



## Epping Forest & Commons Committee

**Date:** WEDNESDAY, 13 NOVEMBER 2013

**Time:** 11.00 am

**Venue:** BASSINGHALL SUITE, GUILDHALL

**Members:** Alderman Gordon Haines (Chairman)  
Deputy Stanley Ginsburg (Deputy Chairman)  
George Abrahams  
Deputy John Barker  
Deputy Alex Deane  
Alderman Ian Luder  
Deputy Catherine McGuinness  
Sylvia Moys  
Barbara Newman  
Virginia Rounding  
Ian Seaton

*For consideration of Business Relating to Epping Forest Only*

Verderer Peter Adams  
Verderer Michael Chapman DL  
Verderer Richard Morris  
Verderer Dr. Joanna Thomas

**Enquiries:** **Natasha Dogra**  
**Natasha.Dogra@cityoflondon.gov.uk**

**Lunch will be served in the Guildhall Club at the rising of the Committee**

**John Barradell**  
**Town Clerk and Chief Executive**

# AGENDA

## Agenda

### Part 1 - Public Agenda

1. **APOLOGIES**

2. **MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

3. **MINUTES**

To agree the public minutes and summary of the previous meeting.

**For Decision**  
(Pages 1 - 12)

4. **REVENUE & CAPITAL BUDGETS - EPPING FOREST - 2013/14 & 2014/15**

To receive a report of the Chamberlain and Director of Open Spaces.

**For Decision**  
(Pages 13 - 22)

5. **REVENUE & CAPITAL BUDGETS - BURNHAM BEECHES, STOKE COMMON & CITY COMMONS - 2013/14 & 2014/15**

To receive a report of the Chamberlain and Director of Open Spaces.

**For Decision**  
(Pages 23 - 32)

6. **TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE EPPING FOREST AND COMMONS COMMITTEE**

To receive a report of the Town Clerk.

**For Decision**  
(Pages 33 - 36)

### Epping Forest

7. **SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

The Superintendent of Epping Forest to be heard.

**For Information**

**8. EPPING FOREST WORK PROGRAMME OUT-TURN 2012-2013**

To receive a report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest.

**For Information**  
(Pages 37 - 44)

**9. EPPING FOREST GRAZING MONITORING AUDIT**

To receive a report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest.

**For Decision**  
(Pages 45 - 64)

**Burnham Beeches & Stoke Common**

**10. SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

The Superintendent of Burnham Beeches & Stoke Common to be heard.

**For Information**

**11. OUTCOME OF PHASE 2 TRIALS OF INVISIBLE FENCING AND VIRTUAL GRIDS AT BURNHAM BEECHES.**

To receive a report of the Superintendent of Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common.

**For Decision**  
(Pages 65 - 76)

**12. REVIEW OF PILOT STUDY - USE OF SECONDARY AUTHORITY POWERS TO INTRODUCE DOG CONTROL ORDERS AT BURNHAM BEECHES.**

To receive a report of the Superintendent of Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common.

**For Discussion**  
(Pages 77 - 86)

**13. SOUTH BUCKS DISTRICT COUNCIL - DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT LOCAL PLAN UPDATE.**

To receive a report of the Superintendent of Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common

**For Information**  
(Pages 87 - 90)

## City Commons

### 14. SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

The Superintendent of the City Commons to be heard.

**For Information**

### 15. COULSDON COMMONS CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

To note the minutes of the previous Coulsdon Commons Consultative Committee meeting.

**For Information**  
(Pages 91 - 96)

### 16. ASHTEAD COMMONS CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

To note the minutes of the previous Ashtead Commons Consultative Committee meeting.

**For Information**  
(Pages 97 - 102)

### 17. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

### 18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

## Part 2 - Non-Public Agenda

### 19. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

MOTION: That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act

**For Decision**

### 20. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

To agree the non-public minutes of the previous meeting.

**For Decision**  
(Pages 103 - 104)

## **Epping Forest**

**21. LEASE RENEWAL**

To receive a report from the Superintendent of Epping Forest

**For Decision**  
(Pages 105 - 108)

**22. HIGH BEACH VISITOR CENTRE - FUTURE OPERATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS**

To receive the report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest.

**For Decision**  
(Pages 109 - 114)

**23. NON PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

**24. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

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**EPPING FOREST & COMMONS COMMITTEE**  
**Monday, 9 September 2013**

Minutes of the meeting of the Epping Forest & Commons Committee held at  
Committee Room - 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Monday, 9 September 2013 at  
11.00 am

**Present**

**Members:**

Alderman Gordon Haines (Chairman)  
Deputy Stanley Ginsburg (Deputy Chairman)  
George Abrahams  
Deputy John Barker  
Sheriff & Alderman Jeffrey Evans  
Alderman Robert Hall (Ex-Officio Member)  
Deputy Catherine McGuinness  
Sylvia Moys  
Barbara Newman  
Virginia Rounding  
Ian Seaton  
Verderer Peter Adams  
Verderer Michael Chapman  
Verderer Richard Morris  
Verderer Dr. Joanna Thomas

**Officers:**

Natasha Dogra	- Town Clerk's Office
Sue Ireland	- Director, Open Spaces
Andy Barnard	- Superintendent, Burnham Beeches & Stoke Common
Paul Thomson	- Superintendent, Epping Forest
Bob Warnock	- Superintendent, City Commons
Jo Hurst	- Epping Forest
Mark Jarvis	- Chamberlains Department

1. **APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies.

2. **DECLARATIONS BY MEMBERS OF ANY PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA**

Deputy Catherine McGuinness and Verderer Richard Morris declared a standing interest as Trustees for the Epping Forest Centenary Trust.

3. **MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** – That the public minutes and summary of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> July 2013 be approved as a correct record.

A Member sought clarification in relation to Deer Management regarding the reference to an accelerated cull being counter-productive. The point was qualified to recognise that a rapid reduction in the Deer population would reduce the opportunity to positively manage the gender balance of the herd.

**Matters Arising:**

The Director of Open Spaces informed Members that she had provided Deputy McGuinness with the requested information on resources and costs of using other City of London officers to assist with responding to planning issues. Consequently, the Director has been asked to prepare a report regarding resourcing for the Open Spaces Committee to consider.

**4. GREEN FLAG AWARDS 2013**

The Committee received the report of the Director of Open Spaces which stated that once again the City of London Open Spaces have been successful in the Green Flag and London in Bloom award schemes.

Members were informed that all of the City of London's Open Spaces were successful in retaining their Green Flag status. Nine sites received additional Green Heritage Awards: Epping Forest, Ashted Common, Kenley Common, Burnham Beeches, Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood, West Ham Park, Bunhill Fields and the Cemetery and Crematorium.

Feedback reports from judges were received for a majority of the sites for the Green Flag awards. In response to a query, Members were informed that each site received different judges each year. Officers endeavoured to explain to the judges the context of each site in the limited time available for assessment. The Superintendents recognised the need to improve communication where judges had not enquired about specific policies and plans during the assessment process. Members asked that the Director of Open Spaces to relay the Committee's comments at her debriefing with Keep Britain Tidy regarding the appointment of judges with appropriate background and experience.

In response to a query from Members, Officers informed the Committee that the minimum pass mark was 66. Members noted that this year scores ranging between 70 and 80 had been achieved.

Members noted that the lack of signage in and around the Epping Forest had been highlighted by the judges, and asked that Officers follow this up to ensure adequate signage was erected. It was noted that the Superintendents were addressing issues relating to litter and fly tipping, and further information would be provided as part of their individual updates.

The Chairman, thanked the Director, Superintendent, Officers and Volunteers of Open Spaces for all of their hard work, and asked that special thanks be sent to the Officers and Volunteers for their contributions. This was supported by Members of the Committee.

**RESOLVED** – That Members noted:



(i) That the great success achieved by the City of London's Open Spaces in the Green Flag and London in Bloom Awards is noted and reported to the Court of Common Council on the 24th October 2013.

(ii) That the members of staff and volunteers at all the Open Spaces are congratulated on their contribution to the success in the awards.

## 5. **SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

The Superintendent of Epping Forest provided a brief verbal update to the Committee, with reference being made to the following:

### **New Herdsman**

Epping Forest's contract partner - Wildlife and Countryside Services – had recruited a new herdsman to replace the previous post holder.

### **Fires**

Epping Forest had been at a Fire Severity Index of 4 for most of July and August relieved only by rain in August. Epping Forest had experienced a series of fires mostly on Leyton and Wanstead Flats with the most serious incident being a series of 3 fires on Leyton Flats during the afternoon of 19th July which saw Fires close to Forest School; land close to the former Lido site and east of Hollow Pond. At its height the latter fire was fought by 12 tenders. Fires were continuing despite a reduced severity rating of 3 with fires at Wanstead and Leyton Flats during early September.

### **Rough Sleeper Clearances**

Clearances had increased by 63% to 44 from 27 for the same period in 2012. Epping Forest staff had met with MPS; London Borough of Redbridge and third sector agencies to develop a joint protocol that will more effectively coordinate the approach of all agencies.

### **Unexploded Ordnance**

Two teenagers uncovered an unexploded hand grenade with their metal detector prompting the public evacuation of Leyton Flats and closure of Whipps Cross Road while the Royal Logistic Corps destroyed the ordnance with a controlled explosion.

### **Fly tipping**

Overall fly tips remain down 17% on 2012. The commercial component of the fly tips continues to increase with Claypit Hill, High Beach being subject to a 12mt fly tip along 0.25 miles of the road on 15th August. There were also problems with a 15mt multiple fly tip across 4 weeks at Fairmead Road which was eventually cleared in September.

### **Nitrous Oxide Canisters**

Keepers and Litter staff noted a sudden and significant increase in Nitrous Oxide canisters being recovered from a range of sites including Wanstead Park; Standard Green; Staples Road Pond and Woodford Golf Course. The Nitrous Oxide gas had been inhaled as an alternative to other drugs.

### **Green Flag Results**

Epping Forest retained at Green Flag and Green Heritage for the eleventh year in succession.

### **Football Association Visit**

Following from a meeting with the Chairman, FA officials visited Wanstead Flats to discuss possible grant support for pavilion refurbishment; grounds maintenance and community outreach.

### **Wanstead Park**

English Heritage's Strategic Assessment for Wanstead Park which identifies 143 separate heritage assets within the Grade II\* Park and Garden has been published. Consultants JBA have been appointed to undertake a Hydrology Study of the Park. Sections of the concrete fence at the Park have collapsed due to possible concrete rot.

### **Highams Park Lake**

The Conservation Management Plan for the Lake area will be published shortly. Notice has been served on the Scout Association for the occupancy of the Michael Mallinson Watersports Centre and the City Surveyor is evaluating the Park Storage hut for potential use by Walthamstow Scouts.

### **Cattle Grids**

The last of the four Tier 1 Grids at Wake Road was completed in August.

### **Forest Events**

Forest Keepers staged a successful Dog Day at Wanstead Park on 9<sup>th</sup> June; supported the Church End Community picnic on 23<sup>rd</sup> June and hosted the Music in the Park event on 13<sup>th</sup> July. Three Illyria Theatre Company events were staged at Wanstead Park 'As You Like It on 28<sup>th</sup> July', 'Babe the Sheep-Pig' on 13<sup>th</sup> August and 'The Mikado' on 29<sup>th</sup> August.

### **Prosecutions**

Epping Forest undertook a successful prosecution on dog control with the dog owner being fined a total of £130 with £220 costs.

### **Staff Workday**

24 staff litter picked over 50 bags of rubbish on Wanstead Flats across the morning of 12<sup>th</sup> June.

### **Community Outreach**

On 13<sup>th</sup> August hosted Redbridge 'Fun for All' targeting Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic families with children with learning difficulties. Waltham Abbey Holy Family Catholic School's sixth form returned for a second year to litter pick Chingford Plan and Barn Hoppitt. Woodcraft Folk camped on the Forest for a week from 29<sup>th</sup> July.

### **Jubilee Pond, Wanstead Flats**

The pond relining was completed in June is now successfully holding water, reducing the call on abstracted water with the use of 2 km of surface drains to supplement rainfall. Ground Control has commenced construction of the

natural play facility and easy access trail and will finish work in September following a successful planning consent for the improvement of the Lakehouse Road car park. The Deputy Chairman addressed members of the Lake House Group ahead of their AGM on 19<sup>th</sup> August.

### **Scout Project Volunteer Hours:**

#### **Video Work**

Epping Forest has commissioned a series of videos outlining its work which include interviews with key staff and will include a video of the November meeting of this Committee.

#### **Recent Publicity**

In addition to the national publicity associated with Fires, Epping Forest was featured in an episode of the popular BBC Detective drama 'New Tricks' which was transmitted in September. Epping Forest was featured in a Guardian article by Sarah Maitland as an inspiration for National Parks, and featured in a Radio 4 programme 'What's the Point of the Lord Mayor of London'.

#### **Ladies Day 2014**

The Lord Mayor's office has confirmed the date of the next Ladies Day as 11<sup>th</sup> June 2014.

Members were concerned by the fly tipping data highlighted in the Superintendents update and queried whether local people and businesses could be engaged when attempting to catch those responsible. Members suggested looking through the CCTV footage of local businesses and using CCTV cameras around the Forest. The Director of Open Spaces said she had been invited to join the panel of a Board responsible for lobbying on national issues and the first issue to be considered was which Government department was responsible for environmental matters such as fly tipping.

Members noted the excellent work being done to promote community engagement and thanked Officers for their contribution to the outreach programme. It was noted that Officers must maintain a good dialogue with other service providers such as Suntrap, The Field Studies Council and the Epping Forest Centenary Trust as each have certain specialities and do not want to duplicate effort. The Superintendent reassured members that there was good dialogue between the Learning Partners and work was underway to secure the legacy from Heritage Lottery funding.

The Committee noted that the Superintendent had featured on the programme titled "What's the point of the Lord Mayor of London" and congratulated him on playing an informative role. In response to a query from Members with regards to signage being designed by Cod Steaks Ltd, Officers informed the Committee that designs would be submitted to the Committee in due course.

## **6. NATURAL PLAY STRUCTURES AT EPPING FOREST**

The Committee received the report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest and noted that the wooded areas of Epping Forest offered a rich diversity of

opportunity for informal play by young people. Some areas of the Forest, notably the flats, plains and greens offer less play potential, and may coincide with shortfalls of traditional playground facilities managed by local authorities. In such circumstances, the Committee had previously authorised the siting of traditional playgrounds on Epping Forest land.

Members were informed that low key Natural play facilities had been installed at three trial sites in Epping Forest as part of the Branching Out Project and are proving popular with children with no reported incidents to date. The City of London had been approached by both local people and local authorities requesting natural play areas at two further areas of the Forest - Hollow Ponds at Leyton Flats and Woodford Green, where there was deemed to be both insufficient play provision and other locally available public land.

In response to a query from Members, Officers said that Natural Play structures offered a focus for play at honeypot sites and were in keeping with the surroundings, while also re-engaging children with the natural environment in a safe and approachable surrounding. Natural Play provided a bridge between traditional play and the exploration of the wilder parts of the Forest. This was especially significant for children from the urban community who could experience barriers to enjoying and appreciating the Forest.

Officers informed the Committee that compared to standard, metal and plastic playgrounds, natural play areas could be more cost effective. Where materials can be sourced from the Forest, the only capital resource required was installation and landscaping by staff or contractors. Where costs were not met by a local authority, scheduled replacement, maintenance, safety inspections and insurance of users represent additional Local Risk costs.

Members of the Committee expressed their concern over the needs and aspirations detailed in the report requiring further work and until these were revised it would not be helpful to agree the installation of further formal or Natural Play areas. Members asked Officers to review the policy approach. Members agreed to a proposal by the Superintendent to pilot a design approach at Hollow Ponds working in partnership with the London Borough of Waltham Forest who have committed to fund a scheme. Proposals would be developed in partnership with the local community and designs could be brought to a future Committee meeting for Members to consider.

RESOLVED: That Members –

- i. Delegate to the Superintendent of Epping Forest responsibility to review the current licences for existing formal play facilities on Epping Forest Land ensuring that investment; maintenance; inspection and insurance obligations are properly maintained;
- ii. Endorse the principal that Natural Play areas can be considered as an option to address the paucity of play facilities in some London Boroughs encompassing Epping Forest;
- iii. Authorise the Superintendent of Epping Forest to negotiate suitable natural play areas at Hollow Pond and Woodford Green with the relevant

stakeholders and bring these designs back to the Epping Forest and Commons Committee for agreement;  
iv. Instruct the Comptroller and City Solicitor to undertake such documentation as necessary.

7. **EPPING FOREST TRUSTEE'S ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2013**

The Committee considered the report of the Chamberlain and the Trustee's Annual Report and Financial Statements. The draft accounts were circulated to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman. Subsequently the accounts had been signed on behalf of the Trust by the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Finance Committee and had been audited.

8. **SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

The Superintendent of Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common provided a brief verbal update to the Committee, with reference being made to the following:

**Conservation**

- The Young pollard work had been completed and 63 young pollards received 2<sup>nd</sup> round of cuts i.e. first cut around 10 years ago - including use of a mobile elevated platform
- Cattle grazed in the 2<sup>nd</sup> trial invisible loop for 4 weeks in July and this included either side of the public highway Stewarts Drive
- Bracken control was undertaken by rolling, flailing, weed wiping and spraying by contractors
- Officers took part in a fire drill with Bucks Fire Service at Stoke Common
- Tree safety work had been carried out when the Local Highway Authority closed a section of public road allowing a safe window to work on difficult trees at the road side.

**Events**

- Guided walks events had taken place with grazing/true or false/simple walk/Kids woodland wildlife week
- The Community well-being day took place on the main common and was run with local community Church.
- The Chiltern Commons group visit had been hosted to look at invisible fencing
- The Epping Forest and Commons Committee visit to Burnham Beeches had taken place
- Officers also hosted buggy walks/alternative Simply walk/Burnham Grammar school induction days, and hosted the Burnham Beeches half marathon.

**Volunteers**

- Volunteers had cleared the pine whipped bracken and heather scrapes, and repaired pathways.
- The Regular Eco group was now 4+ people strong each week
- A new office based volunteer had joined the team and was currently cataloguing historical items collected over the last 133 years.

- 127 volunteers had contributed 678 hours, which was slightly quieter than normal due to summer holidays.

#### **Other**

- Visitor survey began collecting demographic data of visitors as part of planning control issues
- Visitor survey began collecting visitor opinions on the implementation of the various Dog Control Orders
- A new Assistant Ranger and new Senior Ranger had joined the team.

#### **9. BURNHAM BEECHES AND STOKE COMMON TRUSTEE'S ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2013**

The Committee considered the report of the Chamberlain and the Trustee's Annual Report and Financial Statements. The draft accounts were circulated to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman. Subsequently the accounts had been signed on behalf of the Trust by the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Finance Committee and had been audited.

#### **10. SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

The Superintendent of City Commons provided a brief verbal update to the Committee, with reference being made to the following:

##### **Staff Changes**

The Project Officer and Assistant Project Officer had both left the Division to take up new appointments. The Superintendents PA retired in July. The Superintendent was proposing to restructure the Division and aimed to bring a report to the November Committee.

##### **Volunteers**

Additional volunteer tasks over the summer had meant an increase in 7% on the same point last year. 3582 hours were completed by volunteers since April 2013.

##### **Invisible Fence**

Members of the Ashted and Coulsdon Commons Consultative Committees visited Burnham Beeches on the 5<sup>th</sup> September to view the invisible fence. This was an extremely helpful visit and our thanks go to the Superintendent and the Head Ranger for providing such a thorough explanation of the system.

##### **Travellers**

Since reporting to the July committee there had been two further incursions on Coulsdon Commons. Byelaw enforcement was implemented immediately to protect the Common. The Superintendent was launching a project to improve the security around Coulsdon Common.

##### **Events**



The Kenley Fun Day was a great success with over 3000 people attending the event. A series of cross county runs, cycling and walking events have been licensed for September across the Commons. The villa project on Ashted Common was currently underway and this forms the last year of site excavations. Six guided walks were taking place over the weekend of the 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> September.

**11. KENLEY REVIVAL PROJECT - GATEWAY 3/4 REPORT**

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Open Spaces and were informed that on the 13th January 2013 the Committee agreed to submit a grant application to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for Round 1 funding for the Kenley Revival Project, which aims to conserve historic airfield structures associated with the Kenley Airfield. On the 11th September the HLF were expected to announce the result of the application.

Members were informed that to avoid delay in proceeding to the next stage of this project, it was proposed that the Kenley Revival Project could be submitted to the Projects Sub-Committee for Gateway 3-4 Options Appraisal approval on 26th September. The Project Sub-Committee would determine whether to accept the offer of grant funding and proceed with the development phase of the project.

RESOLVED: - That Members:

- Note the forthcoming HLF decision on funding for the Kenley Revival Project.
- That delegated authority be granted to the Director of Open Spaces, in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, to approve the Options Appraisal report for presentation at the Project Sub-committee subject to the decision of the HLF.

**12. CITY COMMONS TRUSTEE'S ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2013**

The Committee considered the report of the Chamberlain and the Trustee's Annual Report and Financial Statements. The draft accounts were circulated to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman. Subsequently the accounts had been signed on behalf of the Trust by the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Finance Committee and had been audited.

**13. PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

Members queried when the Land Registration Working Party would be convening, and were informed that Officers were currently undertaking further research on some outstanding issues, after which the group would be assembled.

The Chairman of the Committee thanked Alderman Hall for his contribution to the work of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee over the years and

said he would be dearly missed by the Members. Members agreed that Alderman Hall's dedication and advice had been very helpful.

The Chairman also thanked Esther Sumner, Policy Officer, for her hard work whilst working with the Committee and welcomed her replacement Ignacio Falcon.

**14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

There was no urgent business.

**15. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

RESOLVED - It was agreed that under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business.

**Item No.**

**Paragraph(s)**

15 – 18

3

**16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

The Superintendent of Epping Forest informed the Committee of three urgent items of business.

**17. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

RESOLVED: - That Members agreed that the non-public minutes of the previous items 18 – 27 were an accurate record.

**Matters Arising:**

The Director of Open Spaces said she would follow up an action from the previous meeting regarding the circulation of further briefing notes and information concerning the draft Warren House Conservation Management Plan.

*Verderer Michael Chapman was invited to retire from the meeting, and was excluded for the remainder of the business considered by the Committee.*

RESOLVED: - That Members agreed that the non-public minutes of the previous items 28 – 31 were an accurate record.

**18. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

There were no questions.

**The meeting ended at 1.00 pm**



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Chairman

**Contact Officer: Natasha Dogra**  
**Natasha.Dogra@cityoflondon.gov.uk**

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# Agenda Item 4

<b>Committee(s):</b>	<b>Date(s):</b>
Epping Forest and Commons Committee	13 November 2013
<b>Subject:</b> REVENUE & CAPITAL BUDGETS - EPPING FOREST 2013/14 & 2014/15	
<b>Report of:</b> The Chamberlain The Director of Open Spaces	<b>Public</b> For Decision

## Summary

This report updates the Committee on Epping Forest's latest approved revenue budget for 2013/14 and seeks approval for a provisional revenue budget for 2014/15, for subsequent submission to the Finance Committee. The budgets have been prepared within the resources allocated to the Director and the table below summarises the position.

Summary of Table 1	Latest Approved Budget	Original Budget	Movement
	2013/14 £000	2014/15 £000	£000
Expenditure	5,234	5,560	326
Income	(2,205)	(2,041)	164
Support Services & Capital Charges	1,226	1,269	43
<b>Total Net Expenditure</b>	<b>4,255</b>	<b>4,788</b>	<b>533</b>

Overall the provisional Original budget for 2014/15 totals £4,788, an increase of £533,000 compared with the latest approved budget for 2013/14. The main reasons for this increase are :-

An increase of £326,000 in Expenditure, the main contributing factor being an increase in the City Surveyor's Additional Works Programme of £337,000 (see Tables 1 & 2), and a reduction of £164,000 in income, most of which relate to a reduction in Grant income of £177,000 (HLF and CBT).

## Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

- Review the provisional 2014/15 revenue budget to ensure that it reflects the Committee's objectives and, if so, approve the budget for submission to the Finance Committee;
- Review and approve the draft Capital Budget;
- Authorise the Chamberlain, in consultation with the Director of Open Spaces, to revise these budgets to allow for any further implications arising from Corporate Projects, departmental reorganisations and other reviews, and changes to the Additional Works Programme.

## **Main Report**

### **Introduction**

1. The City of London Corporation owns and manages almost 11,000 acres of historic and natural Open Spaces for public recreation and enjoyment. This includes Epping Forest which is a registered charity and is funded from City's Cash. Epping is run at no cost to the communities that it serves as it is funded principally by the City, together with donations, sponsorship, grants and trading income.
2. This report sets out the proposed revenue budget and capital budgets for 2014/15. The Revenue Budget management arrangements are to:
  - Provide a clear distinction between local risk, central risk, and recharge budgets.
  - Place responsibility for budgetary control on departmental Chief Officers.
  - Apply a cash limit policy to Chief Officers' budgets.
3. The budget has been analysed by the service expenditure and compared with the latest approved budget for the current year.
4. The report also compares the current year's budget with the forecast outturn.

### **Business Planning Priorities**

5. The key Projects for each Open Space for the next three years were included in the Open Spaces Department Business Plan for 2013-2016 which was approved in April 2013. These include :-
  - Provide Conservation Management Plan in respect of the dam project at Highams Park.
  - Support funding events and secure woodland grant funding re Gifford Wood Appeal.

- Management Plan (development) – draft tender document, commission consultants, and form working groups to deliver new plan.

### **Proposed Revenue Budget for 2014/15**

6. The proposed Revenue Budget for 2014/15 is shown in Table 1 below analysed between:

- Local Risk Budgets – these are budgets deemed to be largely within the Chief Officer’s control.
- Central Risk Budgets – these are budgets comprising specific items where a Chief Officer manages the underlying service, but where the eventual financial outturn can be strongly influenced by external factors outside of his/her control or are budgets of a corporate nature (e.g. interest on balances and rent incomes from investment properties).
- Support Services and Capital Charges – these cover budgets for services provided by one activity to another. The control of these costs is exercised at the point where the expenditure or income first arises as local or central risk. Further analysis can be found in Appendix 2.

7. The provisional 2014/15 budgets, under the control of the Director of Open Spaces being presented to your Committee, have been prepared in accordance with guidelines agreed by the Policy & Resources and Finance Committees. These include continuing the implementation of the required budget reductions across both local and central risks, as well as the proper control of transfers of non-staffing budgets to staffing budgets. The 2% efficiency savings to be achieved by 2014/15 comprise 1% saving in 2013/14 (already achieved) and a further 1% in 2014/15. An allowance was also given towards any potential pay and price increases of 1% in 2013/14 (already applied) and a further 2% in 2014/15. Furthermore, following the end of the 3 year CBT grant 2011-14 it is proposed that grant funding of £237,000 per annum is sought for a further three years, details of specific applications will be provided verbally at committee. In addition the Town Clerk and Chamberlain have agreed to a base budget increase of £43,000 in respect of Epping to mitigate the reduction in grant funding, these are reflected in the 2014-15 budget. The budget has been prepared within the resources allocated to the Director.

TABLE 1 EPPING FOREST SUMMARY						
Analysis of Service Expenditure	Local or Central Risk	Actual 2012-13 £'000	Latest Approved Budget 2013-14 £'000	Original Budget 2014-15 £'000	Movement 2013-14 to 2014-15 £'000	Paragraph Reference
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>						
Employees	L	2,824	2,795	2,839	44	
Premises Related Expenses	L	671	597	607	10	
R & M (City Surveyor's Local Risk including cleaning)	L	869	855	1,192	337	10
Transport Related Expenses	L	206	283	226	(57)	11
Supplies & Services	L	822	629	596	(33)	
Transfer to Reserves	L	260	75	100	25	
Transfer to Reserves (To fund Capital Expenditure)	C	545	0	0	0	
<b>Total Expenditure</b>		<b>6,197</b>	<b>5,234</b>	<b>5,560</b>	<b>326</b>	
<b>INCOME</b>						
Government Grants	L	(303)	(280)	(280)	0	
Other Grants, Reimbursements and Contributions	L	(405)	(369)	(560)	(191)	12
Other Grants, Reimbursements and Contributions	C	(910)	(366)	0	366	13

Customer, Client Receipts	L	(729)	(846)	(799)	47	14
Investment Income	C	(16)	(18)	(18)	0	
Transfer from Reserves	L	(125)	0	0	0	
Transfer from Reserve	C	(143)	(326)	(384)	(58)	
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>(2,631)</b>	<b>(2,205)</b>	<b>(2,041)</b>	<b>164</b>	
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE/ (INCOME) BEFORE SUPPORT SERVICES AND CAPITAL CHARGES</b>		<b>3,566</b>	<b>3,029</b>	<b>3,519</b>	<b>490</b>	
<b>SUPPORT SERVICES AND CAPITAL CHARGES</b>						
Central Support and Capital Charges		907	1,094	1,136	42	
Recharges within Fund		112	118	119	1	
Recharges Across Funds		11	14	14	0	
<b>Total Support Services and Capital Charges</b>		<b>1,030</b>	<b>1,226</b>	<b>1,269</b>	<b>43</b>	
<b>TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE/(INCOME)</b>		<b>4,596</b>	<b>4,255</b>	<b>4,788</b>	<b>533</b>	

8. Income and favourable variances are presented in brackets. An analysis of this Revenue Expenditure by Service Managed is provided in Appendix 1. Only significant variances (generally those greater than £50,000) have been commented on in the following paragraphs.

9. Overall there is an increase of £533,000 between the 2013/14 latest approved budget and the 2014/15 original budget. This movement is explained in the following paragraphs.

10. The 2013/14 Latest Approved Budget reflects the re-allocation of the full programme to reflect the expenditure that is anticipated will be incurred in the year.

The budget movement of £337,000 for Repairs & Maintenance relates to the re-phasing and level of new bids within the Additional Works Programme.

The 2014/15 Additional Works Programme is based on the bids detailed in the report to your Committee in May 2013 which totalled £406,500, which was endorsed by the Corporate Asset Sub Committee in July 2013. The anticipated balance of remaining Additional Works Programme schemes of £576,848 has also been incorporated.

A decision on the funding of the programme will be made by the Resource Allocation Sub Committee. It may therefore be necessary to adjust the budgets to reflect the Resource Allocation Sub Committee's decision.

Following the implementation of the MITIE contract in July 2012, budgets have been re-aligned to reflect the tendered cost of the new contracts. See Table 2 below.

<b>TABLE 2 - CITY SURVEYOR LOCAL RISK</b>	<b>Latest Approved Budget</b>	<b>Original Budget</b>
<b>Repairs &amp; Maintenance (excluding cleaning)</b>	<b>2013/14 £'000</b>	<b>2014/15 £'000</b>
<b>Additional Works Programme</b>		
Epping Forest	646	983
	<b>646</b>	<b>983</b>
<b>Planned &amp; Reactive Works (Breakdown &amp; Servicing)</b>		
Epping Forest	188	188
	<b>188</b>	<b>188</b>
<b>Total City Surveyor</b>	<b>834</b>	<b>1,171</b>

11. The £57,000 reduction in Transport Related Expenditure in Local Risk is mainly due to a reduction in the vehicle purchase requirement within the Epping Forest Assets Team.
12. The £191,000 increase in Other Grants, reimbursements and Contributions in Local Risk is mainly due to the new CBT funding being applied to Local Risk as opposed to Central Risk (see paragraph 13 below).
13. The £366,000 reduction in other Grants, reimbursements and Contributions in Central Risk is for the fallout of the CBT funding at Epping, the 3 year scheme 2011/12-2013/14 of £336,000 per annum ends in March 2014, however, a bid for £237,000 for 2014/15 has been submitted which will now be credited to Local Risk.
14. The £58,000 increase in Transfer from Reserve in Central Risk is income transferred from the Capital Reserve Account to cover the increase in depreciation charges for HLF 'Branching Out' Projects at Epping.
15. Analysis of the movement in manpower and related staff costs are shown in Table 3 below.

<b>Table 3 - Manpower statement</b>	<b>Latest Approved Budget 2013/14</b>		<b>Original Budget 2014/15</b>	
	<b>Manpower Full-time equivalent</b>	<b>Estimated cost £000</b>	<b>Manpower Full-time Equivalent</b>	<b>Estimated cost £000</b>
Epping, Wanstead, Chingford, HLF, CBT	82.43	2,795	79.78	2,839
<b>TOTAL EPPING</b>	<b>82.43</b>	<b>2,795</b>	<b>79.78</b>	<b>2,839</b>



### **Larger Variances in Services Managed (Appendix 1)**

16. The £532,000 overall increase in the Epping division of service only is mainly due to an increase of £337,000 in the City Surveyor's Local Risk (7M) Additional Works Budget and an increase in employee costs due to vacant posts in 2013/14 being filled in 2014/15.

### **Larger Variances in Support Services & Capital Charges (Appendix 2)**

17. The £58,000 increase in Capital Charges relates to depreciation on HLF 'Branching Out' Capital Schemes at Epping.

### **Potential Further Budget Developments**

18. The provisional nature of the 2014/15 revenue budget recognises that further revisions may be required, including in relation to:
- budget reductions to capture savings arising from the on-going PP2P reviews;
  - decisions on funding of the Additional Work Programme by the Resource Allocation Sub Committee.

### **Revenue Budget 2013/14**

19. The forecast outturn for the current year is in line with the latest approved budget of £4.255M.

### **Draft Capital and Supplementary Revenue Budgets**

20. The Committee's draft capital and supplementary revenue project latest estimated costs are summarised in the tables below. These items are approved and contractually committed, with the exception of Great Gregories Farm.

	Exp. Pre 01/04/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Later Years	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Highams Park Lake		225	1,640					1,865
Branching Out	3,642	961	45					4,648
Great Gregories Farm		18						18
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,642</b>	<b>1,204</b>	<b>1,685</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6,531</b>

<b>Table 5 - City's Cash Draft Supplementary Revenue Budget</b>								
	Exp. Pre 01/04/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	Later Years	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Baldwins Pond & Deer Sanctuary Pond, Option appraisal costs		31						31
<b>Total</b>	0	31	0	0	0	0	0	31

21. In addition to the approved budget items above, the implementation phases of the Great Gregories Farm overwintering of the cattle scheme and the Baldwin's Pond and Deer Sanctuary Pond scheme are due to be carried out within the next two years.
22. The latest Capital and Supplementary Revenue Project budgets will be presented to the Court of Common Council for approval in March 2014.

Contact Officer: Mark Jarvis (1221) or Alison Elam (1081)

## APPENDIX 1

<b>Analysis by Service Managed</b>	Actual 2012- 13 £'000	Latest Approve d Budget 2013-14 £'000	Original Budget 2014- 15 £'000	Movemen t 2013-14 to 2014-15 £'000	Paragraph(s ) Reference
<b><u>CITY CASH</u></b>					
Epping Forest	4,397	4,138	4,670	532	16
CBT*	0	0	0	0	
HLF	3	7	7	0	
Chingford Golf Course	16	(64)	(65)	(1)	
Wanstead Flats	179	174	176	2	
Woodredon & Warlies**	0	0	0	0	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,595</b>	<b>4,255</b>	<b>4,788</b>	<b>533</b>	

\* City Bridge Trust (CBT) is a restricted fund which nets to zero.

\*\* Any shortfall or surplus from Woodredon & Warlies is transferred to City Fund and therefore nets to zero.

## APPENDIX 2

<b>Support Services &amp; Capital Charges from/to Epping Forest</b>	Actual 2012-13 £'000	Latest Approved Budget 2013-14 £'000	Original Budget 2014-15 £'000	Movement 2013-14 to 2014-15 £'000	Paragraph Reference
<b><u>Support Services &amp; Capital Charges</u></b>					
<b>Central Recharges-</b>					
City Surveyor's Employee Recharge	219	214	214	0	
Insurance	76	67	64	(3)	
I.S.Recharges – Chamberlain	77	88	82	(6)	
Capital Charges	143	326	384	58	17
<b>Support Services-</b>					
Chamberlain (inc CLPS recharges)	108	106	104	(2)	
Comptroller and City Solicitor	70	74	72	(2)	
Town Clerk	112	114	110	(4)	
City Surveyor	83	85	86	1	
Other Services*	19	20	20	0	
<b>Total Support Services &amp; Capital Charges</b>	<b>907</b>	<b>1,094</b>	<b>1,136</b>	<b>42</b>	
<b><u>Recharges Within Fund</u></b>					
<b>Directorate Recharges</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>1</b>	
<b>Corporate and Democratic Core</b>	<b>(38)</b>	<b>(38)</b>	<b>(38)</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>Total Recharges Within Fund</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>1</b>	
<b><u>Recharges Across Funds</u></b>					
<b>Woodredon &amp; Warlies</b>	11	14	14	0	
<b>Total Recharges Across Funds</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>Total Support Services &amp; Capital Charges</b>	<b>1,030</b>	<b>1,226</b>	<b>1,269</b>	<b>43</b>	

\* Various services including central heating, corporate printing, occupational health, union costs, environmental and sustainability section.

# Agenda Item 5

<b>Committee(s):</b>	<b>Date(s):</b>
Epping Forest and Commons Committee	13 November 2013
<b>Subject:</b> REVENUE & CAPITAL BUDGETS - BURNHAM BEECHES, STOKE COMMON, & CITY COMMONS 2013/14 & 2014/15	
<b>Report of:</b> The Chamberlain The Director of Open Spaces	<b>Public</b> For Decision

## Summary

This report updates the Committee on its latest approved revenue budget for 2013/14 and seeks approval for a provisional revenue budget for 2014/15, for subsequent submission to the Finance Committee. The budgets have been prepared within the resources allocated to the Director and the table below summarises the position.

Summary of Table 1	Latest Approved Budget	Original Budget	Movement
	2013/14 £000	2014/15 £000	£000
Expenditure	2,136	2,404	268
Income	(356)	(354)	2
Support Services and Capital Charges	403	396	(7)
<b>Total Net Expenditure</b>	<b>2,183</b>	<b>2,446</b>	<b>263</b>

Overall the provisional Original budget for 2014/15 totals £2,446M, an increase of £263,000 compared with the latest approved budget for 2013/14. The main reason for this increase is:-

An overall increase of £268,000 in Expenditure, the main contributing factor being an increase in the City Surveyor's Additional Works Programme of £253,000 (see Tables 1 & 2).

### Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

- Review the provisional 2014/15 revenue budget to ensure that it reflects the

Committee's objectives and, if so, approve the budget for submission to the Finance Committee;

- Authorise the Chamberlain, in consultation with the Director of Open Spaces, to revise these budgets to allow for any further implications arising from Corporate Projects, departmental reorganisations and other reviews, and changes to the Additional Works Programme.

## **Main Report**

### **Introduction**

1. The City of London Corporation owns and manages almost 11,000 acres of historic and natural Open Spaces for public recreation and enjoyment. This includes Ashted Common & West Wickham (City Commons), and Burnham Beeches & Stoke Common which are registered charities and are funded from City's Cash. They are run at no cost to the communities that they serve, as they are funded principally by the City, together with donations, sponsorship, and grants.
2. This report sets out the proposed revenue budget for 2014/15. The Revenue Budget management arrangements are to:
  - Provide a clear distinction between local risk, central risk, and recharge budgets.
  - Place responsibility for budgetary control on departmental Chief Officers.
  - Apply a cash limit policy to Chief Officers' budgets.
3. The budget has been analysed by the service expenditure and compared with the latest approved budget for the current year.
4. The report also compares the current year's budget with the forecast outturn.

### **Business Planning Priorities**

5. The key Projects for each Open Space for the next three years were included in the Open Spaces Department Business Plan for 2013-2016 which was approved in April 2013. These include :-
  - Deliver phase two of the grazing expansion plan (2013) leading to grazing to approx. 95% of the site in 2014 (Burnham Beeches).
  - Deliver projects detailed in the Stoke Common Heathland regeneration plan for year's five to eight. (Stoke Common).
  - Deliver Business Plan priorities to achieve key performance indicators (City Commons).
  - Continue working in partnership with English Heritage, Kenley Airfield Friends Group, to fund conservation and interpretation re Kenley Revival Project. (City Commons).

## **Proposed Revenue Budget for 2014/15**

6. The proposed Revenue Budget for 2014/15 is shown in Table 1 below analysed between:
- Local Risk Budgets – these are budgets deemed to be largely within the Chief Officer’s control.
  - Central Risk Budgets – these are budgets comprising specific items where a Chief Officer manages the underlying service, but where the eventual financial outturn can be strongly influenced by external factors outside of his/her control or are budgets of a corporate nature (e.g. interest on balances and rent incomes from investment properties).
  - Support Services and Capital Charges – these cover budgets for services provided by one activity to another. The control of these costs is exercised at the point where the expenditure or income first arises as local or central risk. Further analysis can be found in Appendix 2.
7. The provisional 2014/15 budgets, under the control of the Director of Open Spaces being presented to your Committee, have been prepared in accordance with guidelines agreed by the Policy & Resources and Finance Committees. These include continuing the implementation of the required budget reductions across both local and central risks, as well as the proper control of transfers of non-staffing budgets to staffing budgets. The 2% efficiency savings to be achieved by 2014/15 comprise 1% saving in 2013/14 (already achieved) and a further 1% in 2014/15. An allowance was also given towards any potential pay and price increases of 1% in 2013/14 (already applied) and a further 2% in 2014/15. The budget has been prepared within the resources allocated to the Director.

TABLE 1 BURNHAM BEECHES, STOKE COMMON & CITY COMMONS SUMMARY						
Analysis of Service Expenditure	Local or Central Risk	Actual 2012- 13 £'000	Latest Approve d Budget 2013-14 £'000	Original Budget 2014- 15 £'000	Movem ent 2013-14 to 2014-15 £'000	Paragra ph Referen ce
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>						
Employees	L	1,231	1,214	1,267	53	10
Premises Related Expenses	L	432	392	372	(20)	
R & M (City Surveyor's Local Risk including cleaning)	L	367	208	461	253	11
Transport Related Expenses	L	93	114	89	(25)	
Supplies & Services	L	241	173	180	7	
Third Party Payments	L	35	35	35	0	
Transfer to Reserves	L	36	0	0	0	
<b>Total Expenditure</b>		<b>2,435</b>	<b>2,136</b>	<b>2,404</b>	<b>268</b>	
<b>INCOME</b>						
Government Grants	L	(227)	(199)	(199)	0	
Other Grants, Reimbursements and Contributions	L	(25)	(17)	(15)	2	
Customer, Client Receipts	L	(154)	(122)	(122)	0	
Investment Income	L	(2)	0	0	0	
Transfer from Reserves	L	(50)	0	0	0	
Transfer from Reserve (to fund depreciation charges)	C	(18)	(18)	(18)	0	



<b>Total Income</b>				
		(476)	(356)	(354)
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE/(INCOME) BEFORE SUPPORT SERVICES AND CAPITAL CHARGES</b>		1,959	1,780	2,050
<b>SUPPORT SERVICES AND CAPITAL CHARGES</b>				
Central Support & Capital charges		351	353	346
Recharges within Fund		60	50	50
<b>Total Support Services &amp; Capital charges</b>		411	403	396
<b>TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE/(INCOME)</b>		2,370	2,183	2,446
				2
				270
				(7)
				0
				(7)
				263

8. Income and favourable variances are presented in brackets. An analysis of this Revenue Expenditure by Service Managed is provided in Appendix 1. Only significant variances (generally those greater than £50,000) have been commented on in the following paragraphs.

9. Overall there is an increase of £263,000 between the 2013/14 latest approved budget and the 2014/15 original budget. This movement is explained in the following paragraphs.

10. The main reason for the increase of £53,000 in employees is due to the 2013/14 Latest Approved Budget taking account of vacancies at both City Commons and Burnham Beeches which will be filled in 2014/15.

11. The 2013/14 Latest Approved Budget reflects the re-allocation of the full programme to reflect the expenditure that is anticipated will be incurred in the year.

The budget movement of £253,000 for Repairs & Maintenance relates to the re-phasing and level of new bids within the Additional Works Programme.

The 2014/15 Additional Works Programme is based on the bids detailed in the report to your Committee in May 2013 which totalled £205,200, which was endorsed by the Corporate Asset Sub Committee in July 2013. The anticipated balance of remaining Additional Works Programme schemes of £179,042 has also been incorporated.

A decision on the funding of the programme will be made by the Resource Allocation Sub Committee. It may therefore be necessary to adjust the budgets to reflect the Resource Allocation Sub Committee's decision.

Following the implementation of the MITIE contract in July 2012, budgets have been re-aligned to reflect the tendered cost of the new contracts. See Table 2 below.

<b>TABLE 2 - CITY SURVEYOR LOCAL RISK</b>	<b>Latest Approved Budget 2013/14 £'000</b>	<b>Original Budget 2014/15 £'000</b>
<b>Repairs and Maintenance (excluding cleaning)</b>		
<b>Additional Works Programme</b>		
City Commons	95	299
Burnham Beeches	36	85
	<b>131</b>	<b>384</b>
<b>Planned &amp; Reactive Works (Breakdown &amp; Servicing)</b>		
City Commons	28	28
Burnham Beeches	32	32
	<b>60</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>Total City Surveyor</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>444</b>

12. Analysis of the movement in manpower and related staff costs are shown in Table 3 below.

<b>Table 3 - Manpower statement</b>	<b>Latest Approved Budget 2013/14</b>		<b>Original Budget 2014/15</b>	
	<b>Manpower Full-time equivalent</b>	<b>Estimated cost £000</b>	<b>Manpower Full-time equivalent</b>	<b>Estimated cost £000</b>
Burnham Beeches/Stoke Common	13.33	450	13.33	469
City Commons	22.31	764	22.91	798
<b>TOTAL BURNHAM &amp; CITY COMMONS</b>	<b>35.64</b>	<b>£1,214</b>	<b>36.24</b>	<b>£1,267</b>

### **Larger Variances in Services Managed (Appendix 1)**

13. The £52,000 increase in Burnham Beeches is mainly due to the increase of £49,000 in the City Surveyor's Additional Works Programme.
14. The £211,000 increase in City Commons relates mainly to the £204,000 increase in the City Surveyor's Additional Works Budget.

### **Potential Further Budget Developments**

15. The provisional nature of the 2014/15 revenue budget recognises that further revisions may be required, including in relation to:
  - budget reductions to capture savings arising from the on-going PP2P reviews;
  - decisions on funding of the Additional Work Programme by the Resource Allocation Sub Committee.

### **Revenue Budget 2013/14**

16. The forecast outturn for the current year is in line with the latest approved budget of £2,183M.

### **Draft Capital and Supplementary Budgets**

17. With regard to the above, there is no movement to the Reservoirs and the Pond Embankments projects at Burnham Beeches as they are on hold, however, the Kenley Revival project is still progressing.

Contact Officer: Mark Jarvis (1221) or Alison Elam (1081)

**APPENDIX 1**

<b>Analysis by Service Managed</b>	Actual 2012- 13 £'000	Latest Approve d Budget 2013-14 £'000	Original Budget 2014- 15 £'000	Movemen t 2013-14 to 2014-15 £'000	Paragraph(s ) Reference
<b><u>CITY CASH</u></b>					
Burnham Beeches	676	624	676	52	13
Stoke Common	20	22	22	0	
City Commons	1,675	1,537	1,748	211	14
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,371</b>	<b>2,183</b>	<b>2,446</b>	<b>263</b>	

APPENDIX 2

<b>Support Services &amp; Capital Charges from/to Burnham Beeches, Stoke Common, &amp; City Commons</b>	Actual 2012-13 £'000	Latest Approved Budget 2013-14 £'000	Original Budget 2014-15 £'000	Movement 2013-14 to 2014-15 £'000	Paragraph Reference
<b><u>Support Services &amp; Capital Charges</u></b>					
<b>Central Recharges-</b>					
City Surveyor's Employee Recharge	95	91	91	0	
Insurance	19	12	12	0	
I.S.Recharges - Chamberlain	36	44	41	(3)	
Capital Charges	18	18	18	0	
<b>Support Services-</b>					
Chamberlain (inc CLPS recharges)	51	51	50	(1)	
Comptroller and City Solicitor	33	34	33	(1)	
Town Clerk	51	53	51	(2)	
City Surveyor	39	40	40	0	
Other Services*	9	10	10	0	
<b>Total Support Services &amp; Capital Charges</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>353</b>	<b>346</b>	<b>(7)</b>	
<b><u>Recharges Within Fund</u></b>					
<b>Directorate Recharges</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>Corporate and Democratic Core</b>	<b>(18)</b>	<b>(18)</b>	<b>(18)</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>Total Recharges Within Fund</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>Total Support Services &amp; Capital Charges</b>	<b>411</b>	<b>403</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>(7)</b>	

\* Various services including central heating, corporate printing, occupational health, union costs, environmental and sustainability section.

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# Agenda Item 6

<b>Committee:</b> Epping Forest and Commons Committee	<b>Date:</b> 11 November 2013
<b>Subject:</b> Terms of Reference of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee	Public
<b>Report of:</b> Town Clerk	For Decision

## Summary

1. As part of the post-implementation review of the changes made to the governance arrangements in 2011 it was agreed that all Committees should review their terms of reference annually. This will enable any proposed changes to be considered in time for the reappointment of Committees by the Court of Common Council.
2. The terms of reference of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee are attached as an appendix to this report for your consideration.
3. It should be noted that further amendments might be required and therefore it is proposed that the approval of any further changes to the Committee's terms of reference is delegated to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman.

## Recommendations

4. That, subject to any comments, the terms of reference of the Committee be approved for submission to the Court as set out in the appendix and that any further changes required be delegated to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman.

## **Attachments:**

Appendix 1 – Current Terms of Reference

## **Contact:**

Natasha Dogra

Telephone: 020 7332 1434

Email: [Natasha.Dogra@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:Natasha.Dogra@cityoflondon.gov.uk)

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## EPPING FOREST & COMMONS COMMITTEE

1. **Constitution**  
A Non-Ward Committee consisting of,
  - two Aldermen nominated by the Court of Aldermen
  - 8 Members elected by the Court of Common Council at least one of whom shall have fewer than five years' service on the Court at the time of their appointment
  - the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Open Spaces & City Gardens Committee (ex-officio)
  - plus, for the consideration of business relating to Epping Forest only, four Verderers elected or appointed pursuant to the Epping Forest Act 1878.
  
2. **Quorum**  
The quorum consists of any five Members.
  
3. **Terms of Reference**
  - (a) To be responsible, having regard to the overall policy laid down by the Open Spaces & City Gardens Committee, for:-
  
  - (b) exercising of the powers and duties of the Court of Common Council as Conservators of Epping Forest (registered charity no. 232990) and the various additional lands which have been acquired to protect the Forest in accordance, where appropriate, with the Epping Forest Acts 1878 and 1880 (as amended) and all other relevant legislation.
  
  - (c) the ownership and management of the following open spaces in accordance with the provisions of the Corporation of London Open Spaces Act 1878:-
    - Coulsdon and other Commons (registered charity no. 232989), the other Commons being Kenley Common, Farthing Downs and Riddlesdown
    - West Wickham Common and Spring Park (registered charity no. 232988)
    - Ashted Common (registered charity no. 1051510)
    - Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common (registered charity no. 232987)
  
  - (d) appointing such Consultative Committees as are considered necessary for the better performance of its duties including:-
    - Ashted Common Consultative Committee
    - Burnham Beeches Consultative Committee
    - Coulsdon Commons Consultative Committee
    - Epping Forest Centre Joint Consultative Committee
    - West Wickham Commons Consultative Committee

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# Agenda Item 8

<b>Committee(s):</b>	<b>Date(s):</b>
Epping Forest Management Plan Steering Group Epping Forest & Commons	13 <sup>th</sup> November 2013
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Public</b>
Epping Forest Work Programme Out-turn 2012-2013	
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>For Information</b>
Superintendent of Epping Forest	
<b>Summary</b>	
<p>This report summarises the work completed as part of the access and habitat Work programme for Epping Forest from April 2012 to March 2013. The work was completed against the backdrop of highly unusual weather conditions, beginning with drought and followed by one of the wettest spring and summer periods on record.</p> <p>Amongst the highlights of the work by staff and contractors were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the re-surfacing of over 2.5km of surfaced rides;</li> <li>• the completion of work on 89 Keystone Beech trees in a revised <i>Branching Out</i> programme, modified due to the weather conditions;</li> <li>• the pollarding of more than 150 Hornbeams and “haloing” of many other ancient and veteran pollards in 15 Forest compartments (Appendix 1);</li> <li>• the completion of 10 years work in restoring the ancient wood-pasture and Oaks of Lords Bushes;</li> <li>• the harvesting of over 20 hectares of haylage from the Forest in addition to the crop taken from the Buffer Lands;</li> <li>• the start of the new grazing contract with Wildlife &amp; Countryside Services and the introduction of Redpoll cattle to the Buffer Lands.</li> </ul> <p>In addition, of the two main volunteers’ groups, the Epping Forest Conservation Volunteers (EFCV) and the Epping Forest Centenary Trust, carried out work on over 40 sites During the year, the EFCV agreed to consolidate its volunteering effort on 8 core sites across the Forest. The Scout Project 823 was a success, with the highlight being the construction of the walkway at Connaught Water.</p> <p>The habitats work programme is supported by significant annual income from the agri-environment grants administered by the Rural Payments Agency and Natural England which this year amounted to £313,741.91 in total. In addition, further income was received from the Heritage Lottery Fund and The Tubney Charitable Trust for the trees and grazing management elements of the <i>Branching Out</i> Project.</p>	

## Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- note the report.

## Main Report

### Background

1. This report reviews the conservation projects, habitat management and tree safety work achieved during the year 2012 – 13 by the Operations and Conservation Teams and volunteer groups.
2. The programme is drawn from the Epping Forest Management Plan approved in 2004 and the *Branching Out* Project, which began in 2009. Background details of the projects can be found in the main Management Plan and in the other documents listed below under '*Background Papers*'.

### Current Position

3. The habitats work programme is supported financially by Natural England through its Environmental Stewardship Scheme as well as other agri-environment income administered by the Rural Payments Agency (RPA).
4. The management of most of the grasslands in the Forest and on the Buffer Lands is covered by payments under the Entry Level Scheme (ELS), with additional income for grassland management from the Single Payment Scheme.
5. Other habitats work in the Forest, especially within the scrub and wooded areas, is supported by specific Higher Level Scheme (HLS) payments at higher rates of payment and this includes cattle grazing, wood-pasture restoration and scrub coppicing.
6. The total of income from these sources this year amounted to £313,741.91.
7. This year's work by volunteers was carried out at over 40 sites across the Forest by the Epping Forest Conservation Volunteers (EFCV), Epping Forest Centenary Trust (EFCT), The Wren Group and other groups organised by the Volunteer Development Officer.
8. The EFCV further agreed with a proposal from the Ecologist to consolidate its efforts and dedicate the majority of its volunteer hours to 8 core sites: Gilbert's Slade, Walthamstow Forest, Fernhills, Lord's Bushes, Chingford Plain, Rushey Plain, Long Running and Swaines Green.
9. Additional projects and operations requiring specialist equipment (e.g. hay-making and pond excavation) made use of external contractors.
10. The unusual weather patterns during the year dominated the work programme, affecting both tree work and also the timing of the cutting programme.

### **Car Parks, Barrier Gates, fences and hedges**

11. The cyclical work programme of maintenance was carried out on these features, although more extensive work will be required in future to replace the Fernhills fence. The new Head of Operations, who took up his post in November 2012, began devising a new long-term programme to encompass this work.

### **Rides & Trails Network**

12. The Rifle Butts and Wormleyton Pits Rides were re-surfaced and in addition extensive repair work was carried out on the slope of the surfaced ride at Warren Hill due to damage from a burst water main which had required its temporary closure. This work amounted to over 2,500 metres of ride work for the year.
13. The tree hazard survey was completed along the unsurfaced ride and paths network and, in addition, a programme of cutting back overhanging vegetation was completed across the network during early 2013.

### **Keystone Trees Strategy**

14. The cold and very wet summer of 2012 following on from drought conditions of the late winter and the previous autumn had an impact on the tree population. This was previewed in the proposed annual work programme report to Committee (SEF 12/12). Significant numbers of Oak trees, including veteran pollards, showed signs of physiological stress with stem bleeds. However, Beech tree leaf size, which had been below average during 2010 and 2011, seemed to be improved during summer 2012.
15. As a result any work on Oak pollards was deferred until 2013-14. Instead a revised programme of crown retrenchments was completed on the Keystone Beech trees for the *Branching Out* Project. A target of 100 Beech trees was agreed with Heritage Lottery Fund for the winter, although in the end only 89 Beech trees were completed by March 2013 across 4 compartments – Monks Wood, St Thomas's Qtrs, Rushey Plain and Compartment 19 at Clay Road Heath (see location map at **Appendix 1**). The total of 89 trees was completed despite mechanical problems with the cherry pickers, which put them out of action for more than 2 weeks.

### **Wood-pasture Restoration and other woodland work**

16. The pollarding and re-pollarding of over 150 Hornbeam pollards was completed as planned, along with "halo" clearances around pollards and new pollard creation across 15 compartments (see location map at **Appendix 1**). The annual Scout Project, supported by the Epping Forest arborists, achieved a significant amount of clearance work within the pollarded areas alongside Jubilee Ride in Bury Wood. A major Orienteering event was then able to make use of this cleared area as its start and finish point during November 2012 and complimentary comments were made about the work.

17. Some of the Turkey Oak was removed from Barn Hoppitt and, in addition, this species was also removed from along the Green Ride adjacent to Chingford Plain and Connaught Water.
18. A highlight was the completion of the 10<sup>th</sup> year of wood-pasture restoration work at Lords Bushes, for which a recently-completed MSc study (Imperial College) of the Oak pollards (co-supervised by the Head of Conservation) showed a significant improvement in the condition of the trees, especially due to “haloing” and the removal of competing and over-shading younger trees.
19. A further highlight was the arrival and successful inductions of the 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> apprentices into the arborist teams.

### **Tree safety work**

20. Over 300 trees were completed (a reduction from previous years totals as more trees have now been dealt with) along the surfaced ride network and in the areas of highest priority (red zones) alongside roads.

### **Grazing**

21. The Grazing Expansion Plan was approved by Committee during the year which also saw the beginning of the new contract with Wildlife & Countryside Services (Mr Roger Beecroft) as the grazier.
22. The *Boviguard* Invisible fencing network at Bury Wood and Hill Wood allowed extensive grazing across Fairmead and into Bury Wood with English Longhorns grazing here and also at the traditional areas across Chingford Plain and the heathlands. A 2012 survey of Almshouse Plain revealed that the rare Lousewort had continued to spread and increase both its population size and cover since 2007 when it was last surveyed at this grassland site.
23. The grazier’s herd of Redpoll cattle (another rare conservation breed) was trialled at Warlies Park throughout the summer where the sward management was targeted at Ragwort control.

### **Grassland Mowing and other open sites work**

24. Over 20 hectares of grassland from 5 sites in the Forest itself were harvested for haylage (a form of hay that is cut earlier with more moisture and has to be wrapped in plastic rolls for winter storage) by a specialist contractor.
25. The Grassland Team completed the rest of the extensive Environmental Stewardship grassland programme and the amenity work despite the wet weather, a remarkable effort in the circumstances. Only a few places were left uncut.
26. The MBDC site at Wanstead Flats was re-seeded in autumn 2012 as planned and began to “green up” before the end of the year.

### **Scrub Management & control**

27. *Project Nightingale* continued as in previous years, involving many volunteer hours as well as staff time. New coppicing work was carried out at Warren Wood Slopes as well as around Chingford Plain.
28. An area of scrub, with non-native plants, was removed around the “Fairmead Oaks” in a volunteer effort coordinated by the Friends of Epping Forest.
29. The Scout Project 823 cleared invading scrub from the areas of Heather alongside the Woodchip Ride (part of Clay Road Heath and the old Sandpit Plain) in Compartment 19 near Loughton Camp – restoring the heathy nature of this area.

### **Wetland Management**

30. Work began on the restoration of Jubilee Pond at Wanstead Flats, working with the City Surveyor’s Department.
31. Work at clearing the invasive and smothering *Crassula* was continued at Bulrush Pond as part of the annual Scout Project.

### **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

32. There are no further implications to highlight as this report is a summary of completed operations that were planned and approved by Committee and the Management Plan Steering Group between May and July 2012.

### **Conclusion**

33. The unusual weather patterns during the year dominated the work programme. The cold and wet summer of 2012 following on from drought conditions of the spring and the previous autumn significantly affected the tree populations and this restricted the *Keystone Tree* work. However, despite these extreme conditions the work programme overall was still completed, including the grassland mowing sites with only a few places left uncut. The grazing programme still awaited the new infrastructure and so was maintained at a similar level to previous years, but with the introduction and successful trial of Redpoll cattle at Warlies.

### **Appendices**

- **Appendix 1:** Map of Forest compartments showing those in which Wood-pasture restoration (15) and *Keystone Tree* operations (4 of the 15) were completed.

### **Background Papers:**

- *Epping Forest Annual Work Programme for access and habitats 2012-13. Report to EF&C Committee 14th May 2012 (SEF 12/12).*
- *The Epping Forest Management Plan 2004 – 2010*
- *The Barn Hoppitt Wood-pasture Restoration Plan 2006 – 2011*

- *The Lords Bushes & Knighton Woods Integrated Site Plan 2004 – 2010*
- *The Wanstead Flats Integrated Site Plan 2006 – 2011*
- *Branching Out Stage Project Plan (Nov 2008) (Chapters 15 Keystone Trees Strategy and 16 Grazing Strategy)*
- *Environmental Stewardship guidelines (Natural England)*

**Dr Jeremy Dagley**

Head of Conservation, Epping Forest

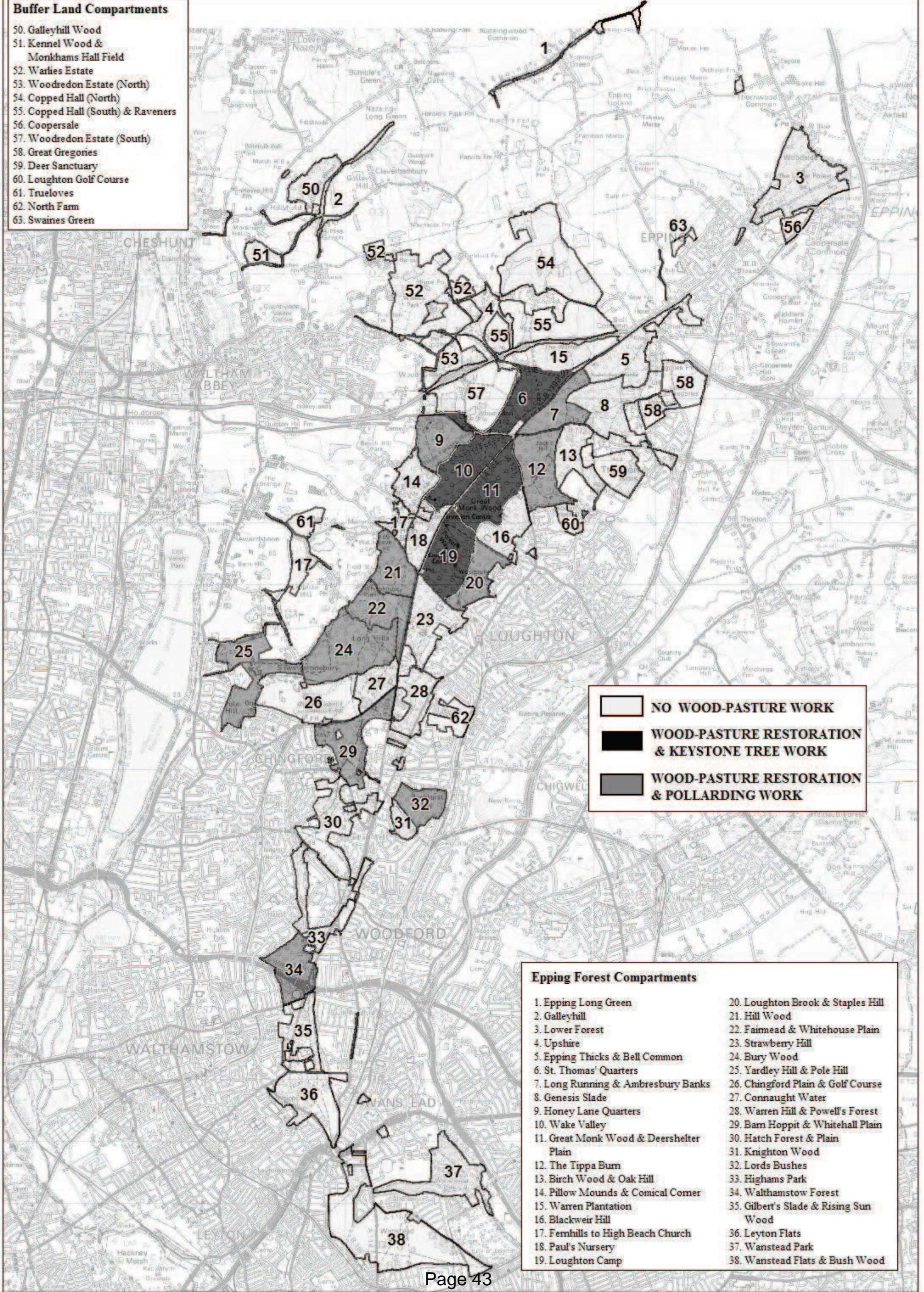
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**Buffer Land Compartments**

- 50. Galleyhill Wood
- 51. Kennel Wood & Monkhams Hall Field
- 52. Warlies Estate
- 53. Woodredon Estate (North)
- 54. Copped Hall (North)
- 55. Copped Hall (South) & Ravensers
- 56. Coopersale
- 57. Woodredon Estate (South)
- 58. Great Gregories
- 59. Deer Sanctuary
- 60. Loughton Golf Course
- 61. Trueloves
- 62. North Farm
- 63. Swaines Green



	<b>NO WOOD-PASTURE WORK</b>
	<b>WOOD-PASTURE RESTORATION &amp; KEYSTONE TREE WORK</b>
	<b>WOOD-PASTURE RESTORATION &amp; POLLARDING WORK</b>

**Epping Forest Compartments**

- |   |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Epping Long Green                    | 20. Loughton Brook & Staples Hill     |
| 2. Galleyhill                           | 21. Hill Wood                         |
| 3. Lower Forest                         | 22. Faimead & Whitehouse Plain        |
| 4. Upshire                              | 23. Strawberry Hill                   |
| 5. Epping Thicks & Bell Common          | 24. Bury Wood                         |
| 6. St. Thomas' Quarters                 | 25. Yardley Hill & Pole Hill          |
| 7. Long Running & Ambresbury Banks      | 26. Chingford Plain & Golf Course     |
| 8. Genesis Slade                        | 27. Connaught Water                   |
| 9. Honey Lane Quarters                  | 28. Warren Hill & Powell's Forest     |
| 10. Wake Valley                         | 29. Barn Hoppit & Whitehall Plain     |
| 11. Great Monk Wood & Deershelter Plain | 30. Hatch Forest & Plain              |
| 12. The Tippla Bum                      | 31. Knighton Wood                     |
| 13. Birch Wood & Oak Hill               | 32. Lords Bushes                      |
| 14. Pillow Mounds & Comical Corner      | 33. Highams Park                      |
| 15. Warren Plantation                   | 34. Walthamstow Forest                |
| 16. Blackweir Hill                      | 35. Gilbert's Slade & Rising Sun Wood |
| 17. Femhills to High Beach Church       | 36. Leyton Flats                      |
| 18. Paul's Nursery                      | 37. Wanstead Park                     |
| 19. Loughton Camp                       | 38. Wanstead Flats & Bush Wood        |

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<b>Committee(s):</b>	<b>Date(s):</b>
Epping Forest Management Plan Steering Group Epping Forest & Commons	13 <sup>th</sup> November 2013
<b>Subject:</b> Epping Forest Grazing Monitoring Audit	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Superintendent of Epping Forest	<b>For Decision</b>

### Summary

This report describes the latest monitoring work on grazing and provides the second annual assessment by the Independent Grazing Assessor, Dr Peter Dennis of Aberystwyth University (Committee Member & Secretary of The Royal Society's UK Biodiversity Science Committee (UK BSC)). The Assessor's independent audit report is appended at **Appendix 2** and his key points are summarised in this main report.

The Assessor is satisfied with the Grazing Strategy's phased approach although he recognises that it has moved at a slower pace in 2013 than anticipated due to external and infrastructure constraints. He considers the current combination of monitoring methods provides "*..a suitable and effective monitoring programme*". He inspected the 8 additional transects and regarded their length and location as appropriate but suggests some additional techniques, including Centre-pole Fixed Point Photography as an economical way of garnering extra vegetation data.

The annual costs of continuing the monitoring programme, with some of the additions covered in this report, would come from local risk budgets and would amount to up to £12,000. In addition the work involved in the assessment is likely to cost between £3,000 - £3,500 in the next financial year.

In response to survey proposals by the Head of Conservation (summarised in a report at **Appendix 1**) Dr Dennis concludes with some suggestions for future projects and survey work. He outlines the extra resources that might be required for these and suggests a phased timetable for survey work is required to match available resources. He recommends seeking public engagement with monitoring projects where possible.

### Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- note the report;
- approve the production of a 3<sup>rd</sup> report by the Grazing Assessor to be provided to the Management Plan Steering Group for consideration prior to being submitted to Committee in November 2014

## Main Report

### Background

1. The appointment of an Independent Grazing Assessor was approved in July 2010 (EFCC Report SEF 21/10) to give an objective overview of the way in which the impacts of grazing are to be measured and monitored.
2. The role of the Independent Grazing Assessor was approved to cover the following areas:
  - to analyse the current ecological monitoring of grazing at Epping Forest;
  - to provide advice on additional or alternative monitoring that could be viably achieved;
  - to provide additional knowledge from comparable sites and situations;
  - to provide the Superintendent with an annual validation report on the ecological monitoring.
3. The Assessor's 1<sup>st</sup> report was received by Committee in November 2012 and a return visit by him to the Forest was approved.

### Current Position

4. This report follows the visit on 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> August by the Assessor who re-visited all the monitoring sites and viewed the impacts of the cattle for himself, both the Redpoll herd at Fairmead and the English Longhorn herds at Chingford and Sunshine Plains.
5. In his report he states that he remains satisfied with the phased approach of the Grazing Strategy, which he regards as "*sensible, gradual and precautionary*". He emphasises the importance of the monitoring programme to allow adjustment of management in order to achieve the objectives for each site and the primary objective of favourable condition
6. On his visit to the Forest Dr Dennis examined the 8 new transects that had been added to the monitoring programme in 2013 and concludes that they are appropriate in length and location. He recognises that increasing the number of such transects based on the level of quadrat sampling is not possible given current resources but suggests several additional techniques which should be considered to increase the information yielded from the grazing and non-grazing areas.
7. These additional techniques and other approaches have been incorporated by the Head of Conservation into an outline 5-year plan for monitoring, which is attached as **Appendix 1** to this report. Some of the additional monitoring will be dependent on resources at the time (e.g. student projects, volunteers and

public engagement) but other monitoring will need to be completed before grazing is re-established (e.g. Deershelter Plain's western scrape).

8. Based on his review of the analyses (carried out by consultant Dr Clive Bealey) of the long-term monitoring data gathered by the Epping Forest monitoring programme from one heathland and one grassland site, Dr Dennis suggests some additional data that should be gathered in future to refine the resolution of the analyses. For example, he recommends that *Sphagnum* species should be separately identified on the wet heathland sites so that favourable condition of the vegetation can be more accurately assessed. *Sphagnum* species are key indicators for certain specific nationally-recognised vegetation communities, which are a recognised feature of Epping Forest Site of Special Scientific Interest's favourable condition.

## Options

9. In response to discussions with Dr Dennis and his report, and to a dialogue with Dr Clive Bealey who analysed some of the long-term datasets this year, the Head of Conservation has outlined a 5-yr plan (**Appendix 1**), which is to be used as a basis for planning the scope and timing of future monitoring.
10. Opportunities will be sought to engage volunteers; a photographer has already been approached for the fixed point photography. A programme of student projects will also be developed for grazing monitoring, although this will also require the collection of significant amounts of baseline data beforehand to provide the students with a platform for their own research and analyses.
11. The fieldwork will have to be phased over the 5 years to ensure that the Forest's ecologist and others can achieve the fieldwork. Some additional assistance will be required each year (as now) for fieldwork and analysis and the costs for this are likely to be between £7,000 - £12,000 annually depending on the number of sites, the detail or technicality of the surveys and the level of statistical analysis involved. In addition the costs of the Grazing Audit Report will also need to be included and depending on the level of detail and length of the visit this work is likely to cost between £3,000 - £3,500.
12. In recent years the City Bridge Trust funding has supplemented the Forest's local risk budget and enabled the survey work and analyses to be achieved. In future years, sources of funding will need to be considered as well as the local risk budget.

## Proposals

13. It is proposed to continue with the current level of monitoring of the existing vegetation quadrats and invertebrate pitfall traps. It is vital that annual recording is maintained during the re-establishment phase of the grazing.
14. In addition, the 8 transects established this year need to be re-surveyed so that the amplitude of vegetation variations can be established. Additional fixed point photography will be established as proposed by Dr Dennis.

15. Of the other possible monitoring it is recommended that the Heath Spotted Orchid population is mapped in detail at Long Running to provide baseline data for future student projects and also to assess the impact of deer and cattle grazing. The essential monitoring of Deershelter Plain scrape is proposed for 2015. A re-survey of Sunshine Plain vegetation quadrats will be considered for either 2014 or 2015, dependent on resources, and will include more detailed recording of the Sphagnum species.
16. Desirable monitoring of animal species (e.g. invertebrates) will be considered but will be dependent on resources and availability of students. As the GPS tracking of the cattle gathers more data this will be stored as a baseline for future student projects in which Dr Dennis has expressed particular interest based on his work with GPS elsewhere.

### **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

17. The options and proposals in this report meet the *City Together Strategy* by contributing to “*a world class City that promotes and enhances our environment*”. In relation to the Open Spaces Department’s Business Plan Improvement Objectives this report fulfils the objective to “*promote sustainability, biodiversity and heritage*”.

### **Implications**

#### **Legal Implications**

18. There are no legal implications associated with the proposals in this report.

#### **Property Implications**

19. There are no property implications associated with the proposals in this report.

#### **Financial Implications**

20. The costs of any monitoring work and the grazing assessor’s time will be taken from local risk budgets as available and as in previous years.

#### **HR Implications**

21. Any monitoring volunteers, including the photographer recruited in 2013, are recruited through the volunteer scheme by the Volunteers Development Officer and would be supervised, as required, by members of the Conservation Team.
22. There are some HR cost implications associated with the Grazing Audit report, as well as the additional fieldwork and analysis proposals. These costs will need to be met from any future City Bridge Trust Grant or from the Local Risk Budget.

## Conclusion

23. This report summarises both the findings of the Independent Grazing Assessor and the outline of a 5-year monitoring programme to continue to assess the impacts of cattle grazing on Epping Forest (see attached appendices for further detail). The Assessor, Dr Peter Dennis, considers that the current level of monitoring, including new transects added in 2013, provides a suitable and effective monitoring programme. A third audit report by the Assessor in 2014 is recommended for approval.
24. Additional avenues and techniques for monitoring are explored in both reports and both the use of less labour-intensive techniques, such as fixed-point photography and “W-walks”, and the engagement of the public through volunteering and student projects are seen as effective ways of increasing the scope and amounts of information gathered on grazing impacts.

## Appendices

- Appendix 1 – *Proposals for future Monitoring to Measure Impacts of Grazing at Epping Forest* by Dr Jeremy Dagley, Epping Forest Head of Conservation, September 2013.
- Appendix 2 – *Grazing Assessor’s report on status of cattle grazing and associated monitoring across Epping Forest* by Dr Peter Dennis, University of Aberystwyth, 26<sup>th</sup> September 2013.

## Background Papers:

- *Epping Forest Grazing Strategy 2006 (updated for Branching Out Project in 2008)*
- *SEF 25/07 EF&C Committee report on: the 2<sup>nd</sup> Public Consultation on Grazing*
- *SEF 21/10 EF&C Committee report on: Ecological Monitoring Programme for Grazing*
- *SEF 35/12 EF&C Committee report of 5<sup>th</sup> November 2012: Epping Forest Grazing Monitoring Audit*

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## Grazing assessor's report on status of cattle grazing and associated monitoring across Epping Forest



Red poll cattle fitted with *Boviguard* & GPS collars grazing at Fairmead, Epping Forest (© P. Dennis)

Dr Peter Dennis

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26 September 2013

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## 1. Introduction

This is the second report by the Independent Grazing Assessor for the Conservators of Epping Forest following a further visit to Epping Forest in August 2013 and a progress report on the implementation of the Grazing Strategy presented during a meeting with the Head of Conservation.

The purpose of this report is to comment upon the current status of the reintroduction of grazing to recently unstocked parts of Epping Forest and to evaluate the suitability of the monitoring programme established to detect vegetation change and plant and animal responses to grazing management; ultimately to inform decisions on suitable timing and stocking densities of cattle throughout the Forest. A review of the scientific evidence supporting conservation grazing programmes was presented in the previous report (Dennis, 2012). Since then, a critique of conservation grazing founded on personal observations at several smaller schemes situated elsewhere in England (Denton, 2013) has raised concerns that the introduction of grazing animals to specifically dry heath, wet heath and mire had not always been successful. Grazing livestock either did not preferentially select the target, abundant vegetation or risked damaging vulnerable *Sphagnum* pools and *Calluna vulgaris*, heather plants. The Denton (2013) observations were not based on objective survey and the incidents may have been a product of the small size of the nature reserves or habitat remnants where grazing was introduced or the previous degraded state of the wetland features. It is clearly important to scientifically validate conservation grazing regimes and it is true that there have been few scientific studies which have experimentally assessed the effect of grazing, especially on invertebrate species (Denton, 2013). However, it is also essential to apply the general scientific principles of grazing ecology with rigorous monitoring and active adjustment of the stocking densities and period of grazing, not least in response to variations in the annual productivity of the dominant vegetation at a particular site. Such unfortunate examples (Denton, 2013) may be the outcome of the addition of grazing as a low cost method of vegetation management with an absence of

adequate but essential monitoring, and a lack of associated and frequent adjustment of stocking density.

## 2. Progress towards the phased expansion of conservation grazing management

Reintroduction of cattle grazing to recently unstocked parts of Epping Forest, as proposed in the Grazing Strategy, is proceeding but at a slower pace than anticipated due to two factors. Cattle movements were temporarily restricted and the acquisition of additional cattle has been impeded by control measures imposed due to a Bovine Tuberculosis 'reactor' animal detected in a herd on adjacent farmland. Construction of essential roadside wooden fencing and cattle grids was also delayed due to highways engineering issues but is now very nearly complete. The construction of invisible fencing (*Boviguard* wire) remains incomplete as required to create a jigsaw of grazing compartments prior to the introduction of cattle. New *Boviguard* collars and generators have been developed for the invisible fence system which should allow modification of fence lengths and configurations and improve ease of installation. This does not detract from the suitability of the Grazing Strategy to achieve habitat and species conservation and landscape objectives for Epping Forest once fully implemented. It is recognised that grazing management is being introduced in some compartments to comply with regulations associated with Natural England Higher Level Stewardship payments and management for wood pasture "HC13 Restoration of wood pasture and parkland" and Entry Level Stewardship management options which apply to compartments 24, 26 and 9/10, "EK2 Permanent grassland with low inputs" and "EK3 Permanent grassland with very low inputs" (Natural England, no date).

During my visit in August, four English Longhorn cattle were stocked on Sunshine Plain and 8 cows on Chingford Plain throughout July to September. Ten Red poll cattle had been introduced to the Fairmead compartment and appeared to have settled well. All Red poll cattle at Fairmead had been fitted with *Boviguard* collars and four of these also had GPS collars to allow real-time tracking of their locations and as a safety precaution should cattle move outside of the designated compartment. A 'put and take' system is clearly described in the Grazing Strategy as the main way to manage the vegetation effectively in order to achieve favourable condition throughout the Forest. This system is appropriate and requires frequent adjustment of cattle numbers in relation to vegetation status rather than a fixed stocking density imposed on each compartment for all or part of the year. Challenges remain to encourage cattle to move between all parts of the grazing compartments that would benefit from grazing, to decide when to rotate grazing between compartments to more effectively utilize abundant vegetation; or to avoid poaching of soil during prolonged wet periods, disturbance of ground nesting of birds or disruption of flowering and seed production of annual plants in spring. Cattle may need to be moved on to sacrificial grazing areas (adjacent amenity or intensified grassland) under these circumstances, when overall conservation grazing targets for compartments are satisfied during certain periods each year or when the cattle require more nutritional forage to maintain body condition and health.



### 3. Evaluation of current and proposed monitoring methods

The combination of vegetation grids; transects along which fixed quadrats are used for plant survey; field GPS recording with GIS mapping of the distribution of specific plant species of conservation interest (e.g., *Pedicularis sylvatica* L., Lousewort on Almhouse Plain and *Silaum silaus* (L.), Pepper saxifrage at Yate's Meadow); and fixed point photography, all contribute to a suitable and effective monitoring programme, essential for successful application of the Grazing Strategy. This will enable assessment that the annual grazing effect is to consume the annual productivity of abundant, competitive plant species and to allow an increase in the population sizes of desirable plant species.

Since my last report (Dennis 2012), additional monitoring in the form of eight belt transects of 50 m length have been located on transition boundaries between woodland and open vegetation in several northern and southern compartments due to be grazed (Palmer's Bridge, Peartree Plain, Barn Hoppit, Bury Wood, Big View, Sunshine Plain (x 2) and Rushey Plain). Plant species and cover have been recorded in a total of 25 2 x 2 m quadrats along each transect. The length of the transects as written appeared too short but inspection of each of them during the August 2013 field visit demonstrated that they adequately extended into and represented the vegetation each side of the boundary.

The single belt transect per site may not be sufficiently representative of the vegetation changes that may occur within each of the grazed compartments although the eight sites do represent a broad range of typical vegetation types in Epping Forest. It would be too costly to add further belt transects and to conduct further plant recording within quadrats along these. A cost-effective compromise could be to supplement the recently implemented belt transects with Fixed Point Photography using the Centre Pole System. Transects of the same length can incorporate ranging poles at ca. 5, 15 and 25 m in each direction from the mid-point and a standardised photograph taken forwards and backwards from that mid-point for visual comparison of vegetation height and vegetation composition along each transect (Hill *et al.* (Eds), 2005).

In addition to these transects, however, there is a new set of quadrats established for the UK Long-Term Monitoring Network (LTMN) managed in England by Natural England. This provides opportunities for more representative assessments (see section a) below).

#### a) Additional monitoring requirements

Due consideration should be given to the frequency and year of re-survey. Priority must be given to ensure a complete and recent baseline dataset prior to the reintroduction of cattle grazing. Baseline vegetation monitoring is, on the whole, already in place and should be adequate to inform decision making on adjustments to the indicative stocking rates and periods in the proposed 'put and take' system of cattle grazing stated in the Grazing Strategy. A further baseline botanical dataset for Deershelter Plain scrape is essential before grazing commences in this small compartment due to the sensitivity of heath to cattle grazing and the need for a more recent assessment of the current extent and growth phase of heather in particular. Quadrats on existing grids or belt transects in compartments need to be resurveyed more frequently (1-2 years) following introduction of grazing but at

less frequent intervals once the management regime has settled (ca. 3-5 years). The evidence of slow vegetation change under consistent, annual management was demonstrated using earlier botanical survey data from the grassland at Whitehall Plain recorded annually by Conservation staff, 2007-2012 and recently analysed by a consultant ecologist (Bealey, 2013).

There is a need to record percentage ground cover in addition to Domin scale for each plant species in all quadrats in order to harmonise monitoring with the prescribed methods of the LTMN (a survey of 50 associated quadrats recently completed) which will enable comparisons with those data and a quantitative indication of the current community profile under the National Vegetation Classification (NVC). These quadrats provide a further independent dataset to test the information yielded from the belt transects.

Although desirable, I consider that it would be too resource demanding to include species compositional assessments of different vegetation strata within vegetation quadrats in the heathland plant community on Sunshine Plain. This was proposed by a consultant ecologist following a recent analysis of heathland monitoring data recorded at Sunshine Plain by Conservation staff, 2002 and 2007 (Bealey, 2013). However, identification of bog moss (*Sphagnum*) to species level is desirable since species such as *Sphagnum compactum* define the target NVC community and would be an indicator of success of wet heath restoration. The ability to identify whether the community is of NVC M16 *Erica tetralix/ Sphagnum compactum* wet heath (Rodwell, 1992) or another type of wet heath, mire or mesotrophic grassland is essential since M16 is a notifiable vegetation community of Natural England and is typical of mire-heath transitions on periodically waterlogged shallow peat and humic mineral soils of the southern and eastern lowlands of Britain (Rodwell, 1992). Similarly, on Whitehall Plain, there is potential for vegetation development to NVC MG5 *Cynosurus cristatus/ Centaurea nigra* grassland (Rodwell, 1998), a further notifiable community of Natural England.

Mapping of populations (individuals) of notable plant species should continue across Epping Forest. This is an effective means of assessing that there are no adverse effects of the change in management, for instance during the transition from cutting to grazing management in Yate's Meadow. The maps of the distribution of the scarce plant species, Pepper Saxifrage, 2003 and 2013 should be supplemented with the archive 1998 GPS data and represent an effective baseline dataset should the existing hay cut management be supplemented with aftermath grazing in future. Experimental investigation has shown how 75% of Pepper Saxifrage seeds fall within 1.5 m of parent plant but that grazing animals and mowing machinery and wheels can facilitate wider dispersal (Bischoff *et al.*, 2009). In addition, grazing animals can create suitable microsites for germination and establishment of seedlings since there are few gaps in a dense grass sward (Bischoff *et al.*, 2009).

Grazing is also required to suppress bramble, tall herbs and the regeneration of scrub and trees in locations where the micro-topography excludes mowing, and to protect yellow meadow ant mounds and encourage greater botanical and invertebrate diversity. Localised

rabbit grazing is also likely to be encouraged and will provide bare soil and short sward patches for Bird's foot trefoil to establish.

Similar maps have been produced for Lousewort at Almhouse Plain and the method could be applied to *Ononis spinosa* L. (Spiny restharrow), *Dactylorhiza maculata*, Heath Spotted Orchid, *Crataegus laevigata*, Midland hawthorn, *Rusus aculeatus*, Butcher's broom and *Lasius flavus*, Yellow Meadow Ant nests. The method should also be applied to track the extent of populations of undesirable plant species such as creeping thistle, marsh thistle and ragwort.

I recommend that the transects distributed in the compartments across Epping Forest should be integrated with the W walks using the Grazing Impact Assessment approach (focusing on vegetation) which assesses the species according to the DAFOR scale (dominant, abundant, frequent, occasional or rare) perhaps separately for each leg of the W within each compartment (Offer *et al.*, 2003). The proposed modification by the Epping Forest Head of Conservation, to assess a selection of grazing-adapted and grazing-sensitive plant species with a -1, 0 to +1 scale also appears appropriate (although even better to record comparable % cover estimates of selected plant species).

It should remain a general ambition to harmonise the different vegetation monitoring methods used to assess the effects of cattle grazing, progress towards stated targets of habitat condition for the Natural England nature conservation designations and objectives of the Entry Level and Higher Level Stewardship options. Additional monitoring protocols for invertebrates (e.g., butterflies, ground beetles and ant colonies), amphibians, reptiles, mammals and birds provide important additional information since changes in plant species alone often do not indicate the response of other taxa to grazing management. With pressure on resources, pioneering methods that combine smart phone technology and crowd sourced information are being developed in the EU CobWeb project as a way of increasing public engagement in biodiversity monitoring and improving data capture (COBWEB, no date). Increasingly, there is a need to continue to involve amateur specialists or engage the general public in such recording. These should be considered and used where possible at Epping Forest.

### **b) Student projects**

Additional detailed information can be obtained by promoting engagement with Higher Education Institutions in order to realise specific, targeted student projects. It is important to co-design a project list from which students can select so that each study has management relevance but the necessary academic and scientific credibility.

Various invertebrate surveys have already been conducted throughout Epping Forest and student projects may be the best way to accumulate repeat, comparable data over time given resource constraints and priorities. This would be applicable for assessing the response of the distribution of *Omocestus viridulus*, Common green grasshopper to cattle grazing in the open vegetation of various grazed compartments.

The satellite telemetry based on the cattle GPS collars offers the opportunity for research projects on animal behaviour and habitat selection/ vegetation preferences which could identify the effectiveness of grazing on abundant plants or the vulnerability of conservation sensitive plant species. This would inform management and allow further refinement of stocking densities and the periods of grazing consistent with conservation objectives for Epping Forest.

## 4. Summing up

I am satisfied that the phased nature of the Grazing Strategy is a sensible, gradual and precautionary approach which, combined with the monitoring, provides ample opportunity to review and adjust management to achieve the stated objectives. With these cattle management measures in place, I consider that there is a realistic opportunity to achieve and maintain the stated objectives of the Grazing Strategy over the next 5-20 years:

- Restore and maintain the favourable condition of key forest habitats using good forest management (including conservation of scarce and notable plant and invertebrate species).
- Conserve the Forest as a special mosaic landscape distinct from surroundings.
- Maintain cultural tradition and protect common rights of pasturage.

I consider that the information from monitoring should indicate when the primary objective for achieving 'favourable condition' for the mosaic of vegetation is reached and should also be effective for informing the decision when to change the grazing management regime from one appropriate for habitat restoration to one suitable for the maintenance of the habitats.

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## **MONITORING PROPOSALS**

### **PROPOSALS for FUTURE MONITORING to MEASURE IMPACTS of GRAZING at EPPING FOREST**

Under the Grazing Strategy and more recently the approved Grazing Expansion Plan (GEP) the area grazed by cattle, the time period for grazing and the number of cattle are each to be increased over the next 5 years and beyond. There have been several areas selected already and monitored for different periods since the 1990s. This monitoring plan now seeks to expand the monitored areas and adopt a wider range of monitoring methodologies whilst also establishing a sustainable regime of monitoring that can fit with existing and likely future staff and financial resources.

#### **1. Vegetation**

##### Quadrats

A variety of quadrat-based monitoring methods have been used over the last 15 years. The Whitehall Plain plots – both species plots and grids - that were begun in 2007 will be continued. The grids with periodic randomised sampling on the heathland sites at Sunshine Plain and Deershelter Plain will also be repeated at intervals of 5-6 years.

##### Transects

The 50m-long transects that have been set up this year, 2013, will be monitored on an annual basis for the first 3 years, with repeated survey work in 2014 and 2015. After this, the transects will be re-surveyed at intervals of every 3 years. Additional transects will be added in each of the main wood-pasture habitats (e.g. Hornbeam-Oak dominated areas) if possible over the next 2 years (by 2015) to increase the number of replicates. These transects will be surveyed as “belt transects” of 2 x 2m quadrats and fixed point photographs using the centre-pole method will supplement the information yielded by this method.

##### LTMN plots

Natural England has surveyed 50 LTMN plots in Epping Forest in 2013, following nationally-accepted LTMN protocols for both soils and vegetation, with assistance from Epping Forest staff. The vegetation ordination analysis for these plots will be compared to ordination analyses for the above transect and quadrat work and the 3 approaches will be reviewed with the Grazing Auditor to ensure complementarity and the best use of resources.

##### Fixed-point photographs

In addition to the detailed transects above other fixed point photograph transects, using the centre-pole method, will also be set up to cover a wider range and number of transitions across the habitats both within the expanded grazing area and outside, in ungrazed areas.

### Impact Assessment approach

The Natural England Grazing Impact Assessment (GIA) approach will not be adopted in full as it would require too much time to complete but it will be adapted as a “cut-down” version using W-walks in randomly-selected, stratified areas in both grazed and non-grazed areas. The vegetation will be assessed on the DAFOR scale and sighting poles will be used to allow condition assessments along the routes walked. The exact methods will be discussed with the Grazing Auditor to best suit the needs of the grazing monitoring project and resources at Epping Forest. Grazing-adapted and grazing-sensitive species will be specifically chosen to be recorded and their condition will be recorded in a simple -1, 0, +1 scoring system.

### Phase 2 and NVC vegetation mapping

This will be carried out as resources allow but the target is to achieve full mapping of the grazed areas of the Forest by 2018.

### Target species & features – GPS recording, mapping and census techniques

As well as selecting species for the GIA “W-walks” above, certain plant species have been and will be chosen for more detailed approaches to monitoring at different sampling periodicities. The methods will include GPS mapping of individual plants and/or patches of plants and even individual census techniques using GPS and fixed grid measurements if time or student availability allow (e.g. for Heath Spotted Orchid).

The species and features chosen so far, with the dates of GPS or other survey, are given below:

Lousewort 2001, 2005, 2007, 2012 (all GPS) – survey to be repeated by 2018

Pepper Saxifrage 1998, 2003, 2013 (all GPS) – survey to be repeated by 2018 if grazing begun on site.

Heath Spotted Orchid (census in 1995 – but incomplete); rosette and flower spike counts annually but to be mapped/censused by GPS and grid mapping by 2015, if resources allow.

Spiny Restharrow – to be GPS mapped

Butcher’s Broom – GPS map started – GPS map of Compartments 24 and 22 to be completed and then monitored at 10-year intervals by GPS survey.

Ant-hills – *Lasius flavus* ant-hills are to be mapped by GPS in future having been mapped by a combination of aerial photos and ant-hill density estimates and direct counts

Other species will be mapped in less detail and both species which are favoured and “problem” species will be mapped, including the following:

Birds-foot Trefoil – patches to be GPS mapped in grazed and ungrazed grasslands – random, stratified sampling

Fleabane or Agrimony – the latter has been partially mapped in Compartment 26 (Yates's Meadow) in 2003.

Creeping Thistle – as above for Bird's-foot Trefoil

Marsh Thistle – as above for Bird's-foot Trefoil

Ragwort - as above for Bird's-foot Trefoil

Michaelmas Daisy

*Dechampsia caespitosa*

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## 2. Other monitoring

### Butterflies

The butterfly transects based on the national protocols (now adopted within LTMN) will be continued – having been set up prior to free-range grazing across the centre of the Forest. Three transects are currently monitored and this will be reviewed by 2014.

### Grasshoppers

Grasshopper densities across selected grassland sites will be censused using modified, standardised techniques (incl. Gardiner xxxx; and Charalambous & Dagley unpublished Imperial College project) of sampling using quadrats. Different species numbers as well as male:female ratios will be assessed by these techniques.

### Ant-hills

Base maps of the Yellow Meadow-ant (*Lasius flavus*) ant-hill numbers and distribution will be created and these base maps should provide future data for student research projects examining changes in numbers and distribution.

### Saproxylic Insects

The surveys of 2003, 2004 and 2010 will form the basis of a scientific paper which should be published by 2015. A re-survey of some of the areas within the grazing area could be considered from 2017 onwards (or earlier) if a student/volunteers available and with some resources for identifying the species (consultancy time – likely to be between £4,000 - £6,000 depending on the number of traps and level of trapping effort).

### Breeding Birds (BBS)

Breeding Bird Transects for the LTMN will be continued – 2 transects are currently being surveyed across the centre (Fairmead – Bury Wood) and north of the Forest (Long Running – Jacks Hill).

### Cattle movements

GPS plotting of cattle movements: – the cattle wear GPS collars (4 cows with collars in 2013) and the number wearing collars is due to be increased significantly with the intention to have all cows with collars. Due to a limitation on resources the numbers may represent less than 50% of the herd ( so fewer than 50 cows) in the first 2-3 years from 2014 – 2016.

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### 3. Proposed Monitoring Schedule

Monitoring technique	Year 1 - 2014	Year 2 - 2015	Year 3 – 2016	Year 4 - 2017	Year 5 - 2018
1. Vegetation quadrats	Whitehall Plain (CoL staff)	Whitehall & Sunshine Plains (CoL staff)	Deershelter “scrape”		
2. Vegetation transects	Re-survey by consultant	Re-survey by consultant			
3. LTMN vegetation plots				Natural England surveyors re- survey	
4. Fixed Point Photographs – Centre-pole method	Volunteer on 8 transects	Volunteer on 8 transects	Volunteer on 8 transects	Volunteer on 8 transects	Volunteer on 8 transects
5. Fixed Point Photographs (FPPs) – around transects and other general positions on Stewardship plots	Volunteer(s) & staff 4 extra FPP around each of the 8 transects	Volunteer(s) & staff General Stewardship FPPs	Volunteer(s) & CoL Ecologist	Volunteer(s) & CoL Ecologist	Volunteer(s) & CoL Ecologist
6. GIA (modified)			8 x 200m “W- walks” incl. the 8 transects		
7. Phase 2/NVC survey of Forest					NVC survey consultants
8. Target species GPS mapping	Heath Spotted Orchid – (CoL ecologist and/or consultant)			Lousewort mapping (various sites)	Pepper Saxifrage (Yates’s Meadow) –impact of grazing
9. Target Species – general mapping of polygons		Bird’s-foot trefoil and Thistle species (CoL staff)			
10. Butterfly transects	3 x “Pollard walk” transects	3 x “Pollard walk” transects	3 x “Pollard walk” transects	3 x “Pollard walk” transects	3 x “Pollard walk” transects
11. Grasshopper quadrats		Set up baseline	To be continued by student project		
12. Ant-hill mapping		Set up baseline	As in row above		
13. Saproxyllic trapping/				Consider re-	

<b>surveys</b>				<b>survey</b>	
<b>14. Bird – BBS transects</b>	2 x BBS transects CoL HoC and Ecologist	2 x BBS transects CoL HoC and Ecologist	2 x BBS transects CoL HoC and Ecologist	2 x BBS transects CoL HoC and Ecologist	2 x BBS transects CoL HoC and Ecologist
<b>15. Reptiles – general monitoring</b>	General heathland site surveys (volunteers)	General heathland site surveys (volunteers)	General heathland site surveys (volunteers)	Consider detailed survey	General heathland site surveys (volunteers)
<b>16. GPS tracking and analysis of cattle</b>	Gather & store baseline data	Gather & store baseline data	Consider student project	Consider student project	Consider student project

<b>Committee(s):</b>	<b>Date(s):</b>
Epping Forest and Commons Committee	13 <sup>th</sup> November 2013
<b>Subject:</b> Outcome of Phase 2 trials of invisible fencing and virtual grids at Burnham Beeches.	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Superintendent of Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common	<b>For Decision</b>

### Summary

Approval for a phased and expanding trial of 'Invisible Fencing' and 'Virtual Cattle Grids' at Burnham Beeches was given by this committee in May 2012.

A report updating members of the 2012 trial of invisible fencing was provided in November 2012.

This latest report provides members with the results of the final, phased trials that took place in July - September 2013 and makes recommendations based on their findings.

#### **Recommendations**

- To delay the final delivery of conservation grazing across Burnham Beeches by one year to allow:
  - Equipment improvements and implications to be assessed.
  - Two options to be considered as mechanisms for final delivery.
- That the Superintendent provides a final recommendation report to this committee in July 2014.

### Main Report

#### **Background**

1. In May 2012 your Committee approved a report from the Superintendent that set out a phased and expanding trial of invisible fencing and virtual cattle grids at Burnham Beeches National Nature Reserve (NNR).
2. Each phase of the trials was designed to test the technical reliability of the invisible fencing equipment under a variety of conditions. The phasing also reflected an increased level of trust in the system as risks, such as traffic volume and boundary complexity, grew.

3. On successful completion of the trial it was proposed that up to 95% of the site would be grazed by livestock by 2014 or shortly thereafter.

### **Current Position**

4. The Trial programme has now been completed and the results summarised as follows: (**See Map 1**)
  - a. **2012 – Trial 1.** This trial was conducted over 2 weeks during July 2012. The area grazed was approximately 10 ha on the west side of the Beeches. It did not include public roads although the invisible fence ran close by.
  - b. **2012 – Trial 2.** This trial ran from September - October 2012. It enclosed approximately 15ha on the North West boundary of the Beeches. It included a 300m length of public road and the use of virtual cattle grids for the first time at the Beeches. An equipment failure occurred before the livestock were introduced to the invisible fence enclosure. This was resolved by replacing the signal generator.
  - c. **2013 – Trial 3.** This trial ran for four weeks i.e. July – August 2013 and enclosed an area of 15ha on the north east boundary of the site. It included a 350m length of public road used heavily by commuters and the use of virtual cattle grids.
  - d. **2013 – Trial 4 (repeat of Trial 1).** This trial ran for 4 weeks during September and October 2013. On one occasion an equipment failure occurred and the cattle were found calmly grazing outside of the invisible fence loop (within the Beeches) during the daily livestock checks.

### **Marketing and Consultation**

5. A marketing programme was delivered to prepare visitors and motorists for the trials. Two large plywood cows were placed on the green roof of the Information Point. Two large plywood cows were placed adjacent to the virtual grids on the public roads for each trial. Extensive use of the 'Grazing it's Amazing' logo and table talkers at the Burnham Beeches Café was also made.
6. A competition for local school children to design a companion for the cut out cow was held and the winning entry announced at the Lord Mayor's 2012 site visit.
7. Letters were sent informing neighbouring land owners of the trial that would shortly take place on their boundary. No comments were received.

### **Monitoring and risk management**

8. Every aspect of the trials was closely monitored to identify and reduce risks and to help to evolve future working practices. The monitoring programme included:
  - Regular checks of all equipment including loops, batteries, signal generators and livestock. These occurred at 00.00, 04.00, 08.00, 12.00, 16.00, 20.00 and 22.00 the first 5 days of each trial period. This



was reduce to checking between 08.00 and 21.00 for the remainder of each trial period

- Ensuring the availability of spare equipment and tools to resolve any equipment failure or identify problems with the livestock.
9. The risk to livestock and others using the public highway was managed by:
- Use of reflective leg bands on the cattle.
  - Use of additional highway signs warning of the presence of livestock.
  - Use of road markings to indicate the location of the 'virtual grids'.
  - Use of gateway fencing to indicate the start and finish points of the trial area.

### **Outcome of the trials.**

10. Generally the trials were a success with livestock behaving well and grazing safely within the invisible fence enclosures. Public reaction was very positive for each trial with no complaints received. The livestock checking procedures worked well and staff excelled themselves by committing to checks in the very early morning hours. The trials also helped to develop new and more effective techniques to bury the cable and test equipment vulnerability to damage and theft etc. The cattle were not disturbed by dogs despite this being an unusual area for dog walkers to come across livestock. No incidents were reported by road users or other visitors during the trial.
11. There was an equipment failure during Trial 2 in 2012 when an early morning 'pre use' check of the equipment showed that the radio signal was not circulating around the cable. The cows were not within the enclosure at the time of this malfunction. Several tests were carried out on both the equipment and battery and it was concluded that the signal generator was faulty. This was replaced with a second device that worked faultlessly throughout the trial.
12. There was an equipment failure during Trial 4 in 2013. This had the potential to allow cows out along the public roads. The cattle were collected in the livestock trailer by the duty rangers and taken to the livestock enclosure at Tower Wood. The equipment was checked the following morning and faulty equipment replaced. The cattle were reintroduced to the trial area within 48 hours.
13. Whilst there were 2 incidents over the 14 weeks of trials our checking procedures ensured that they were detected at a very early stage and in the case of the latter incident, the cattle remained within the Beeches and very close to the trial area.

### **Options.**

14. The two equipment failures mean that it remains important to continue to work closely with the team at Epping Forest and the manufacturer to seek improvements in reliability and design over the coming years. We are currently expecting a number of equipment improvements that will enhance reliability and reduce the time required to set up the underground cabling.
15. It is now thought best to await these improvements before expanding the use of invisible fencing across the site and this will delay completion of the installation

of cables and equipment by 12 months i.e. until December 2014. This would indicate a livestock release date of April 2015.

There are two main options following equipment improvements:

**Option 1(see map)**

16. To reduce the consequences of equipment failure and risk of cattle escape by exploring the possibility of secondary, 'failsafe' loops to prevent cattle wandering away from the site. This would require the use of neighbouring land and perhaps double the number of virtual grids and loops to monitor and maintain each day. This option would add significant expense to the project but is worth exploring with local landowners and the Highway Authority.

**Option 2(see map)**

17. The risk of cattle egress along the public roads could be greatly minimised by excluding the majority of roads from the grazed area. This would reduce the area grazed to about 80% of the site but has a number of significant advantages over Option 1 i.e.

- Only one loop in use at a time (option 1 would have up to 22 loops in operation at all times) thereby significantly reducing the impact on staff resources
- Reduces risk of harm to cattle and road users
- Significantly cheaper to install and maintain
- Requires fewer livestock and reduces overwintering issues
- Gives greater control over grazing to create the desired habitats
- Less impact on visitors
- Provides alternative areas for livestock should a loop malfunction
- Can be expanded incrementally across the site thus spreading costs efficiently over two or more financial years if required.

**Proposals**

18. Amend the implementation date to expand conservation grazing across Burnham Beeches to April 2015 to reflect the knowledge gained from the recent trials
19. Cattle and ponies to be used to graze the existing trial areas during 2014 to test improvements in equipment function and reliability
20. Use this period to determine which of the two options outlined should be used as the final delivery mechanism
21. Report these considerations to this committee in July 2014 and install invisible fencing according to the final approved option.

**Financial and Risk Implications**

22. The cost of proceeding with the options outlined above, is as follows:

**Option 1**

- Trials 1+2 (2012) £5,000
- Trial 3. (2013) £5,000

• Expansion across the site (2014/15). Including additional 'fail safe' loops	£30,000
• Purchase of livestock – 2015/18	£10,000
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>£50,000</u></b>

## Option 2

• Trials 1+2 (2012)	£5,000
• Trial 3. (2013)	£5,000
• Expansion across the site (2014/15).	£15,000
• Purchase of livestock – 2015/18	£5,000
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>£30,000</u></b>

23. The original estimate for this project was £60,000 (May 2012). This estimate has now been significantly reduced to reflect adjustments to the outcome of the trials and in particular a reassessment (reduction) of the number of animals needed to graze the whole site.
24. The Superintendent will apply for 80% capital funding from Natural England's Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) scheme to fund the cost of installing the invisible fencing and virtual grids. The remaining 20% will be provided from local risk budgets. Delivery remains possible without external funding if necessary.
25. The Superintendent will continue to explore a number of livestock overwintering options.

## Legal Implications

26. The installation of the Boviguard invisible fence system required the City of London Corporation to obtain a street works licence from the local highway authority under the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991. This was a largely administrative cost with some legal costs payable to the grantor of the licence. The licence for each highway location is required to enable the laying of cable apparatus in the public highway.
27. An agreement between the City of London and Buckinghamshire County Council has been entered into in respect of the road markings installed in connection with the "virtual grids" and following consultation with relevant Buckinghamshire County Council officers about the proposals.

## Property Implications

28. The Superintendent remains responsible for ensuring that the implementation and use of the invisible fencing along with the subsequent animal grazing continues to be appropriate for the conservation of Burnham Beeches. In addition the operation of the trial should take place with minimal impact on any existing infrastructure or buildings located at the Beeches.

## HR Implications

29. The expansion of the grazing herd (estimated at between 10 and 15 livestock units when up to 95% of the Beeches is grazed) will alter the emphasis of this

element of our work and require more staff time than presently available to ensure its effective management.

30. The Superintendent has liaised closely with the Director of Open Spaces and the Human Resources Department to accommodate this change by minor adjustments to the current staff structure and individual responsibilities.

### **Strategic Implications**

31. The production of the management plan supports the 'Protect, promote and enhance the environment' and 'Support Communities' elements of the 'City Together Strategy'.
32. The plan to expand conservation grazing across Burnham Beeches is a key project within the Departmental Business plan.
33. The provision of conservation grazing across Burnham Beeches will assist the City to:

#### **Economic**

- Prepare for and adapt to the likely impacts of climate change.
- Support local workforces, SME's and community activities.

#### **Environment**

- Encourage best environmental practice in service delivery by the City Corporation, its stakeholders and contractors.
- Encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport.
- Improve or create habitats for wildlife.

#### **Social**

- Enhance and encourage preventative health services, activities and education.
- Consult, inform and engage the community in decision making.
- Reduce crime and fear of crime.

34. An Equality Impact Assessment has been produced for this project and has concluded 'no negative' impacts to the relevant groups.

### **Conclusion**

35. The invisible fencing trials have been conducted without major incident albeit two equipment failures have been recorded during the trials
36. The manufacturers of Boviguard invisible fencing are aim to provide technical improvements to the equipment in time for the 2014 grazing season.
37. The Superintendent proposes to test the updated equipment and explore two further delivery options.
38. Costs for existing project delivery are likely to be significantly less than originally anticipated in the May 2012 report.
39. The Superintendent will make a final recommendation to this committee in July 2014 so that the expanded conservation grazing scheme at Burnham Beeches can be delivered by April 2015.

**Background Papers:**

- Report to Epping Forest and Commons Committee – *A 5 year trial of 'Invisible Fencing' at Burnham Beeches. Expansion of the Conservation Grazing Scheme at Burnham Beeches.* May 2012.
- Report to Epping Forest and Commons Committee - *Outcome of the Phase 1 trial of Invisible fencing/virtual grid trials at Burnham Beeches.* Nov 2012.

**Contact:**

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# Burnham Beeches

**KEY**

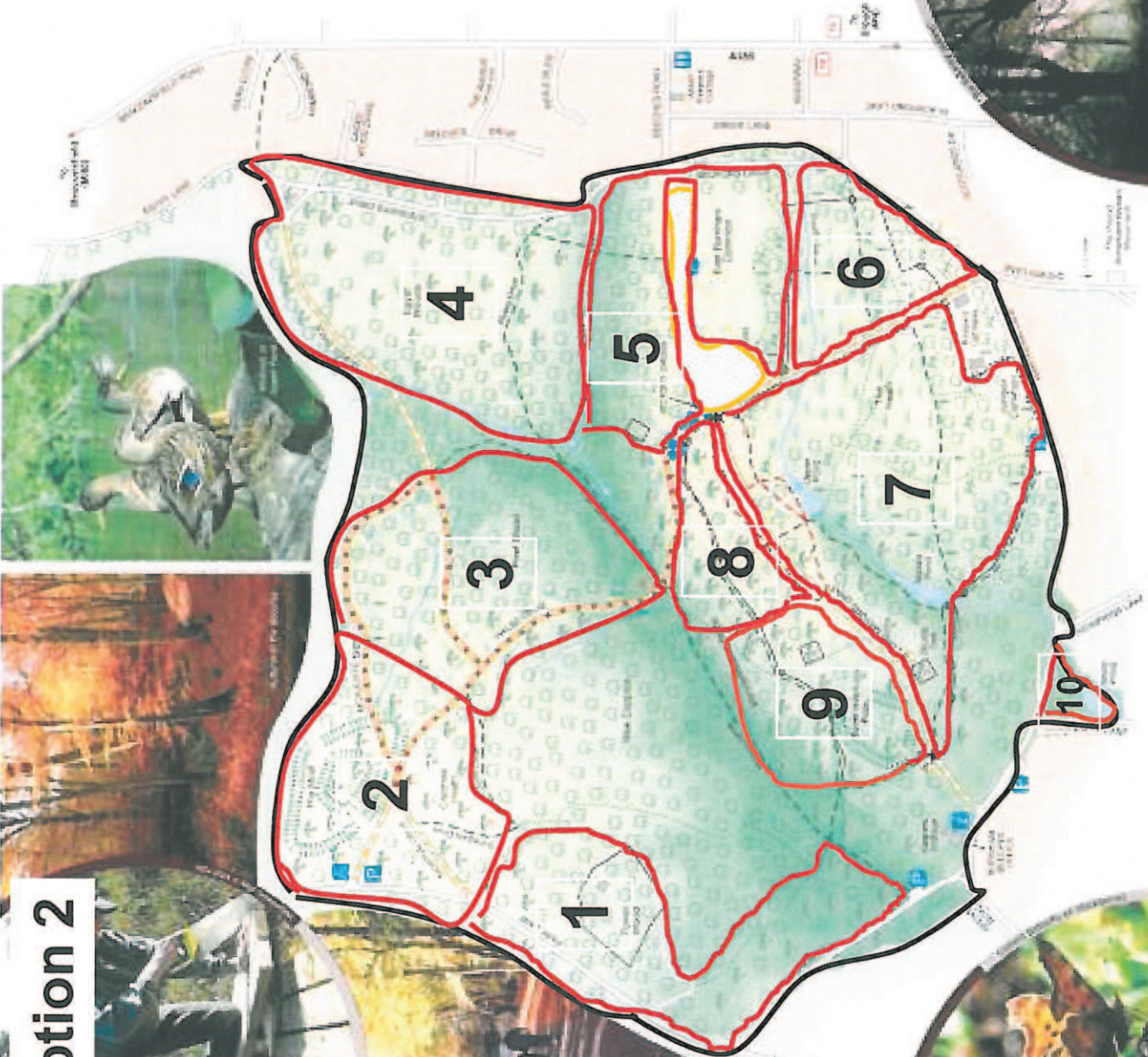
- Virtual cattle grids
- Failsafe loops
- Boundary fences



Option 1



# Option 2



Icon	Description
	Blue square icon
	Green square icon
	Yellow square icon
	Red square icon
	Blue circle icon
	Green circle icon
	Yellow circle icon
	Red circle icon
	Blue triangle icon
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	Red triangle icon
	Blue star icon
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# Burnham Beeches



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# Agenda Item 12

<b>Committee(s):</b>	<b>Date(s):</b>
Epping Forest and Commons Committee Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee	12 November 2013
<b>Subject:</b> Review of Pilot Study - Use of Secondary Authority Powers to introduce Dog Control Orders at Burnham Beeches.	<b>Public</b>
<b>A Report of:</b> The Superintendent of Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common	<b>For Discussion</b>
<b><u>Summary</u></b>	
<p>This report informs members of the proposal to introduce Dog Control Orders at Burnham Beeches National Nature Reserve using the recently acquired powers provided under Secondary Authority status.</p> <p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <p>1. Member's views on the content of this report be received.</p>	

## **Main Report**

### **Background**

1. Burnham Beeches is located in Buckinghamshire and is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, National Nature Reserve and Special Area of Conservation. In recent years it has become an increasingly popular area for dog walking due in part to the very special nature of the site and in particular because it remains one of the very few open spaces in the District that provides free car parking Monday to Friday each week (excluding bank holidays).
2. In 2010 Members of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee approved the Burnham Beeches management plan 2010 – 2020. That document sets out the detail by which the City intends to achieve a balance between the needs of recreation and conservation whilst meeting its legal obligations.
3. The growing attraction of the site to dog walkers and the associated challenges this presents has been managed at the site in a variety of ways. In 2004 and following extensive consultation with visitors, the site introduced a 'Dog Behaviour Code' that set out the standards of dog behaviour expected of owners when visiting the site. More recently the Open Spaces Dog Policy and associated agreement with the Kennel Club restated the City's commitment to healthy exercise and good behaviour for dogs and their owners.
4. The Common Council of the City of London was designated as a Secondary Authority for the purposes of Chapter 1 of Part 6 of the Clean Neighbourhoods

and Environment Act 2005 from 31<sup>st</sup> May 2012. This enables the Common Council to make Dog Control Orders (DCO's) in its open spaces outside the City where the relevant Primary Authority has not already made an Order in respect of the same offence on the same land.

5. South Bucks District Council (SBDC) is the Primary Authority for Burnham Beeches and has confirmed that it does not intend to exercise these powers in the foreseeable future.
6. Given the sensitivity of Burnham Beeches and its national conservation designations it was agreed that Burnham Beeches should pilot on behalf of the Open Spaces Department, the approach to implementation of DCO's. Appendix 1 sets out a framework and timetable for how consultation both informal and statutory, together with development of an enforcement strategy and implementation of DCO's, will need to be managed.
7. Dog Control Orders will be among those abolished by the relevant provisions of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Bill currently before Parliament.
8. Discussions are taking place with officials about the extent to which the Corporation could be permitted to make use of the new powers for the protection of public spaces in respect of its open spaces outside the City
9. The new powers will replace an array of existing powers, including anti-social behaviour orders and injunctions, drinking banning orders, individual support orders, litter clearing notices, defacement removal notices, 'Section 30' dispersal orders, premises closure orders, gating orders and dog control orders.
10. The new powers are likely to be introduced in autumn 2014 and whilst they will alter the detail of how dog control issues are managed it is sensible to assume that the principle of greater control over dog behaviour on public open spaces will remain. In addition the preparation for the introduction of the new powers is likely to require a similar approach to that of DCO's particularly in terms of informing the visiting public, consulting on their implementation and achieving improvements through enforcement.
11. On that basis it remains appropriate for Burnham Beeches to continue to pilot the introduction of DCO's to 'live test' the broad challenges presented by the use of enforcement tools to improve dog behaviour. This learning can then be applied across the Open Spaces as required albeit it would be sensible to do so via the replacement Act.

### **Current Position**

12. Burnham Beeches continues to welcome dog walkers and provides the following services and facilities:
  - An internationally important Open Space for their enjoyment.
  - A 'Dog Behaviour' Code.
  - A Ranger Service that understands the needs of dog walkers (including the management of lost dogs) and other site users.

- Dog bins/bags service for free disposal of dog waste.
  - A 'dog friendly' zone at the café including water bowls, lead ties and water bowls.
  - A range of dog friendly events.
13. The latest visitor numbers survey (2012) indicates that there are 585,000 visits to the site each year. The survey also indicates that around 215,000 dog visits occur each year amounting to 960 dogs/ha each year.
14. A report produced by Footprint Ecology demonstrates that Burnham Beeches is under immense and growing visitor pressure and broadly outlines the impact of dogs in terms of their existing and potential impact on wildlife, habitats and visitors.
15. The majority of visiting dog walkers attempt to ensure their pets behave according to the approved Dog Behaviour Code. However, a significant number find it a challenge to meet these standards and this manifests itself in the following common issues:
- Dogs disturbing/chasing wildlife/livestock or similar
  - Lost dogs (reported as such by site visitors)
  - Dogs running loose with 'no owner in sight'
  - Dogs 'disturbing/intimidating' other site users.
  - Injured dogs (fights, traffic accidents)
  - Dog mess being left on site
  - Dogs without collars and identification(a byelaw offence)
  - Dog noise – (nuisance barking)
16. 415 incidents have been formally recorded in the last 2 years at the Beeches and in all probability this represents only a fraction of the total number occurring each year. Each incident places a demand on the site's resources.

### **Byelaws**

17. Burnham Beeches has specific byelaws that set out the legal standards of behaviour expected of dog owners when on site. They require that:
- Dogs are kept under effective control.
  - Dogs wear a collar that bears the name and address of the owner.
  - Hunting or chasing of 'animals' game or birds does not occur.
18. The definition of 'effective control' is both subjective and problematic when it comes to the management of dog behaviour issues. It is for that reason that the site's Dog Behaviour Code defines effective control as being 'within sight of the owner at all times and coming back immediately when called'. However, this is not a legal definition and therefore difficult to enforce.
19. Contraventions of byelaws are dealt with at the local Magistrate's Court and a fine is applied if found guilty. This process is time consuming and can appear to be very heavy handed. For this reason the site's byelaws tend only to be used for the most serious dog related offences such as attacks on visitors,



wildlife and livestock. Byelaws have therefore proved to be ineffective for preventing repetitive, nuisance type behaviours.

20. For these reasons it is recommended that the existing byelaws are complemented by DCO's. Only byelaws that deal with the same offence on the same land as a DCO would lapse. The existing byelaws at Burnham Beeches would therefore remain in force.

### **Proposed Dog Control Orders**

21. It is proposed that all five of the different types of DCO's (listed below) would be appropriate for Burnham Beeches and used to form the basis of the informal and formal consultation processes i.e.

**Schedule 1.** *Failure to remove dog faeces.* This control could be applied to the entire Open Space.

**Schedule 2.** *Failure to keep a dog on a lead in an area so designated.* This control could be applied to part or all, of the site

**Schedule 3.** *Failure to put and keep a dog on a lead when directed to do so by an authorised officer (the length of the lead can also be stipulated).* This control could be applied to part or all, of the site.

**Schedule 4.** *Permitting a dog to enter land from which dogs are excluded.* An example of where this control might be applied is the existing fenced enclosure area adjacent to the café.

**Schedule 5.** *Taking more than a specified number of dogs on to the land.* We are proposing a maximum of 4 dogs.

22. DCO's can be seasonal or applied at different periods in the year or week At Burnham Beeches it is proposed that they would all apply all year round. DCO's can also apply to the whole site or only part of the site. Members will note that it is proposed that Schedules 1 and 5 should be applied to the whole site and Schedules 2, 3 and 4 are to be applied to specific areas.
23. It is possible to formalise exemptions for 'assistance dogs' where DCO's are in place.
24. Schedule 5 may be used to minimise the attractiveness of the open space to commercial dog walkers

### **Consultation**

25. Before making DCO's the Epping Forest and Commons Committee must be satisfied that their introduction is justified and proportionate. As part of that process the Superintendent must consult all other Primary and Secondary

Authorities in the area and publish a notice of the proposals in a local newspaper, allowing at least 28 days for representations. This is known as the statutory consultation process

26. Those seeking to introduce DCO's on their land are also encouraged to seek public feedback prior to the formal consultation. This latter process is referred to as 'informal consultation'.
27. At Burnham Beeches the informal consultation process is highly significant due to the large number of visitors and the site's importance and sensitivities as a National Nature Reserve and Special Area of Conservation. Concern over the impact of dog walking on the rare habitats and wildlife of the Beeches is a substantial influence on the areas to be covered by Schedules 2 and 3.
28. The Burnham Beeches Consultation Group has been involved with the informal consultation process from a very early stage and remains generally supportive of the introduction of all 5 DCO Schedules albeit there are individual differences of opinion as to the exact delivery details.
29. The Superintendent has liaised closely with the Kennel Club during the consideration of DCO's and currently there is disagreement about the impact of dog walking on wildlife (and visitor experience in general) and hence what a reasonable use of Schedules 2 and 3 would look like 'on the ground'. It is the Kennel Club's view that there is little or no harmful impact caused by heavy use of the Nature Reserve for dog walking. They therefore wish for minimal use of Schedule 2 in particular.
30. The City's view is the opposite of the Kennel Club's and it believes that proportionate use of Schedule 2 must include consideration of the impact of dog walking on wildlife as well as on the majority of people who visit the site without a dog. This matter will be resolved at a meeting with the Kennel Club in December 2013.
31. To provide some objectivity to this discussion the Superintendent has commissioned a survey of visitors to Burnham Beeches to establish their views. This survey is on-going and on completion will inform the final geographic spread of all DCO Schedules across the site.

### **Enforcement**

32. Once the issue highlighted above has been settled the matter of enforcing DCO's can be considered. The main issues are discussed below.
33. The penalty in relation to any offence in a DCO is, on summary conviction, a fine not exceeding level 3 on the standard scale – currently £1,000. However the legislation also allows the option of offering the offender a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) as a means of avoiding prosecution in the Magistrate's Court.
34. The amount of the fixed penalty payable is the amount specified by the Authority which made the DCO – or if no amount is specified, £75. The amount would typically stand at between £50 and £80 per offence perhaps with an

early payment reduction of 50% if paid within 10 days. The precise amounts – should DCO’s be introduced at Burnham Beeches – have not yet been finalised but is likely to err towards the maximum.

35. Primary Authorities can enforce their own DCO’s. Secondary Authorities can enforce their own DCO’s, and those made by the Primary Authority. Enforcement is by authorised officers – which includes authorised employees, PCSO’s and other persons authorised under arrangements made with the Authority. FPN’s are payable to the Primary or Secondary Authority whose officer gave the notice. Again, further thought needs to be given to the most appropriate arrangements for Burnham Beeches, should DCO’s be introduced.
36. The use of FPN’s would be appropriate for most offences. Automatic prosecutions would be reserved for the most serious incidents. It is hoped that this ‘twin approach’ will be a significant help in reducing the number of dog related incidents and restoring the balance between the various needs of site visitors and wildlife.
37. As part of the proposals to introduce DCO’s it is necessary to produce an ‘Enforcement Strategy’. The final version of this strategy will be reported to the Epping Forest and Commons Committee in January 2014.
38. The aim of the Enforcement Strategy will be to encourage responsible dog ownership on the site by proportionate enforcement of DCO’s and thereby reduce the number of dog related incidents. A typical strategy would contain the following elements:
  - **Statements** of intent, and summary of all consultations
  - **Descriptions** of powers to be used, and how, where and when they are to be applied
  - **Fines and enforcement** procedures and onwards to magistrate’s court if required
  - **Resources** - budget, staffing, training
  - **Administration** - record keeping and use of receipts

**Financial and Risk Implications**

39. The cost of the DCO consultation and enforcement process is estimated at £21,000 including officer time, training, consultation costs and the provision of appropriate signage and other materials. These costs are being met from local risk budgets and are set out in Table 1 below:

**Table 1**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Research and informal Consultation (Footprint Ecology)	£7000
Management time (estimated at 30 days)	£7500
Staff Training (est)	£4000



Administration (set up)	£2500
<b>Total estimated costs</b>	<b>£21,000</b>

40. An income of around £2,000/annum is anticipated from Fixed Penalty Notice payments.
41. The development of appropriate administration procedures is key to the success of the proposals. The Superintendent is considering this matter with the City Solicitor and District Enforcement who currently oversee the site's Parking Charge Notice administration.
42. There will then be an on-going cost to administer the scheme although it is believed that income from the FPN's will cover this.

### HR Implications

43. Staff at Burnham Beeches have been consulted throughout this process and are aware of the implications on their roles. Minor adjustments to the staff structure have also been made.
44. The Rangers at Burnham Beeches currently issue parking tickets for failure to 'pay and display'. They will also enforce the DCO's (perhaps with the assistance of local PCSO's) and issue the FPN's. This will require additional 'appropriate training'.

### Strategic Implications

45. The proposals support the Strategic aims of the City and Open Spaces Department by:
  1. **Quality.** Providing, safe, secure and accessible Open Spaces and services on behalf of London and the Nation.
  2. **Inclusion.** Involving communities and partners in developing a sense of place through the care and management of our sites
  3. **Environment.** Delivering sustainable working practices to promote the variety of life and protect the Open Spaces for the enjoyment of future generations
  4. **Promotion.** Promote opportunities to value and enjoy the outdoors for recreation, learning and healthy living
  5. **People.** Manage, develop and empower a capable and motivated work force to achieve high standards of safety and performance.

### Conclusion

46. Dog walking at Burnham Beeches has grown in popularity over recent years. Incidents related to dog walking are recorded by staff and remain high despite proactive management such as the site's Dog Behaviour Code, waste removal and other 'dog friendly' services.
47. The site's byelaws have not been effective in reducing repetitive, nuisance behaviour and the use of DCO's at Burnham Beeches is proposed as a complementary enforcement mechanism.

48. DCO's offer additional controls and a more flexible approach to enforcement compared to the byelaws. This provides an opportunity to establish a balance between the needs of the many site users.
49. The Kennel Club are opposed to extensive use of Schedules 2 and 3 and to that end the Superintendent is seeking the views of the public before statutory consultation and introduction.
50. The cost of implementation of DCO's at Burnham Beeches is currently estimated at £21,000.
51. The use of Senior Officers to manage the pilot DCO process has also placed a heavy demand on local resources and this is likely to be the case for any Open Spaces that elect to follow suit. However, the lessons learned and issues resolved by the pilot scheme should help to reduce this demand in future albeit it is likely to remain a significant commitment.
52. The Superintendent intends to seek final approval for the implementation of DCO's at Burnham Beeches in January 2014 with the aim of introducing them on site in April 2014.
53. Dog Control Orders will be among those abolished by the relevant provisions of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Bill (ABCP) currently before Parliament and greater clarity on the implications of this is desirable. The Remembrancer will continue to monitor progress of the ABCP through parliament and advise officers of its implications

**Appendix 1.** Timetable for the delivery of Dog Control Orders at Burnham Beeches

**Contact:**

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*andy.barnard@cityoflondon.gov.uk*

## Dog Control Orders – Timetable.

Action	Who	Date	Comments
<b>Stage 1 – Informal approaches</b>			
1. Liaise with District Enforcement	AB	July 2012	Administration and enforcement issues.
2. Staff Consultation	AB	July 2012	Ensure all staff are kept up to date and have the opportunity to influence the impact on their roles.
3. Contact SBDC in writing	AB	Aug 2012	Forewarn of introduction of DCO's and impending letter of formal consultation in 2013. Ask if they have any suitable enforcement officers whose time we could buy.
4. Contact Parish Councils (FPC and Burnham)	AB	Aug 2012	Forewarn of impending formal consultation process.
5. Thames Valley Police	AB	Aug 2012	Forewarn of impending formal consultation process and ask if we can buy PCSO time and admin procedures
6. City Solicitor	AB	Aug 2012	PC guidance approved + other DEFRA docs provided. No impact re CROW – proceed as independent open space 16/6/12
7. EFCC report	AB	Sept 2012	Setting out the intention and basis by which we want to apply DCO's at BB and building on SI's May '12 report – see file for guidance.
8. Staff Consultation	AB	Nov 2012	Ensure all staff are kept up to date and have the opportunity to influence the impact on their roles
9. City Solicitor/Director of OS	SI/CS	Jan 2013	Determine how best to administer of enforcement i.e. local or central, internal or external (informed by 1-4 above).
10. Devise administration with D-E and enforcement procedures etc,	AB	Jan - Feb 13	Based on outcomes of 1 - 6 above.
<b>Stage 2 – Formal Consultation</b>			
11. Produce a first draft enforcement strategy, justification and associated maps.	AB/MH	April 13	Use as the basis for all formal consultation
12. Seek Kennel Club comments and approval for enforcement strategy	AB	April – Oct 13	Stress proportionality etc. <b>Disagreement continues despite proposed survey approach.</b>
13. Seek BBCG general approval for first draft	AB	April - May 2013	
14. Design informal public consultation exercise	AB et al	June - July 2013	Design to measure opinion re various Schedules and proposals for zoning
15. Public consultation. Collate results and produce stats + final report	AB/CM HR	July – Dec 2013	Measure opinion on the various individual Schedules and proposals for zoning
16. Informal update for Bucks Local Access Forum	AB	Oct-Nov 13	Based on early survey results. Jonathon Clark from BCC to arrange – 01296 387695
17. Use survey data to review/update Dog Management Strategy (DMS) and consult staff	AB	Nov-Dec 13	Use old version for main text and update DCO implementation details section. Ensure staff meeting timing fits.
18. Seek BBCG comment/approval	AB	11 Dec 13	
19. Meet KC to discuss survey outcome and proposed DMS	AB/SI/BW	16 Dec 13	Last chance to agree the final approach.
20. Seek EFCC approval of DMS	AB	13 Jan 14	
21. Agree final admin processes with D-E and sort/sign contract	AB/MH	Sept 13 - Jan 2014	+ Include discussion on use of video badges etc
22. Agree wording of all DC Orders applying to the site	AB + CS'citr	Dec - Jan 2014	
23. Deliver staff training	MH	Dec –Jan 14	
24. Formal written consultation with SBDC	AB	Jan - Feb 2014	Usually just a letter asking for opinion but AB may present to panels if required
25. Formal written consultation – PC's	AB	Jan–Feb 14	Usually just a letter but meeting(s) if required
26. Arrange public notice of intention to enforce	AB	Feb 2013	Best done through local papers and on site notices.
<b>Stage 3 - Implementation</b>			
27. Publicise enforcement date and deliver marketing campaign	CM	Feb - April 2013	Local Newspapers and site posters etc
28. Enforcement commences		April 2014	

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<b>Committee(s):</b>	<b>Date(s):</b>
Epping Forest and Commons Committee	13 Nov 2013
South Bucks District Council - Development Management Local Plan update.	Public
The Superintendent of Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common.	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Summary</b>	
<p>The purpose of this report is to update members concerning progress with South Bucks District Council's Development Management Local Plan (DMLP).</p>	
<b>Recommendation(s)</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members views on this report will be received.</li> </ul>	

## Main Report

### Background

1. South Bucks District Council, one of four local planning authorities affecting Burnham Beeches, is currently developing the 'local element' of their Core Planning Strategy. This 'Development Management Local Plan' (DMLP) will set the context and determine planning permission criteria over the next decade or so, on land in close proximity to Burnham Beeches. There currently exists an opportunity for the City of London to influence the DMLP to minimise and/or mitigate harm to Burnham Beeches.
2. SBDC is required to take into account the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (The Habitats Regulations). This sets out a legal requirement to protect SACs (Special Areas of Conservation) such as Burnham Beeches, from harm. This includes control of development that may have a detrimental impact on the SAC 'either alone or in combination with other developments'. The features protected under the Regulations 'the citation' are 'Acidic Beech Woodland and associated Epiphytes'.
3. The Regulations make it clear that SBDC, as the controlling influence on planned development, are the Competent Authority and as such can be held responsible for causing harm to the site.
4. SBDC took Counsel at an early stage and subsequently accepted their responsibilities under the EU Regulations. Your Superintendent has also ensured the involvement of Natural England (NE) (the body that oversees the management of SSSI's) and the Environment Agency (EA) (who consider

flood, pollution and other environmental issues) to ensure that the development of the DMLP also reflects their requirements.

### **Current Position**

5. The Superintendent and Conservation Officer continue to work closely with all parties on this matter and are of the view that the final version of the DMLP should seek to protect the Beeches from harm by limiting the type and scale of development in the vicinity of the SAC. Those developments that are allowed should contribute to the long term care and maintenance of the site (as mitigation).
6. This approach demands evidence of 'likely significant impact' of harm from developments upon the SAC. Unfortunately, the science required to provide this is largely absent so, following guidance from NE and the EA, SBDC and the City of London are in the process of establishing the following baseline data to support the case to protect the site:
  - i. Demographic data
  - ii. Hydrological data
  - iii. Visitor access preferences (where they walk, what numbers etc)
  - iv. Soil health
  - v. Beech tree health
  - vi. Lichen analysis (air quality)
7. The outcome of this research will be available from January 2014 and used to inform the draft DMLP. The research has been designed to indicate the effect of the most common impacts of development upon the features included in the EU citation.
8. Further research may be needed as additional knowledge gaps are highlighted. The implications of this are set out later in this report.
9. In the interim period the Superintendent will strive to ensure that any current planning applications are examined in light of the issues being considered by the draft DMLP process. It has been a particular challenge to ensure consistent comments are provided by NE and this will remain a focus of activity.

### **Proposals**

10. To continue to work closely with SBDC, NE and the EA to ensure that the research findings inform the draft DMLP as failure to do so may lead to long-term and permanent harm to the Beeches from inappropriate development.
11. To keep members updated as to progress on the development of the draft DMLP as appropriate. SBDC's timetable remains uncertain but the next update to this committee is anticipated in May 2014.

### **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

12. The proposals support the Strategic aims of the City and Open Spaces Department by:

**Quality.** Providing, safe, secure and accessible Open Spaces and services on behalf of London and the Nation.

**Inclusion.** Involving communities and partners in developing a sense of place through the care and management of our sites

**Environment.** Delivering sustainable working practices to promote the variety of life and protect the Open Spaces for the enjoyment of future generations

## Implications

13. Research and staff costs for Burnham Beeches and SBDC for 2013/14 amount to:

Research/Resource	City of London	SBDC	Cost
Demographic data and access patterns	X		£5000
Soil nutrient and compaction data	X		£8000
Lichen monitoring and data	X		£3000
Beech Tree Health	X		£1000
Staff time	X	X	£17000 (£5000+£12000)
Hydrological Study		X	£10000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£22000</b>	<b>£22000</b>	<b>£44000</b>

14. The Superintendent has sought to gain value for money by combining the demographic element of this research with information required for the implementation of Dog Control Orders at Burnham Beeches.
15. To deter developers in the longer-term it is possible that additional research evidence will be required and costs are likely to accrue over the next year or more. These will have to be met from local risk budgets
16. It may also be necessary to seek specialist counsel if the City of London is to be content that the final version of the DMLP is sufficiently robust in its defence of the Open Space. This cost may need to be met from local risk budgets.
17. It is likely that this same process will commence with the remaining three local authorities and whilst the research costs should diminish the impact on the Superintendent and his management team in terms of time and resources dedicated to the issue is likely to remain significant for the foreseeable future.

18. The financial issues highlighted above were presented to the Open Spaces and Policy and Resource Committees in their meeting of October 2013 where it was approved that a sum of £25,000 will be made available (ring fenced for this use) in 2013/14 for use across the Open Spaces Department.

### **Conclusion**

19. Partnership working with SBDC, NE and the EA to inform the DMLP is making good progress.
20. This issue has placed a significant workload on the management team at Burnham Beeches and has required unplanned expenditure in the current financial year. These pressures are likely to continue over the next 2-3 years as the three remaining planning authorities commence similar work.
21. A recent decision by the OS and P&R committees has made £25,000 available (ring-fenced) to the Open Spaces to help support the cost of this work in 2013/14.
22. In the interim i.e. until the DPLP is implemented, the Superintendent will continue to seek consistent planning decisions across all organisations to minimise any harmful impacts upon Burnham Beeches.

### **Appendices - None**

### **Background Papers:**

- i. Planning Commitments for City of London Open Spaces – October 2013. Open Spaces and City Gardens and Policy and Resource Committees.

### **Andy Barnard**

Superintendent of Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common

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**COULSDON COMMON CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE****Wednesday, 26 June 2013**

**Minutes of the meeting of the Coulsdon Common Consultative Committee held at the Merlewood Estate Office, Ninehams Road, Caterham, Surrey, CR3 5LN at 7.00pm**

**Present****Members:**

Alderman Gordon Haines (Chairman)  
 Sylvia Moys  
 Rachel Adams  
 Chris Baguley  
 Gwyneth Fookes  
 Malcolm Jennings  
 Brian Longman

Sarah Lovatt  
 Dr Jane McLauchlin  
 Phil Rathbone  
 Avril Sleeman  
 Councillor Chris Wright  
 Richard Carter

**Officers:**

Bob Warnock - Superintendent of City Commons  
 Allan Cameron - Head Ranger  
 Alistair MacLellan - Town Clerk's Department

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Deputy Stanley Ginsburg, Deputy Catherine McGuinness and Councillor Hilary Turner.

**2. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

There were no declarations.

**3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The public minutes of the meeting held on 10 October 2012 were agreed as an accurate record subject to Dr Jane McLauchlin's surname being spelt correctly on page four.

**Matters Arising****Superintendent's Update**

The Superintendent of City Commons gave a brief update to the Committee. He noted that the West Wickham Common Consultative Committee had been formed and had met for the first time a fortnight ago. He informed the Committee that volunteer training courses had commenced on topics such as tree inspection, and that a Committee Visit had taken place on Kenley Airfield on 15 June. He concluded by informing the Committee that the minutes from each of the new Consultative Committees would be shared to ensure each committee membership was aware of current issues across the City Commons.

#### 4. **COULSDON COMMONS CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE PROPOSED TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Superintendent of City Commons introduced the proposed Terms of Reference of the Coulsdon Common Consultative Committee, noting in particular the format of an informal summer consultation meeting centred around a walk on the Common, coupled with a formal winter meeting at which current issues could be discussed.

In response to a question, the Superintendent said that if circumstances required it, reports could be brought to the informal summer meeting and, should it be necessary, issues could be dealt with in between meetings via email.

In response to a remark from a Committee Member, the Superintendent agreed to consider amending the Committee membership to include representatives from other local parish councils.

#### **APPROVED**

#### 5. **CITY COMMONS MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES FOR 2013/14**

The Superintendent of City Commons introduced the agenda report on the City Commons Management Priorities for 2013/14, noting that volunteers were now part of the 'Making Connections' group on the scorecard, rather than the 'People' group. The scorecard would be used to assess the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) of the City Commons, and the evaluation of the KPIs would be reported to the January meetings of the Committee. In response to a question the Superintendent confirmed that the KPIs included engagement with local stakeholders through site audits.

The Superintendent then introduced the management priorities for the City Commons. Overall management priorities for the City Commons include:

- *Visitor Experience* – implementing systems of inspection ahead of Green Flag assessments.
- *Marketing* – the development of a consistent 'brand' across all of the City Commons and its application in the use of Facebook and Twitter.
- *Condition Assessments* – implementation of systems of inspection to assess condition of City Commons sites against ESS, SSSI and Cross Compliance criteria.
- *Conservation Grazing* – the Head Ranger outlined plans to relocate breeding cattle to Epping Forest and the creation of a corral there.
- *Tree Wardens* – the Superintendent noted corporate concern over tree diseases such as Oak Processionary Moth and Ash Dieback and highlighted the survey work being undertaken involving City Commons volunteers.
- *Business Plan* – the Superintendent noted that the current Divisional Plan needed to be updated so that it was in line with the new 'Score Card'.

- *Visitor Survey* – this had been completed and an analysis of the data collected over the past two years would come to then next Committee in January.
- *Consultation* – work would be undertaken by City Commons staff to ensure that changes to the three new consultative committee's ensured City Commons staff worked more effectively with local communities.
- *Volunteers* – the Superintendent noted that a Volunteer Improvement Plan would be submitted to the January 2014 meeting of the Committee.
- *Education, Recreation & Events* – the Superintendent reported that the procedure for the provision of activities had been updated and that the City Commons staff would be maintaining the current annual provision of events.

The Superintendent concluded his outline of corporate management priorities by briefly discussing the benchmark corporate standards of sustainability, finance, health & safety, personnel and communication. He noted that a Head Ranger was responsible for each of these and that this involved oversight of improvement plans for each area.

The Head Ranger then outlined specific management priorities for the Coulsdon Commons. These include:

#### *Farthing Downs & New Hill*

- The continuation of the ten-year management plan for grassland and scrub management.
- Maintenance works at the “visitor hub” at Farthing Downs.

#### *Coulsdon Common*

- The creation installation of wood pasture at The Grove. The Superintendent noted that there was an issue with the planning application for fencing by the roadside.
- City Commons staff are working with a water consultant, Thames Water and the Environment Agency to resolve a flooding issue in Stites Hill Road in the south eastern area of the site, which is prone to flooding by foul water sewage.
- The Head Ranger introduced proposals to install posts along Holmfield Road to help protect the Common from erosion. In response to a question from the Chairman, the Head Ranger confirmed that the proposed solution would not inhibit strimming of the grass verges.
- Coulsdon Common Consultation Area, as discussed on the site visit of the same day. Consultation has begun on developing a model for the management of the area adjacent to the Merlewood Estate Office. The consultation centres around the appropriateness or not of the introduction of a grazing programme in this area and will include such options as the use of the “invisible fence” system currently being trialled at Epping Forest and Burnham Beeches. The Superintendent

suggested a site meeting to Burnham Beeches could be useful for the Committee to learn more about the “invisible fence” project.

### *Kenley Common*

- Drainage and vegetation management work continues to be undertaken by City Commons staff to help conserve the heritage features on Kenley Common.
- City Commons staff are committed to retaining and restoring open areas of species rich grassland on Whyteleafe Bank and protecting the residential boundary by carrying out tree safety management.

### *Riddlesdown*

- A review on boundaries and site safety was being undertaken to ensure the site is protected and the safety of people and livestock. The Head Ranger noted that a form of height control barrier for vehicles was being considered. In response to an observation the Superintendent said that whilst a height control feature would not be a 100% guarantee of site security, although he was confident it could act as a deterrent. He noted that the barrier was a compromise between site security and aesthetics.

A brief discussion of the Coulsdon Commons management priorities followed during which a member of the Committee said that there had been a noticeable increase in traffic using Stites Hill and Holmfield Road. In response to this observation the Head Ranger noted that the installation of a short section of rumble strips had been installed through a partnership with Croydon Council. The concrete sections had been laid parallel to the road edging to encourage drivers to reduce their speed and to protect the Common from erosion.

## **6. FRIENDS' GROUPS UPDATES**

### **6.1 Kenley Airfield Friends Group (Chris Baguley)**

Chris Baguley reported to the Committee the passing of Mr Mike Simpson due to illness and expressed his sense of loss for a man who had been a dedicated Friend of Kenley Airfield.

Mr Baguley updated the Committee on recent work undertaken by the Friends of Kenley Airfield. This included:

- The Friends had handed the Heritage Lottery Application project over to the City of London given its greater resources and experience in such applications. Mr Baguley noted that the finalised application had been submitted on 6 June and the decision would be announced in September 2013.
- The Friends continued to give presentations on the history of the Airfield.

- The Annual General Meeting had been held recently, at which over 65 persons heard a presentation from a local Wing Commander. Mr Baguley noted that he had been elected Secretary at the meeting and furthermore the Friends had authorised expenditure for dog waste bins on the airfield.
- The Group was holding an exhibition at a local fun day in July 2013.
- The airfield was hosting an air show on the weekend of 7/8 September 2013.
- The Group was undertaking a Grand Litter Pick over the airfield on 29 June 2013.

## 6.2 Friends of Farthing Downs (Ian Payne)

Mr Payne updated the Committee on current issues being dealt with by the Friends of Farthing Downs. These include:

- The steps on Downs Road have been identified for upgrading.
- The Friends had noted more pressure on Farthing Downs due to new housing schemes such as Cane Hill in Coulsdon.
- The Friends were exploring the feasibility of a North Downs National Park.
- The Friends were currently involved in developing a nature trail in partnership with Croydon Council in respect of Happy Valley.
- The Friends were the subject of a £400 promotion campaign at Coulsdon South Train Station. The display frame was being provided by the station operator.
- The recent pop-up Cake Sale had been a success but it is unlikely to be repeated due to the need for a Level Two Food Hygiene certificate.

## 7. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

### Access to Legal Expertise

In response to a question from the Committee regarding the ability of the City of London Corporation to provide specific legal expertise to local societies and resident groups to help defend and preserve the Green Belt, the Superintendent advised that much of the legal basis for the management of the City of London Open Spaces arose from specific Acts of Parliament that governed particular Open Spaces (e.g. Hampstead Heath, Queen's Park), and that any legal expertise that did exist within the Corporation would be centred on the interpretation of those Acts in particular.

8. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**  
There was no urgent business.

9. **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 12 February 2014 at 7.00pm at the Merlewood Estate Office, Ninehams Road, Caterham, Surrey, CR3 5LN.

**The meeting closed at 8.35pm**

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Chairman

**Contact Officer: Alistair MacLellan**  
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DRAFT

**ASHTEAD COMMON CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**  
**Monday, 1 July 2013**

Minutes of the meeting of the Ashtead Common Consultative Committee held at Ashtead Estate Office, Woodfield Road, Ashtead, Surrey, KT21 2DU on Monday, 1 July 2013 at 6.30pm

**Present**

**Members:**

Alderman Gordon Haines (Chairman)  
Barbara Newman  
Douglas Mobsby  
David Baker  
Bob Eberhard  
Wyn James  
Paul Krause  
Anthony McLelland  
Cllr John Northcott  
Pippa Woodall

**Officers:**

Bob Warnock - Superintendent of City Commons  
Andy Thwaites - Head Ranger, Open Spaces  
Alistair MacLellan - Town Clerk's Department

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Deputy Stanley Ginsburg, Joseph Byllam-Barnes, Helen Cocker and Councillor Chris Townsend.

**2. DECLARATIONS BY MEMBERS OF ANY PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA**

There were no declarations.

**3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 29 January 2013 were agreed as an accurate record.

**4. ASHTEAD COMMON CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE PROPOSED TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Superintendent of City Commons introduced the draft Terms of Reference of the Ashtead Common Consultative Committee. He noted the proposed format of a Summer site visit to the Common coupled with a Winter meeting at Guildhall to discuss the upcoming work programme for the coming year.

The Committee proceeded to discuss the draft Terms of Reference and the following points were made:



- The Superintendent was considering the degree of input afforded to local schools.
- The Superintendent would research and report back to the Committee the proposed final membership, and he would focus his research on individuals and organisations with a demonstrable affiliation to Ashted Common.
- The Chairman noted that he welcomed the encouragement and involvement of young people in the management and enjoyment of the Common.
- It was noted under 1(A) that 'Association' should be in the singular.
- It was suggested that the Environment Agency be involved, at least informally, in the business of the Committee and that the Terms of Reference could be redrafted to reflect the potential informal contribution of local and national organisations. The Superintendent responded by saying that a list of consultees will be drawn up to include organisations like the Environment Agency. Individuals and organisations on the list will not routinely attend committee meetings, but will receive information and may be called upon to attend consultation events depending on the subject in hand.
- The Superintendent concluded by saying he would welcome feedback from local organisations on any changes in membership in between the meetings of the Committee.

#### 5. **CITY COMMONS MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES FOR 2013/14**

The Superintendent introduced the City Commons management priorities for 2013-14. He noted that the Committee had seen the draft proposals in January 2013. He went on to briefly discuss each of the service priorities and the management standards that staff of the City Commons would seek to adhere to. These included:

*Rangering* - the Superintendent stated that it was a key priority to maintain a visible public presence on the Commons.

*Visitor Experience* – the Superintendent noted that the City Commons had just undergone a Green Flag inspection and that the results would be available in the next few weeks.

*Marketing* – this was focused around Facebook and Twitter. The branding of the City Commons was currently being evaluated and will need to take account of the difficulty of marketing such a geographically diffuse set of Commons. The results of the evaluation would be shared with the Committee later in the year.



*Condition Assessments* – the Superintendent noted the obligation to assess the condition of City Commons sites given the receipt of government funding for their upkeep.

*Tree Health* – it was noted that Oak Processionary Moth was present in Kew. Furthermore, current City Commons volunteers had been designated as Tree Wardens and were carrying out inspections over the Summer to monitor the arrival and spread of tree disease. The Superintendent concluded by noting the need to study best practice from across Europe and the involvement of City Commons staff in the Ancient Tree Forum. In response to a question the Superintendent said that informal links and expertise provided by organisations such as the Ancient Tree Forum allowed the quick communication of intelligence on the spread of tree disease in areas in close proximity to the City Commons, but that there was no obligation of landowners in the immediate proximity of the Commons to report the arrival of tree disease. The Superintendent committed to providing advice via e-news on the course of action to follow if a disease such as Ash Dieback is spotted.

*Consultation* – the Superintendent noted that the minutes from each of the City Commons Consultative Committees were to be shared amongst the three Committee memberships.

*Volunteers* – the Superintendent committed to bringing a report on volunteering to the next meeting of the Committee. He noted that volunteer numbers 2012/13 had increased by 2% but that the corporate emphasis was very much on the quality of volunteer experience rather than the number of volunteers themselves.

*Education* – the procedures around education, recreation and events were being refreshed and the maintenance of the current number of walks had been made a Key Performance Indicator (KPI).

The Committee then briefly discussed the service priorities and management priority standards.

In response to a question, the Superintendent clarified that the term 'psychological contract' under the Business Plan service management priority referred to expectations over staff behaviour and staff recognition.

In response to a question regarding the branding of the City Commons the Superintendent answered that it was hoped the final branding would underline the relevance of the three charities that go to make up City Commons as a whole.

The Head Ranger then introduced the management priorities for Ashted Common. These included:

*Oak Pollards* – following an incident last year the programme for veteran tree management had been reviewed. This resulted in fewer trees being worked on and it was felt that this reduced amount was more sustainable. This assumption

was further bolstered by concern over tree disease and a suspicion that management techniques had caused trees stress. Consequently, a procedure had been implemented to properly monitor oak pollarding against a longer time plan.

*Special Project* – Crown reduction had been undertaken to achieve halo release, but the amount of reduction would be reviewed after a condition assessment.

*Grazing* – the current seven cattle on site was a reduction from eleven, with the balance going to market the previous week. The remainder would be moved to another part of the Common shortly. A diversity in sward height had been created during the herd's tenure on Pheonix Field and Pine Field.

*Welcoming Site* – the Head Ranger noted the introduction of new signage on the Common that sought to make it clearer which paths were open to cyclists and horse riders at the various points of entry. In response to a question he replied that the new maps would be available online after they had been formally launched.

*Bracken Control* – the Head Ranger noted the aim to roll/mow areas restored as pasture and to maintain routes designated as firebreaks. He admitted that there as a challenge in meeting this aim given the stewardship agreement stated that the percentage cover of undesirable species including bracken should only make up 10% of the Common. He added that to meet this target the work of volunteers, grazing and mechanical methods were all very important.

*Roman Villa* – the Head Ranger noted that this year represented the seventh year of work on what was originally conceived of as a five year project. Work would be undertaken to ensure the maintenance of the site as an Ancient Monument, and to develop a plan for future work around the interpretation of the data that had been gathered to date.

*Boundaries* – it was noted that fly tipping was not a problem on the Common. A member of the Committee noted that fly tipping had been a problem on the farm to the north of the Common, and that the problem had been addressed using covert cameras.

In response to a question on the potential to link the nature and habitat conservation work being undertaken on the Common with wider sites, the Head Ranger responded by noting the current partnership working with the Lower Mole Countryside Management Project. The Committee discussed the topic in greater detail, making the following observations:

- The Woodfield area of the Common was in terms of biodiversity, now considered to be of SSSI quality.

- Physical boundaries, such as the Railway, were not that important in hindering continuity of habitat given that deer had been spotted on both sides of the track.
- There was a gradation in the immediate local area between the urban park south of the railway, northwards to the Common and to the farmland beyond.
- A member of the Committee reported that it was likely there would be an issue over a land boundary with Merton College.
- A member of the Committee suggested the opportunity be taken to assess ownership of the Merton College and Mole Valley land.

**6. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

**Volunteers**

In response to a question the Head Ranger reported that two training sessions on volunteer leadership had been held recently and that these were considered vital in maintaining a pool of trained volunteers.

**Newton Wood**

In response to a question the Head Ranger replied that the sale of Newton Wood was expected to be completed imminently. It would then be possible to engage with the new owner once we know his/her identity.

**7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

There was no urgent business.

**8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 18 February 2014 at 11:30am in the Committee Rooms, Guildhall.

**The meeting ended at 7.50 pm**

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Chairman

**Contact Officer: Alistair MacLellan / [alistair.maclellan@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:alistair.maclellan@cityoflondon.gov.uk)**

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# Agenda Item 20

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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# Agenda Item 21

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# Agenda Item 22

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