild,' 'gardening with nature' and 'planet-friendly gardening' as emerging themes (RHS 2023).

The Mayor of London has published comprehensive environmental policy documents for Greater London with targets to make over half of London green space by 2050 (Greater London Authority 2018) and is developing a 'London Nature Recovery Strategy' (Greater London Authority 2023a). London's drive to set new standards for rewilding is highlighted by its status as the world's first National Park City, committing to becoming 'greener, healthier and wilder' (*National Park City Foundation* 2023). Engaging residents in rewilding their gardens is recommended in reports from Zoological Society London (Pettorelli *et al.* 2022) and the major's Rewilding Task Force (Greater London Authority 2023b).

While a growing body of research has explored urban greening, wildlife gardening and pro-environmental behaviours, much of this work remains descriptive, focusing on attitudes, values or reported practices without systematically applying theory-driven frameworks to understand how behaviour can be changed (Cox *et al.* 2017, Moxon *et al.* 2023). Behavioural science offers a more structured approach to understanding and intervening in complex behaviours. However, its application to urban rewilding, particularly within private gardens, remains limited.

Understanding residents' rewilding behaviour is integral to developing approaches to bring about change. The 'COM-B' model (see Figure 1) is a theoretical framework that helps to understand behaviour by identifying its three components: (1) the Capability and (2) Motivation to engage in the behaviour, and (3) the Opportunity, the external factors that promote or make the behaviour possible (Michie *et al.* 2011).

The components of the COM-B model include psychological and physical Capability, social and physical Opportunity, and reflective and automatic Motivation. Psychological Capability is the knowledge or psychological skills, strength or stamina to engage in the necessary mental processes to perform a behaviour; physical Capability is the physical skill, strength or stamina. Physical Opportunity is afforded by the environment, such as time, resources, locations, cues or physical affordance to perform a behaviour; social Opportunity is afforded by interpersonal influences, social cues and cultural norms that influence the way we think about things. Reflective Motivation describes processes involving intentions and evaluations of a specific behaviour; automatic Motivation describes processes involving emotional reactions, desires, impulses, inhibitions, drive states and reflex responses (Michie *et al.* 2014).

The COM-B model provides a comprehensive framework for identifying the interacting influences on behaviour. The COM-B model sits within an intervention-development framework, the Behaviour Change Wheel (Michie *et al.* 2011), allowing for an easy transition from understanding the behaviour to the development of intervention strategies to facilitate change. The COM-B model and Behaviour Change Wheel are widely used in public health and health behaviour research (Vinogradov *et al.* 2024, Duan *et al.* 2025, Weeks *et al.* 2026, Webb *et al.* 2022). However, their use in the context of everyday environmental practices, such as the rewilding of private gardens, is underdeveloped. This study addresses this gap by

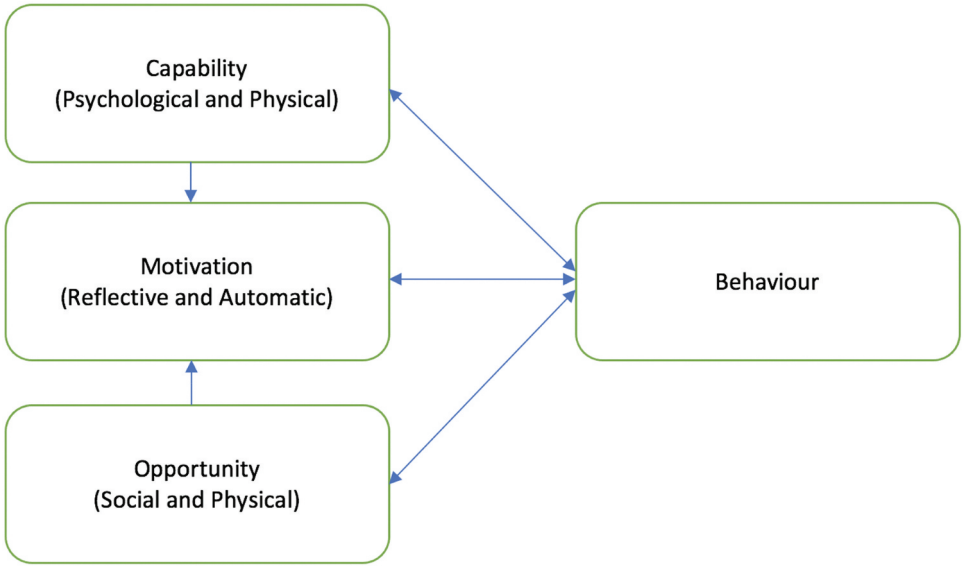

Figure 1. The COM-B model.

applying the COM-B model to generate an in-depth, theoretically informed understanding of the behavioural drivers of urban rewilding among London residents. In doing so, it moves beyond descriptive accounts of gardening practices to identify specific behavioural mechanisms that can inform the design of targeted, evidence-based interventions and policies to support biodiversity and climate resilience at the household level.

Methods

Study design

This is a qualitative study designed to gain an in-depth understanding of the Capability, Opportunity and Motivation of Londoners to engage in urban-rewilding behaviour in their private gardens. The study seeks to answer the research question: 'What themes underpin London residents' capability, opportunity and motivation to carry out rewilding behaviour in their private gardens?' This research is part of a multi-stage research project to design intervention approaches to support urban rewilding in London gardens, for which a study protocol has been published previously (Webb and Moxon 2021). The methods specific to this qualitative research are presented here.

Recruitment

Participants were eligible if they were adults (aged 18 years or over), resided in London and had access to a private garden space of any size or description. Recruitment was undertaken via digital invitations distributed through the research team's networks, including universities, local authorities, conservation organisations and project partners, as well as newsletters and social media platforms. This approach was intended to reach individuals with varying levels of interest and engagement in gardening and environmental issues. However, it is acknowledged that this strategy may have led to a sample biased towards participants with a pre-existing interest in rewilding or environmental sustainability.

A total of 20 participants were interviewed, consistent with qualitative research aiming to generate in-depth, experiential insights and considered sufficient to achieve thematic depth and diversity of perspectives. Data collection and analysis were conducted iteratively, with emerging patterns observed across interviews, suggesting that sufficient depth had been reached to address the study aims.

Participants who expressed an interest were emailed a participant information form and asked to provide informed consent. Consenting participants were interviewed from February to March 2023.

Interview process

Interviews were conducted using video conferencing because of the dispersed nature of the participants across London. Twenty interviews were conducted in total, by the same interviewer for consistency. The interviews followed a semi-structured format with a topic guide influenced by a previous scoping review of the barriers and facilitators to urban rewilding beahviour (Webb and Moxon 2021) (Supplementary file 1). Participants were asked about their knowledge and understanding of urban rewilding in relation to their private garden, their current or intended behaviours, and their perceived capability, motivation and opportunities to engage in rewilding, including factors that may facilitate or hinder this.

The interviews were recorded, with the participants' consent, and transcribed verbatim in anonymised form. The interviewer checked the accuracy of the transcripts and participants were offered the chance to review their own transcript.

Data analysis

The interview transcripts were divided among the research team for coding using components of the COM-B model and supported by Nvivo data-analysis software. In addition to deductive coding using the COM-B model, an inductive approach was employed to allow novel themes to emerge from the data, emphasising participant lived experiences. Transcripts were initially coded independently by members of the research team, with codes subsequently reviewed and refined through an iterative process of discussion. Any discrepancies in coding or theme interpretation were resolved through consensus, with reference back to the original transcripts to ensure consistency and credibility of the analysis.

Reflexivity was considered throughout the research process; the research team brought interdisciplinary perspectives spanning public health, architecture and behaviour change, alongside a prior interest in urban rewilding. Regular discussions were used to reflect on how these perspectives may have influenced data interpretation, with efforts made to remain grounded in participants' accounts and to minimise the imposition of pre-existing assumptions.

Results

Participants

The characteristics of the interview participants are presented in Table 1.

Participants represented 13 of Greater London's 32 boroughs (Pilgrim Chief Executive's Office, Martin 2006) with an age range from 25 to 78 years old. A large majority (85%) owned their home.

Table 1. Participant data.

Participant number	Gender	Age	London borough	Home-ownership status
P1	Male	49	Camden	Rented
P2	Female	46	Greenwich	Owned
P3	Female	62	Waltham Forest	Owned
P4	Female	56	Barnet	Owned
P5	Female	54	Lambeth	Owned
P6	Female	60	Waltham Forest	Owned
P7	Female	48	Barnet	Owned
P8	Non-binary	45	Haringey	Owned
P9	Female	57	Lambeth	Owned
P10	Male	48	Hackney	Owned
P11	Female	25	Harrow	Owned
P12	Female	60	Wandsworth	Owned
P13	Male	69	Kingston	Owned
P14	Female	46	Hackney	Owned
P15	Male	49	Tower Hamlets	Owned
P16	Male	61	Hammersmith & Fulham	Rented
P17	Female	37	Islington	Rented
P18	Female	47	Greenwich	Owned
P19	Male	41	Greenwich	Owned
P20	Female	78	Islington	Owned

Capability opportunity and motivation behaviour components

All COM-B components were found to influence rewilding behaviour in private gardens. Themes and sub-themes related to each component are summarised in Table 2.

Capability

Physical capability

Heavy lifting. It is self-evident that there is a requirement to have the physical strength, skills and stamina to perform rewilding. One participant stated, 'I don't feel able.' (P9); it should not be assumed that everyone has the physical Capability to perform urban-rewilding activities.

There was an association between gardening and heavy lifting, seen negatively, with participants stating, 'I'm not one for doing too much . . . digging.' (P20) and, 'I like seeing the plants, but not the hard work to put them in.' (P16).

Psychological capability

Thirst for knowledge.

Knowledge gaps. Half of the participants wished to learn more about gardening for wildlife, claiming to, 'not [be] an expert' (P20) or be, '[not] the most knowledgeable gardener' (P18), but wanting to learn more: 'I'm sure there's a lot more that I could learn.' (P1).

Some felt that generally raising awareness would be beneficial. Some highlighted the importance of

Table 2. Themes and sub-themes related to the COM-B components.

COM-B Component	Theme	Sub-theme
Capability – Physical	Heavy lifting	
Capability – Psychological	Thirst for knowledge	
		Knowledge gaps
		Learning by experience
		Sources of information
	The bigger picture	
Opportunity – Physical	Local conditions	Biodiversity
		Climate
	Amount of space	
	Time to garden	
	Cost	
	Pets	
Opportunity – Social	Community engagement	
	Family	
	Local/national government involvement	Communicating a wider strategy
		Supporting rewilding
Motivation – Reflective	Appreciating benefits	
	Thinking about nature	Helping the environment
		Enhancing growing
	Creating a haven	
	Competing priorities	Aesthetic
		Functional
		Safety
Motivation – Automatic	Feelings about nature	Species
		The environment
		Connection with nature
	Maintenance habits	

educating children, who in turn could educate older family members; others acknowledged the health benefits of gardening.

Gaining a knowledge of what, where and when to plant; what to dig up and let grow; and how to design a garden were identified knowledge gaps. Other knowledge areas included: 'Tips of what to do at what time and planting different things; … how to enrich your soil, so then that saves us money [and] we don't have to keep buying compost' (P14). Participants acknowledged the climate and biodiversity crisis but did not always know how changes in their own garden could make a difference.

Learning by experience. Knowledge about gardening for wildlife increased through experience, and for many, it was a case of trial and error. For example, some identified particular species within their gardens and adapted their practices accordingly: 'I started to learn a little bit about frogs and that all the female frogs are buried in the mud. The time of year you manage that transition is critical for the frogs, so we tried to do it at a time when it wouldn't disturb them.' (P12).

When something worked, such as planting to attract bees, participants were motivated to continue. Conversely, if something failed it was demotivating. Some took a more relaxed approach: 'If I'm not sure, I just shove it in and see what happens.' (P18).

Increased knowledge supported a change in mindset from being aesthetically focused to letting things go to support wildlife: 'It used to be quite nice … in the autumn … you cut everything down … [Now] I know that leaving stuff is the right thing to do, so I just go with it, and it looks messy but it's more important that it's providing stuff for wildlife than it looks tidy.' (P6).

Sources of information. Participants were able to find the information they needed, but not without challenges as there is, 'so much information out there' (P15). The internet was favoured over the use of books, and YouTube was highlighted as a useful resource. Having a knowledgeable person to ask was seen as helpful, whether friends, family, local-community members or people linked to gardening and wildlife-conservation organisations: 'I've been really fortunate to have some great conversations with a few … people on email … in particular a couple of people at RHS [Royal Horticultural Society].' (P10).

The bigger picture. The majority of participants (n = 14 of 20) were able to understand *the bigger picture*, in terms of the climate crisis and the health benefits of gardening, as a source of information and an influence on their gardening practices: 'I think that the reason that we are seeing people as interested … is to do with awareness of the big picture problems around … climate and … the health benefits as well.' (P10).

Participants understood that people are part of a larger ecosystem and should play their part to make positive changes to protect biodiversity. In particular, the importance of pollinating insects, such as bees and butterflies, was mentioned several times. Some also acknowledged the importance of taking action in London: 'London gardens are a really huge environmental space, and the more we do, the more we've got diversity in insects and plant life, and that's good for the whole ecosystem. I'm aware that collectively those small patches make quite a large space.' (P4).

Specific practices to protect health within the city were identified, for example, planting certain species for, 'mopping up pollution' (P15) and, 'improving air quality' (P8).

Opportunity

Physical opportunity

Local conditions.

Biodiversity. Several participants reported that they were keen to attract the wildlife already present in their neighbourhood by adapting their own gardens: 'We maintain quite a nice space for the local wildlife.' (P12); 'We're very lucky here, we've got a nice colony [of birds].' (P16); 'We've seen woodpeckers in our garden [and] goldfinches.' (P15).

Climate. Residents sometimes felt challenged by the unpredictability of their local climate, saying, 'The only barriers we really face [are] time and weather' (P11). and, 'It's really trial and error … The weather … hugely influences what's happening in the garden.' (P2).

These concerns were heightened by awareness of climate change: '[With] things warming up, your typical English garden … has no chance. There is a dry part of our garden, we have an agave plant there, just to cope with the changes in the climate.' (P14).

Amount of space. The size of gardens was mentioned several times, with larger gardens supporting rewilding activity, but having a smaller garden did not appear to deter residents from rewilding: 'Space isn't an issue' (P11).

Time to garden. Many residents complained that they did not have enough time to work on their garden, stating, 'Always the same thing, it's time.' (P12). This issue was compounded by competing priorities in their lives, for example, 'I'm not able to [rewild] if I'm working, so I just have to do it when I can.' (P18).

Cost. The cost of adaptations for wildlife was mentioned several times as a barrier to rewilding: 'Money is obviously an issue.' (P11); 'That magic money tree [is needed] for me to do biodiversity

improvements.' (P19). Expense was associated with specific rewilding tasks, for instance, 'Sometimes you've got to knock a hole in the concrete, which is expensive.' (P10).

Pets. Domestic pets living nearby, particularly neighbours' cats, were seen as counterproductive to rewilding: 'The cats [are] a big issue.' (P10). Some residents felt the presence of pets made it difficult to attract a variety of wildlife: 'There are a number of cats and . . . dogs . . . , so . . . we don't get a huge amount of small birds come into the garden, no matter how much feed we put down, or bird amenities.' (P18); 'I had a bird table but . . . [it] was causing a concentration of cats knowing they had a ready food supply.' (P16).

Social opportunity

Community engagement. Many participants saw the value of being part of a local community across their neighbourhood to foster a sense of working together: 'How we collaborate across neighbourhoods . . . will make a difference. I'm certainly seeing the appetite for that now.' (P10). 'The community aspect is so important . . . I think it's very important for people to come out of their house and get their hands dirty or get to talk to people. There's more impact through doing.' (P17). 'Raising awareness would be useful' (P15). in local communities. Neighbours were seen as a potential source of advice.

Family. Having young children was likely to persuade the whole family to take part in rewilding, whereas teenagers were less likely to be interested: 'When [the children] were younger it was . . . more fun to do [rewilding activities] as . . . family events', but, '[as teenagers] I don't know how many genuine sacrifices they would make to their lifestyle in order to improve the environment.' (P12). Another said of their engagement in rewilding activity, 'not so much now [my daughter is] . . . older, but certainly when she was younger [we did] counting the butterflies, seeing how many different types of bees we could have in the garden.' (P18).

Local/National government involvement.

Communicating a wider strategy. Participants strongly felt there was a lack of communication from local authorities to residents on the wider environmental strategy, meaning they did not feel their gardens were contributing to a larger-scale rewilding plan. Tensions between local and regional government were observed, 'There's a conflict between what the GLA . . . and . . . the local authority . . . are trying to do. The local authority here are living in the Dark Ages.' (P15). Further, some felt that local government action was disjoined and lacked focus.

Supporting rewilding. Participants thought there was insufficient local or national governmental support for rewilding on a practical level: 'It would be good if there was some kind of government or local authority support or encouragement, financial support that was available, and then that would definitely encourage people to do it.' (P15).

It was felt that the local authorities could lead by example in public spaces, as 'It's just [done by the] community. I don't think the local authority is doing anything.' (P2); 'It would be nice if the council felt like they need to encourage people to do it more. I think any positive reminders are good all the time . . . ' (P17).

Motivation

Reflective motivation

Appreciating benefits. Many acknowledged the health benefits that came from rewilding their gardens, both for themselves and their families: 'I'm very interested in the health and wellbeing benefits' (P10). Some reported that awareness of the health benefits was heightened during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Thinking about nature.

Helping the environment. Many residents were motivated by helping the environment, either generally or by helping specific causes, such as avoiding the use of chemical gardening products, or helping certain species, for example, providing nectar sources for pollinators, fostering native plants and offering water for birds: 'We've planted . . . plants that . . . support night-flying insects for bats.' (P10).

Enhancing growing. Many were keen to work with nature to enhance the growing of edible plants, which was regarded as compatible with rewilding, even extending to ideas of permaculture: 'From a food-production perspective . . . we need bees, we need the pollinators, and the more we can encourage those, the better.' (P18).

Creating a haven. Many residents were driven by creating a haven in their outdoor space, for themselves as much as for wildlife. This involved creating a space with an attractive appearance, sometimes seen as an oasis in the city: 'I've got a little haven in our garden here for British species.' (P16). However, there was concern that neighbours preferred a sanitised extension of their own houses creating a potential conflict. Creating a haven extended to planting to provide visual screening from overlooking neighbours or to cover built structures, or to mitigate road noise and pollution.

Competing priorities.

Aesthetic. Prioritising other concerns repeatedly acted as a barrier to urban rewilding. Aesthetic considerations sometimes precluded rewilding measures that were perceived as untidy in favour of a, 'well-kept garden' (P10). However, there was a suggestion that untidiness could be tolerated by onlookers if its contribution to rewilding was clear; and some thought rewilding and aesthetics could be compatible, particularly when well designed, saying, 'It can be functional and aesthetically pleasing.' (P17).

Functional. Functional priorities included avoiding dense planting to optimise sunlight: 'We had to take out . . . trees . . . it was really dark and dank and overgrown.' (P3). Play space for children was also mentioned as a competing priority, as was space for car parking.

Safety. While a few residents highlighted the benefits of educating children about nature, concerns about their safety often took priority. Perceived risks included thorny plants, stinging insects, water and even dirt: 'I had an amazing honeybee hive . . . and . . . had to get rid of it because I have two young children and I really didn't want to be dealing with . . . the likelihood of them getting stung.' (P7). The provision of water for wildlife was avoided because of the risks of children drowning.

Many residents were concerned about safeguarding their pet dogs, avoiding gaps in boundaries, ponds with poisonous algae and hazardous plants, for instance, 'I have to make sure what I plant isn't toxic or dangerous for [my dog] . . . I'm . . . careful when I'm planting bulbs and prickly things.' (P11). A couple of interviewees were worried about plants damaging their property, with one keen to avoid, 'anything that would undermine the structural integrity of the house.' (P15).

Automatic Motivation

Feelings about nature.

Species. Many residents were motivated by the potential outcome of attracting new species, more native species or a greater diversity of species to their gardens, particularly birds: '[It was] lovely to have birds coming into the garden.' (P12). A minority welcomed plant and animal species that are perhaps traditionally considered unwelcome, including dandelions and feral pigeons; but, for many, dislike of species that were considered vermin, invasive or an object of fear or annoyance, was a demotivator. Examples included foxes, cats, thorny plants and . . . 'We don't want rats.' (P12). Fear of species seemed to stem from childhood, but adults sometimes tolerated species they feared in the garden. People seemed threatened by the possibility of large numbers of certain species, such as squirrels, earwigs or snails.

The environment. Participants were often motivated by a passion for the environment saying it is 'something that I care about.' (P12). However, several suspected that other people in their neighbourhood did not care enough about nature.

Connection with nature. A recurring theme was a sense of joy from having a sensory connection with nature, going beyond the visual experience: 'I just get a lot of enjoyment out of sitting in a garden, and hearing the noise of the insects.' (P4). This was mentioned particularly in connection with growing plants to connect with the soil, especially edible plants, with delight taken in sharing produce with neighbours.

Maintenance habits.

Habit was important for rewilding. Many said gardening for wildlife was a habit they had acquired from their upbringing. Yet the practice of minimal maintenance was also acknowledged to be important, with some residents taking part in Plantlife's 'No Mow May' initiative annually or stating, 'We're not very good at weeding so . . . we've got a lot of ivy.' (P7). Entrenched maintenance habits could be a barrier to rewilding in communal gardens where gardening was outsourced and contractors routinely used chemical weed killers.

Discussion

The application of behavioural science to environmental issues has often focused on influencing automatic, often unconscious, decision-making through changes to contextual cues and 'nudge'-based approaches (Byerly *et al.* 2018). While this work has also extended to more deliberative, intention-driven behaviours such as improving recycling practices and reducing household energy consumption (Osbaldiston and Schott 2012, Bamberg and Rees 2015), relatively little attention has been given to behaviours that actively support biodiversity restoration, particularly within urban domestic settings. To develop and select effective interventions to influence pro-environmental behaviour change, the determinants of behaviour need to be considered (van Valkengoed *et al.* 2022).

This qualitative study provides new insight into how London residents understand and enact rewilding behaviours in their private gardens, using the COM-B model to reveal how Capability, Opportunity and Motivation interact within a densely populated urban context. The findings of this study contribute to this emerging area by providing a theoretically informed understanding of how such behaviours are shaped, highlighting the complex interplay of capability, opportunity and motivation in the context of private garden rewilding.

Although many themes echo wider literature on gardening for wildlife (Moxon *et al.* 2023), the

findings also demonstrate conditions that are specific to London as a global city – shaped by its climate vulnerabilities, housing pressures, governance structures and cultural demographics – and which therefore require tailored policy and practice responses.

Psychological Capability, particularly knowledge and confidence, is a key influence, while physical and social Opportunity – such as time, space, cost and community context – act as enabling or constraining factors. Motivation operates across both reflective processes (e.g. environmental concern, perceived benefits) and automatic processes (e.g. emotional responses, habits). Effective interventions must address multiple interacting components of behaviour rather than relying on information provision alone.

Rewilding amid the realities of city living

Several barriers and facilitators identified to rewilding reflect the constraints and stresses of urban life. Limited time, space and budget, and competing domestic priorities limited residents' capacity to engage in rewilding. These factors align with existing research describing how urban living reduces opportunities for nature contact and can generate environmental disengagement (Cox *et al.* 2017). Yet participants also described strong desires to create 'havens' within their gardens, echoing evidence that access to small urban greenspaces helps mitigate stress and improve wellbeing (Egerer *et al.* 2024). This duality – pressure on time and space but a strong emotional need for nature – appears particularly intensified in London. This is unsurprising when its working hours are the longest in the UK (Bangham 2020), its gardens are smaller than the national average (ONS 2020b) and over one third of its population struggles to make ends meet (Centre for London 2023); yet, meanwhile, its residents experience high levels of loneliness and poor air quality (Brook and King 2017, Greater London Authority 2022). Nevertheless, the themes of creating a haven, appreciating benefits, having a connection with nature and food growing, suggest that Londoners intuitively understand the importance of spending time in greenspace to help counter their stressful lives (Grahn and Stigsdotter 2003). Strategically designed messaging campaigns highlighting these themes could therefore influence urban-rewilding behaviour in the capital (Liu *et al.* 2025, Peiró-Signes *et al.* 2025).

The influence of culture, climate and species encounters

Themes relating to weather, climate change and everyday encounters with urban wildlife indicate that Londoners' rewilding behaviour is shaped by a distinctive environmental and cultural context. Participants often viewed gardening as weather dependent and expressed uncertainty about plant selection in a warming climate. This is perhaps to be expected in cities, where climate-change impacts such as overheating and flooding are exacerbated by a predominance of hard surfaces (Hobbie and Grimm 2020). Encounters with animals commonly found in the capital – such as foxes, grey squirrels and rats (Funnell 2019) or neighbours' cats – evoked strong emotional responses that either prompted or deterred rewilding. These automatic motivations were powerful in shaping behaviour, reinforcing the need for interventions that work with, rather than against, residents' visceral reactions to disliked species and perceived messiness.

Importantly, many Londoners were motivated by a sense of contributing to environmental solutions, describing their gardens as part of a wider ecological system. This aligns with a national interest in climate action and biodiversity recovery with an estimated 80% of adults in the UK expressing climate concern (DESNZ 2024), yet participants lacked clarity on how their individual gardens connected to city-wide strategies.

Knowledge, learning and habit as behavioural drivers

Psychological Capability emerged as a central enabler. Participants frequently expressed a desire to learn more, but also reported being overwhelmed by conflicting or excessive information. Much learning occurred through experience, trial and error, or advice from friends and community members. This suggests that interventions that provide simple, localised, trustworthy guidance – and opportunities to learn by doing – are likely to be particularly effective.

Habit also played a significant role: established maintenance routines could inhibit rewilding, while minimal-intervention practices, such as 'No Mow May' (Plantlife 2025), helped residents normalise wilder aesthetics. Supporting residents to shift habitual practices, and linking messaging campaigns to popular conservation events, will therefore be key to scaling up rewilding behaviour.

Community dynamics and the role of local governance

Social Opportunity strongly shaped motivation. Many participants described community action as energising and enabling, reflecting literature on the importance of neighbourhood cohesion for urban environmental engagement (Jennings *et al.* 2024) and, inversely, the impact of urban environmental engagement on improved neighbourhood cohesion (Oh *et al.* 2022). In London, this social impact is much needed, given

the epidemic of loneliness (Hobson and Kharicha 2022). Local authorities were widely viewed as inconsistent or absent in their support for rewilding. Participants perceived a disconnect between strategic ambitions and on-the-ground policies in their London borough, noting disparities in communication, use of pesticides and prioritisation of greening between boroughs.

This gap between strategy and delivery may limit residents' belief that their actions contribute to meaningful collective impact. Strengthening communication, showcasing council-led rewilding in parks and verges, and offering financial or practical support could therefore help unlock greater community participation (Moxon *et al.* 2023).

Family, children and early rewilding values

The findings show that families and children can play an important role in shaping rewilding behaviour. Parents often described gardening for wildlife as a shared, hands-on activity that helped children connect with nature and learn about biodiversity. Such early experiences are known to foster pro-environmental values that endure into adulthood, suggesting that family-based rewilding may have long-term cultural benefits (Liu and Green 2024).

However, parents also highlighted concerns about safety – such as stinging insects, toxic plants or water features – which sometimes limited their willingness to let their gardens go wild. These risks reflect broader patterns of parental caution in urban settings (Kalish *et al.* 2010) and indicate that practical guidance on child-friendly rewilding is essential.

Participants also identified schools as an important setting for normalising nature engagement and introducing children to nature-positive practices. School activities related to food growing, wildlife observation and outdoor learning are opportunities for children to influence family behaviour at home. Strengthening these school-family links could therefore support wider uptake of rewilding and help cultivate early ecology-conscious values across communities (Liu and Green 2024).

Implications for rewilding London

Overall, the findings suggest that Londoners are motivated and broadly supportive of urban rewilding, substantiating a previous quantitative study (Webb *et al.* 2025), but face barriers linked to physical constraints, uncertainty, cost and habit. Practice and policy interventions informed by the Behaviour Change Wheel linked to the COM-B model should therefore:

- Build residents' skills and confidence through simple, localised, experiential learning;
- Offer solutions that accommodate limited time, space and budgets, and address concerns around pets and children;
- Work with social norms by leveraging community identity and neighbourhood collaboration;
- Address emotional responses to rewilding, such as 'creating a haven' and 'untidiness' through positive narratives and communications campaigns;
- Enable behaviour through supportive policies, clear communication and visible leadership from local councils and regional bodies;
- Develop lesson plans, linked to the National Curriculum, to encourage urban rewilding in school children.

These broad aims should inform practical changes to both practice and policy for key actors:

Policymakers

The commitment of government to joined-up policy implementation on rewilding at local, regional and national level should be strengthened and made known to residents.

The Mayor of London's world-leading targets on urban rewilding, broader environment strategy and commitment to the associated London National Park City and London Rewilding Taskforce initiatives should be better communicated to London residents. Critically, the role of Londoners and their private gardens in delivering London's biodiversity and wider environmental goals should be explicitly articulated to enable the capital's gardens to reach their potential. Regional strategy, such as the London Environment Plan, should be strengthened to include measures targeting existing private gardens alongside public open spaces. This could include planning requirements for green roofs, walls and habitat boxes on house extensions and new garden structures, and vegetation within new hard-landscaping proposals. Alternatively, the mayor could instigate schemes similar to Paris's 'Permis de Végétaliser,' which enables residents to apply to plant in unmaintained public spaces, such as tree pits, to build a sense of community effort. Disparity on speed or extent of implementation of this rewilding policy between London boroughs, whether for political or resourcing reasons, should be minimised by setting implementation deadlines to ensure an equitable approach.

Rewilding policy will need to be managed alongside development, as London's growing population, which is expected to reach 11 million by 2050, will put added pressure on the environment (Greater London Authority 2018). The coexistence of growth and thriving biodiversity has long been part of the city's history, as celebrated in 'London: A Natural History' (Fitter

1990), but today's housing crisis represents a new challenge (Greater London Authority 2018b).

Councils

Local councils should lead by example, demonstrating and signposting rewilding in local public spaces and clearly communicating their involvement in such initiatives. London boroughs should review their systems for engaging residents and community groups in rewilding, considering measures such as labelling rewilded spaces on public land and highlighting council rewilding efforts through newsletters and social media. Councils should consider organising community events, de-paving services, bulb and seed giveaways, or campaigns, such as Hammersmith and Fulham Council's 'Rewilding Raves.' Offering localised rewilding advice, such as London Borough of Tower Hamlets' 'Tower Habitats' website, attuned to local built-environment characteristics, climate and priority species, is likely to be impactful.

Conservation organisations

Conservation organisations and community groups can offer London residents knowledge, sources of inspiration and the potential of learning by experience, for example through citizen science or plant swapping events. Suggestions for rewilding activities should be sensitive to the challenges of space, time and cost facing many Londoners, suggesting practical ways around these barriers, such as making habitat boxes from waste materials or growing plants from seed or by propagation to save money. Suggestions for wildlife features should allow for competing priorities in the garden, for example, installing a mini pond with a metal grille to promote child safety while allowing access for wildlife. Proposed rewilding activities should take account of the likelihood of domestic pets in the neighbourhood, offering practical methods, such as keeping pets indoors after dark to minimise interractions with wildlife. Campaigns that encourage community interaction and highlight the wider benefits of rewilding, including helping the environment, enhancing food growing and creating a haven from city life, are likely to be popular. Encouraging the adoption of simple garden-maintenance habits that benefit wildlife, such as creating leaf and log piles after pruning and tidying, will be important to encourage rewilding activity as part of everyday life. Moreover, messaging that evokes positive feelings about nature and addresses residents' concerns about negative aspects of nature will be vital to steer behaviour towards rewilding. Lastly, conservation campaigns should be mindful of the age of their target audience, and of any children in target households, engaging more receptive young children through their families and schools, while finding new ways to engage older children and childless adults.

Conservation organisations should promote affordable, multi-functional products of a scale to fit an urban environment.

Built-environment designers

Urban designers, landscape architects and architects should integrate wildlife features into building and garden refurbishments, creating attractive spaces and choosing products that are small scale and multi-functional to suit the urban context.

Schools

London primary schools should provide teacher training on developing lesson plans around urban rewilding, such as the course offered by the Natural History Museum. Secondary schools should offer the new Natural History GCSE (Cambridge OCR 2026). All schools can join sustainability networks, such as London National Park City Schools, and events, such as STEM Protecting Our Planet for support; and maximise outdoor learning and after-school clubs through, for example, 'Forest School' programmes.

Implications for rewilding other cities

This paper has focused on understanding rewilding behaviour in London's gardens in relation to Capability, Opportunity and Motivation factors. Given that research into rewilding gardens in London and other cities is in its infancy (Moxon *et al.* 2023), the findings make an important contribution to a vital, topical field and will inform the work of other researchers investigating urban rewilding elsewhere.

The findings will thus advance understanding of rewilding in residential gardens more broadly. Cities worldwide face climate stress, biodiversity decline and competing land-use pressures, and urban gardens are important to cities' sustainability and resilience amid these threats (Chicca *et al.* 2022), highlighting a role for rewilding urban gardens globally. While the specific themes observed here reflect London's unique cultural and political context, the underlying behavioural mechanisms identified through COM-B are likely to resonate with other densely populated urban settings. Undoubtedly other cities will share common themes with London alongside new themes, reflecting their unique cultural, political, economic and geographical context. For example, the need to balance citizens' desire for access to nature with limitations on time, space and budget is likely to be universal. Similarly, the value of individual residents' actions to aid rewilding being reflected by wider community and governance efforts is expected to be transferable across contexts. Conversely, attitudes to weather, climate change,

untidiness and living alongside other species might well vary with local cultural norms.

Strengths and limitations

This study benefits from a theoretically informed design, using the COM-B model to provide a structured understanding of the behavioural drivers of urban rewilding. The qualitative approach enabled in-depth exploration of participants' lived experiences and the use of a consistent interviewer enhanced the coherence of data collection. Inclusion of participants from multiple London boroughs also provided a degree of geographic diversity within a dense urban context.

However, several limitations should be considered. The sample was recruited through researcher networks and voluntary participation, which may have resulted in self-selection bias, with participants more likely to have an existing interest in gardening, rewilding or environmental issues. The sample was also skewed towards homeowners and older adults, with limited representation of renters, younger individuals and more ethnically diverse groups. As such, the findings may not fully capture the perspectives of populations who face different structural constraints or have differing relationships with private outdoor space.

While participants were drawn from a range of London boroughs, the study is geographically specific to London, a global city with distinct environmental, cultural and housing characteristics. This may limit the transferability of findings to other urban or rural contexts. In addition, data were collected during February and March, and seasonal factors may have influenced participants' perceptions and engagement with gardening activities.

Finally, the study relies on self-reported accounts of behaviour, which are subject to recall bias and social desirability effects. Participants may have over-reported environmentally positive behaviours or intentions. Despite these limitations, the study provides a robust, theory-informed exploration of behavioural influences on urban rewilding, offering insights that can inform future research and intervention development.

Conclusion

Understanding how Capability, Opportunity and Motivation shape rewilding behaviour in London's private gardens provides a critical foundation for designing interventions that can help the city achieve its nature recovery and climate-resilience goals. By addressing practical constraints, supporting positive emotions and habits, and strengthening community and governance structures, rewilding in private gardens can become a scalable and meaningful component of urban ecological transformation. This study enables the development of intervention strategies in support of rewilding London's gardens, as part of city-wide rewilding aims, while offering a model for testing the identified themes in other cities globally.

Abbreviations

BCW	Behaviour Change Wheel intervention-development framework
COM-B	Behaviour model covering Capability, Opportunity and Motivation

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Funding

This work was supported by the Kusuma Trust under its Community and Environment grant; and London Metropolitan University under its Rescaling grant.

Notes on contributors

Siân Moxon is an Associate Professor of Sustainable Architecture at London Metropolitan University's School of Art, Architecture and Design. Siân's practice-centred design research explores urban biodiversity at the Centre for Urban and Built Ecologies (CUBE). Siân is a member of the Conservation and Sustainability Consortium of AcaDEmic Institutions (CASCADE) and the UK Universities Climate Network. Siân is an architect, author and founder of the award-winning Rewild My Street urban-rewilding campaign.

Justin Webb is an Associate Professor of Public Health at London Metropolitan University. Justin has been working in the field of public health for over 20 years both as a practitioner and as a researcher. Justin's former roles include working as the Director of the Centre for Workplace and Community Health at St Mary's University and as a National Engagement Manager for Macmillan Cancer Support, leading on elements of the charity's healthy lifestyles programme. Justin's research interest is in understanding and changing behaviour to improve health.

Alexandros Semertzi is a Lecturer at Global Banking School in London. Alexandros worked as a research assistant for the Wild Ways study while doing his PhD in Cognitive Neuroscience at London Metropolitan University. Alexandros's research interest is in neurophysiology, attention, memory, and neuroscience of behaviour change for health improvement.

Mina Samangooei is a practicing architect and academic, with research focusing on the role that food production in and on buildings plays for the future of cities. Mina's PhD looked at behaviour theory in relation to people cultivating edible plants on buildings, which has been brought into practice through workshops and other live projects. Mina

is a Senior Lecturer in Architecture and Technology at Oxford Brookes University, leading undergraduate and postgraduate modules and conducting research with collaborators.

ORCID

Siân Moxon http://orcid.org/0000-0001-6464-1294
Justin Webb http://orcid.org/0000-0001-7637-068X
Alexandros Semertzi http://orcid.org/0000-0001-6227-5657
Mina Samangooei http://orcid.org/0000-0001-6736-8772

Ethical approval

A favourable ethical opinion was received from the London Metropolitan University School of Social Sciences and Professions Ethics committee.

Geolocation information

The interviews were conducted in London, UK.

References

Aviva, 26, 2022. *Gardens being uprooted in favour of driveways and artificial grass, new research reveals*. Available from: https://www.aviva.com/newsroom/news-releases/2022/07/gardens-being-uprooted-in-favour-of-driveways-and-artificial-grass-new-research-reveals/. [Accessed 26 Apr 2023].

Bamberg, S. and Rees, J., 2015. Environmental Attitudes and Behavior: Measurement. *In:* J.D. Wright, ed. *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*. Second ed. Oxford: Elsevier, 699–705. https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-08-097086-8.91066-3.

Bangham, G., 2020. *The times they aren't a changin': why working hours have stopped falling in London and the UK*. Resolution Foundation. Available from: https://tfl.ams3.cdn.digitaloceanspaces.com/media/documents/The_times_they_arent_a_changin.pdf. [Accessed 11 June 2024].

Brook, R. and King, K., 2017. *Updated analysis of air pollution exposure in London*. Aether. Available from: https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-and-strategies/environment-and-climate-change/pollution-and-air-quality/health-and-exposure-pollution. [Accessed 2 Dec 2025].

Burns, F., *et al.*, 2023. *State of nature 2023 - report on the UK's current biodiversity*. State of Nature Partnership. Available from: https://stateofnature.org.uk/. [Accessed 12 Dec 2025].

Byerly, H., *et al.*, 2018. Nudging pro-environmental behavior: evidence and opportunities. *Frontiers in ecology and the environment*, 16 (3), 159–168. doi:10.1002/fee.1777.

Cambridge OCR, 2026. *GCSE natural history hub*. Available from: https://teach.ocr.org.uk/naturalhistory. [Accessed 10 Apr 2026].

Centre for London, 2023. *The London intelligence – spring 2023*. Available from: https://centreforlondon.org/publication/the-london-intelligence-spring-2023/. [Accessed 24 May 2024].

Chicca, F., Garcia, E., and Vale, B., 2022. Sustainability, resilience, and the contribution of private urban gardens. *Urban and regional planning*, 7 (4), 187–197. doi:10.11648/j.urp.20220704.16.

Cox, D.T.C., *et al.*, 2017. The rarity of direct experiences of nature in an urban population. *Landscape and urban planning*, 160, 79–84. doi:10.1016/j.landurbplan.2016.12.006.

DESNZ, 2024. *DESNZ public attitudes tracker: net zero and climate change, spring 2024, UK, GOV.UK*. Available from: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/desnz-public-attitudes-tracker-spring-2024/desnz-public-attitudes-tracker-net-zero-and-climate-change-spring-2024-uk. [Accessed 2 Dec 2025].

Duan, L., *et al.*, 2025. Barriers and facilitators to shared decision-making for patients with cancer and health care providers based on the COM-B model: a systematic review. *BMC medical informatics & decision making*, 25 (1), 369. doi:10.1186/s12911-025-03194-2.

Egerer, M., *et al.*, 2024. Urban oases: the social-ecological importance of small urban green spaces. *Ecosystems and people*, 20 (1), 2315991. doi:10.1080/26395916.2024.2315991.

Finnerty, P.B., *et al.*, 2025. Urban rewilding to combat global biodiversity decline. *BioScience*, 75 (7), 545–558. doi:10.1093/biosci/biaf062.

Fitter, R., 1990. *London's natural history. Repr. Of the ed. 1946 with a new forew. By the author*. London: Bloomsbury (The new naturalist).

Funnell, R., 2019. Where to spot wildlife in London all year round. *Time out London*. Available from: https://www.timeout.com/london/things-to-do/where-to-see-wildlife-in-london-year-round. [Accessed 11 June 2024].

Grahn, P. and Stigsdotter, U.A., 2003. Landscape planning and stress. *Urban forestry and urban greening*, 2 (1), 1–18. doi:10.1078/1618-8667-00019.

Greater London Authority, 2018. *London environment strategy*. Available from: https://www.london.gov.uk//what-we-do/environment/london-environment-strategy. [Accessed 19 Nov 2020].

Greater London Authority, 2018b. *London Housing Strategy*. Available from: https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2018_lhs_london_housing_strategy.pdf.

Greater London Authority, 2022. *Reconceptualising loneliness in London*. Available from: https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/communities-and-social-justice/loneliness-london. [Accessed 2 Dec 2025].

Greater London Authority, 2023a. *Local nature recovery strategy | London City Hall*. Available from: https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/environment-and-climate-change/parks-green-spaces-and-biodiversity/local-nature-recovery-strategy. [Accessed 7 Dec 2023].

Greater London Authority, 2023b. *Rewilding London: Final report of the London Rewilding Taskforce*. Greater London Authority. Available from: https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/environment-and-climate-change/parks-green-spaces-and-biodiversity/london-rewilding-taskforce. [Accessed 28 Nov 2023].

Greenspace Information for Greater London CIC, 2023. *Key London figures*. Available from: https://www.gigl.org.uk/our-data-holdings/keyfigures/. [Accessed 14 Mar 2024].

Hobbie, S.E. and Grimm, N.B., 2020. Nature-based approaches to managing climate change impacts in cities. *Philosophical transactions of the Royal Society B: Biological sciences*, 375 (1794), 20190124. doi:10.1098/rstb.2019.0124.

Hobson, H. and Kharicha, K., 2022. *Reconceptualising loneliness in London*. Mayor of London. Available from: https://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/wp-content/uploads/Reconceptualising-Loneliness-Final-for-Pub-29Mar22.pdf. [Accessed 24 May 2024].

Jennings, V., *et al.*, 2024. The dynamic relationship between social cohesion and urban green space in diverse communities: opportunities and challenges to public health. *International journal of environmental research and public Health*, 21 (6), 800. doi:10.3390/ijerph21060800.

Kalish, M., *et al.*, 2010. Outdoor play: a survey of parent's perceptions of their child's safety. *The journal of trauma and acute care surgery*, 69 (4), S218. doi:10.1097/TA.0b013e3181f1eaf0.

Liu, J. and Green, R.J., 2024. Children's pro-environmental behaviour: a systematic review of the literature. *Resources, conservation & recycling*, 205, 107524. doi:10.1016/j.resconrec.2024.107524.

Liu, J., Wang, Y., and Gay, J.L., 2025. Promising campaign themes to promote active pro-environmental behaviors among U.S. coastal residents. *Environmental communication*, 19 (4), 663–687. doi:10.1080/17524032.2024.2441948.

Michie, S., Atkins, L., and West, R., 2014. *The behaviour change wheel: a guide to designing interventions*. London: Silverback Publishing. Available from: https://www.behaviourchangewheel.com/.

Michie, S., van Stralen, M.M., and West, R., 2011. The behaviour change wheel: a new method for characterising and designing behaviour change interventions. *Implementation science*, 6 (1), 42. doi:10.1186/1748-5908-6-42.

Moxon, S., *et al.*, 2023. Wild ways: a scoping review to understand urban-rewilding behaviour in relation to adaptations to private gardens. *Cities & health*, 7 (5), 888–902. doi:10.1080/23748834.2023.2218016.

Moxon, S., 2024. Exploring the urban jungle: making space for wildness in cities. *In*: C. Kokkiou and A. Malakasioti, eds. *Beauty and monstrosity in art and culture*. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 187–195.

National Park City Foundation, 2023. *National Park City Foundation*. Available from: https://www.nationalparkcity.org/. [Accessed 28 Nov 2023].

Oh, R.R.Y., *et al.*, 2022. Connection to nature and time spent in gardens predicts social cohesion. *Urban forestry and urban greening*, 74, 127655. doi:10.1016/j.ufug.2022.127655.

ONS, 2020a. *Access to gardens and public green space in Great Britain - Office for National Statistics*. Available from: https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/environmentalaccounts/datasets/accesstogardensandpublicgreenspaceingreatbritain. [Accessed 8 Feb 2024].

ONS, 2020b. *'One in eight British households has no garden - Office for National statistics'*. Available from: https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/environmentalaccounts/articles/oneineightbritishhouseholdshasnogarden/2020-05-14. [Accessed 11 June 2024].

Osbaldiston, R. and Schott, J.P., 2012. Environmental sustainability and behavioral science: meta-analysis of proenvironmental behavior experiments. *Environment & behavior*, 44 (2), 257–299. doi:10.1177/0013916511402673.

Peiró-Signes, Á., *et al.*, 2025. Exposure to social media pro-environmental campaigns and its impact on generation Z's commitment to environmental sustainability actions. *Sustainable futures*, 10, 101320. doi:10.1016/j.sftr.2025.101320.

Pettorelli, N., *et al.*, 2022. *Rewilding our cities. ZSL report*. Available from: https://issuu.com/zoologicalsocietyoflondon/docs/zsl_rewilding_our_cities_report. [Accessed 26 Oct 2022].

Pilgrim Chief Executive's Office, Martin, 2006. London regional governance and the London boroughs. *Local government studies*, 32 (3), 223–238. doi:10.1080/03003930600693112.

Plantlife, 2025. *'Give power to the flowers this No Mow may!'*. Plantlife. Available from: https://www.plantlife.org.uk/campaigns/nomowmay/. [Accessed 2 Dec 2025].

RHS, 2023. *RHS gardening trends for 2024 / RHS gardening*. Available from: https://www.rhs.org.uk/press/releases/RHS-Gardening-Trends-for-2024-resilient,-planet. [Accessed 14 Mar 2024].

Smith, C., 2010. *London: garden city? Investigating the changing anatomy of London's private gardens, and the scale of their loss*. Available from: http://downloads.gigl.org.uk/website/LondonGardenCity.pdf.

van Valkengoed, A.M., Abrahamse, W., and Steg, L., 2022. To select effective interventions for pro-environmental behaviour change, we need to consider determinants of behaviour. *Nature human behaviour*, 6 (11), 1482–1492. doi:10.1038/s41562-022-01473-w.

Vergnes, A., Kerbiriou, C., and Clergeau, P., 2013. Ecological corridors also operate in an urban matrix: a test case with garden shrews. *Urban ecosystems*, 16 (3), 511–525. doi:10.1007/s11252-013-0289-0.

Vinogradov, R., *et al.*, 2024. Barriers and facilitators of adherence to low-dose aspirin during pregnancy: a co-produced systematic review and COM-B framework synthesis of qualitative evidence. *PloS one*, 19 (5), e0302720. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0302720.

Webb, J., *et al.*, 2022. The barriers and facilitators to physical activity in people with a musculoskeletal condition: a rapid review of reviews using the COM-B model to support intervention development. *Public health in practice*, 3, 100250. doi:10.1016/j.puhip.2022.100250.

Webb, J. and Moxon, S., 2021. A study protocol to understand urban rewilding behaviour in relation to adaptations to private gardens. *Cities & health*, 1–9. doi:10.1080/23748834.2021.1893047.

Webb, J., Moxon, S., and Semertzi, A., 2025. Wild ways: a cross-sectional study investigating gardening for wildlife in London's private residential gardens. *Cities & health*, 1–13. doi:10.1080/23748834.2025.2539613.

Weeks, S., *et al.*, 2026. A systematic review of antimicrobial stewardship education for undergraduate students in medicine, nursing, pharmacy, dentistry, veterinary science and midwifery using COM-B framework. *JAC-antimicrobial resistance*, 8 (1), dlaf245. doi:10.1093/jacamr/dlaf245.