



Epping Forest Centre Joint Consultative Committee

Date: FRIDAY, 26 OCTOBER 2012
Time: 11.30am
Venue: COMMITTEE ROOM - 2ND FLOOR WEST WING, GUILDHALL

Members: Alderman Gordon Haines (Chairman)
Barbara Newman (Deputy Chairman)
Verderer Peter Adams
Verderer Richard Morris
Mr. Simpson
Mr. Brown
Mr. Chapman
Mr. Kington
Mr. Thomas

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Lunch will be served in the Guildhall Club at 1pm

John Barradell
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

AGENDA

1. **APOLOGIES**

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

3. **MINUTES**

To agree the public minutes of the meeting held on 20 April 2012 (copy attached).

For Decision
(Pages 1 - 6)

4. **HEAD OF CENTRE'S REPORT ON PROGRESS IN 2012**

Report of the Head of Centre, Epping Forest (copy attached).

For Information
(Pages 7 - 10)

5. **HEAD OF CENTRE'S REPORT ON DISCOVERING EPPING FOREST**

Report of the Head of Centre, Epping Forest (copy attached).

For Information
(Pages 11 - 62)

6. **HEAD OF CENTRE'S REPORT ON THE CENTRE'S 2013 PLAN AND FINANCIAL ESTIMATES**

Report of the Head of Centre, Epping Forest (copy attached).

For Decision
(Pages 63 - 68)

7. **QUESTIONS**

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

9. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

To be held at 11.30am on 19 April 2013 at the Epping Forest Field Centre.

EPPING FOREST CENTRE JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

FRIDAY 20 APRIL 2012

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EPPING FOREST CENTRE JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE HELD AT EPPING FOREST FIELD CENTRE, PAUL'S NURSERY ROAD, HIGH BEACH, LOUGHTON, ESSEX, IG10 4A, ON FRIDAY, 20 APRIL 2012 AT 11:30AM.

Present

Members:

Mr Kington (Chairman)	Field Studies Council
Mr Brown	Field Studies Council
Mr Chapman	Field Studies Council
Mr Thomas	Field Studies Council
Barbara Newman	City of London Corporation
Verderer Peter Adams	City of London Corporation

Officers:

Edward Foale	- Town Clerk's Department
Allison Elam	- Chamberlain's Department
Rita Bacheta	- Epping Forest Estate Office
Tony Fenwick	- Epping Forest Estate Office
Steve Bunce	- Field Studies Council
Mark Bolland	- Field Studies Council
Richard Walker	- Field Studies Council

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Alderman Gordon Haines and Verderer Richard Morris.

The Committee also noted apologies from the Superintendent of Epping Forest.

2. DECLARATIONS BY MEMBERS OF PERSONAL OR PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS IN RESPECT OF ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED AT THIS MEETING

There were none.

3. MINUTES

The public minutes of the meeting held on 26 October 2011 were agreed as a correct record.

4. HEAD OF CENTRE'S REPORT ON ACTIVITY IN 2011

The Committee considered a report of the Head of Centre regarding progress at Epping Forest Field Centre in 2011.

The Head of Centre advised that the Centre recognised the benefits of social media use and was currently experimenting with both Twitter and Facebook, on which a Member of the team had recently attended a training course. Members noted that the Centre's Facebook site had received 760 visitors in the past week. Twitter was being used to communicate directly with schools.

In response to a Member's question, the Head of Centre confirmed that volunteers frequently supported tutors in "outdoor classrooms." The number of volunteer days had reduced from 500 in 2010 to 389 in 2011 because two volunteers, who had worked a large number of the volunteer days in 2010, had recently left the Centre. This had affected the number of office volunteer days more than the number of grounds volunteer days. It was anticipated that there would be a larger number of volunteers later in 2012.

In response to a Member's query, the Head of Centre confirmed that the tutors preferred to teach on site in Epping Forest and make full use of "outdoor classrooms." However, because many schools' budgets had recently been cut, tutors were increasingly teaching classes in schools. Although tutors and volunteers were encouraged to use bikes where possible, many of the routes to schools were unsafe. Public transport or cars were usually used.

The Head of Centre drew attention to the outstanding feedback received from visiting teachers.

In response to a question from the Chamberlain, the Director of Finance advised that the Centre had isolated all 40th anniversary celebration costs from the operational income and expenditure in order to present comparable year-on-year statistics. It was unlikely that an event similar to the anniversary celebrations would take place in the near future. However, an invoice for the anniversary had been paid from the "food" account heading in error. This accounted for the overspend within this category.

The Head of Centre clarified that the Discovering Epping Forest funding had been placed under the "restricted fund" account heading.

Members noted that the Centre had provided 23,000 learning experiences in 2011, which was the highest ever achieved by the Centre. Members noted that this had been in the context of budget cuts, and commended the Centre's performance in 2011 as outlined within the report.

RECEIVED.

5. HEAD OF CENTRE'S REPORT ON PROGRESS IN 2012

The Committee considered a report of the Head of Centre, which updated Members on progress at the Epping Forest Field Centre in 2012.

In response to a question from the Chairman, the Head of Centre confirmed that the report noted progress up until the end of March 2012. Members noted that 100% of completed visitors' forms indicated that visitors' learning experience expectations had been either met or exceeded. The Head of Centre

advised that in 2012 the challenge would be to address the rise in learner experiences whilst simultaneously cutting costs. The Head of Centre tabled biodiversity diagrams completed by children. Members noted a significantly higher level of demonstrable knowledge that children had after, as compared with prior to, their learning experience.

In response to a Member's question, the Head of Centre advised that since 2010 the most senior officer at the Centre below himself had left.

The Head of Centre noted that the Centre was working on a number of projects to generate income. It was not currently possible to confirm how much revenue these projects would generate.

RECEIVED.

6. HEAD OF CENTRE'S REPORT ON DISCOVERING EPPING FOREST (DEF)

The Committee considered a report of the Head of Centre, which informed Members of the exit strategy and legacy of the DEF Project.

The Head of Centre advised that, via the DEF project, links had been created between the Learning Providers and 32 different schools. The Centre was keen to maintain contacts with the schools where possible.

Members noted that the final project evaluation report would outline what was achieved, assess what the benefits of partnerships were and outline a format under which to progress. The Centre, under consultation with other parties, would draft the report.

The Visitor Services Manager, Epping Forest Estate Office, advised that the seven schools who left the scheme did so due to their own internal issues such as receiving very poor OFSTED scores or dealing with staff resignations, rather than because of any shortcomings in the Discovering Epping Forest scheme.

The Head of Centre believed that the final workshop with the schools would also be the first meeting of a new phase, and would generate a sensible way forward with which all parties would be content.

RECEIVED.

7. EPPING FOREST FIELD STUDY CENTRE – OUTCOME OF BUILDING CONDITION SURVEY

The Committee considered a report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest which informed Members of a Building Condition Survey of the Epping Forest Field Study Centre, which was undertaken by the City Surveyor in October 2009. The report also summarised progress since 2009.

The Business Manager, Epping Forest Estate Office, advised that the buildings had been found to be in relatively good condition. The FSC welcomed the production of the schedule of works and recognised the City's investment in this area.

The Head of Centre assured Members that the mould growth referenced in the report had been kept under control via maintenance work and changing the practice of tenants to improve ventilation.

The Head of Centre welcomed the plan to install a fire alarm in the timber hut and indicated that he believed this was a very desirable improvement to safety.

In response to a Member's query, the Chamberlain confirmed that the Corporate Asset Sub Committee had approved the overall programme.

In response to a query from the Chairman, the Head of Centre agreed that it would be useful to produce a schedule of works in order to progress with improvements and have relevant departments take responsibility for particular areas or tasks. The Director of Operations undertook to meet with the Superintendent to explore pursuing the production of this schedule.

A Member expressed discomfort in the wording used in the "property implications" paragraph of the report. The Business Manager assured Members that the City had not intended to cause any discomfort to the Centre, and pointed out that the nature of the partnership was explained in paragraphs 31 and 32 of the report. Members recognised that the City had acknowledged that the charity was delivering a service on behalf of the City rather than a commercial occupation.

The Financial Director of the Centre advised that, although residential employees had not been asked to sign the Service Occupancy Agreement, a similar agreement existed between the Centre and the residential employees.

RECEIVED.

8. EPPING FOREST VISITOR SERVICES ACTIVITIES

The Committee considered a report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest that outlined the visitor services programme for 2012-13.

Members noted that the change in Visitor Services staffing structure, as outlined in the appendix to the report, would result in the creation of several new posts.

The Visitor Services Manager reported a 30% month-on-month increase in the number of website visitors. It was likely that this would increase further when the website was re-launched in June.

The Head of Centre advised that he would be interested in progressing collaboration between the Centre and Visitor Services in use of or provision of learning services in Chingford.

Members noted that once the new visitor centre had opened the existing visitor centre building, which was in close proximity to the Centre, would undergo a tender process. This would likely commence in July or August.

9. QUESTIONS

There were no questions.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items of further business.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Epping Forest Joint Consultative Committee would be held at 11.30am on 26 October 2012 in Guildhall.

The meeting closed at 1:05pm.

CHAIRMAN

Contact Officer: Edward Foale

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Inspiring environmental understanding through first-hand experience



Epping Forest Field Centre

The Centre is managed by FSC for, and on behalf of, the City of London



Head of Centre's report on progress in 2012

Purpose of report:

The purpose of this report is to inform the Joint Committee on progress at the Epping Forest Field Centre in 2012. I recommend that the report be RECEIVED.

The 2012 Plan presented to the last meeting made clear reference to the need to respond to rising basic costs and to reduced income in comparison to 2011 specifically in relation to HLF (DEF) funding and to the City of London payment. Reference was also made to the need to manage the additional cost of recruiting new business and finding additional income. Subsequently there has also been a need to respond to reduced course income arising from recessionary pressures.

With this in mind we have been prudent with expenditure although tight budgets give virtually no room for significant expenditure reduction other than in relation to salaries. The significant savings that have been made are salary related:

- We have kept a Tutor role (Laurence Jarvis) at 0.4 full-time equivalent and not made this full time for the peak season as originally envisaged
- We have not replaced a full-time Tutor (Christian Kiel) who left at the end of July

This has added to the cost savings arising from the redundancy (part-time Administrator) and discontinued role (Trainee Tutor) in December 2011.

It is hoped that this will lead to a satisfactory financial performance at the end of the year and that the impacts on service delivery and achievement of KPIs can be adequately managed. Whilst this inevitably brings additional pressures and challenges this is offset in part by efficiency gains arising from the current team having all worked together for more than 12 months


Our latest stakeholder' newsletter is attached to this report to give a flavour of other things that are of current relevance at the Centre. [Please note that some of the links in this newsletter may not be active until the circulation date of the 'stakeholder email') later this month.

A Fire Risk Assessment was carried out by Jerry Scott of CS Todd Associates Ltd on 12 June 2012 at the request of FSC as part of a review of all the safety of all of its operational sites.

The purpose of the report was to provide an assessment of the risk to life from fire, and, where appropriate, to make recommendations to ensure compliance with fire safety legislation.

Aside from the need to remove combustible material from the storage area between the boot store and the timber hut the action points are essentially what might be called 'landlord responsibilities' and a matter of some updating of fire safety provision, notably fire alarm cover for the timber hut and the fire resisting capability of doors in Ravensmead (shared staff accommodation). These action points have been referred to City of London officers in order that action can be taken, as appropriate.

We are making generally good progress towards the delivery of the 2012 Plan and the progress in relation to key performance indicators is as follows:

Criteria	2012 Targets	2012 Performance at end of third quarter
Learner experiences	22,000	2012 will be one the Centre's best ever years but we are likely to fall a little short of target reflecting impacts of 'recession', loss of DEF learner experiences in the Autumn and reduced demand for (Advanced level) biology courses together with limited staff time for marketing.
Volunteer days	525	Approaching target but may fall a little short with limited staff time to foster volunteer recruitment.
People	Able to demonstrate meeting of IIP standards for internal or external assessment	FSC re-accredited with IIP (assessment included EFFC) March 2012 with EFFC as one of the sample Centres assessed. 
Quality Badge (&PEF)	Maintain standards and prepare for re-assessment in 2013	Generally on track but with some developmental work delayed due to the need to focus available staff resources on course delivery and other higher priority work.
Health & Safety	Maintain standard of Gold Shield and prepare for re-assessment in 2013	Standards being maintained.
visitor feedback	In the first nine months of the year > 90% of customers have responded 'yes' to: 'Overall did your experience with us match or hopefully exceed your expectations?'	
	In the first nine months of the year > 90% of customers have responded 'yes' to: 'Did your learning experience lead to a significant increase in your understanding of the environment?'	

Epping Forest Field Centre

October 2012

The face behind facebook!

Hear more from Kathy about how we are using social media and search engine optimization to reach more people



Upcoming events

Autumn half term

- A range of fun activities for children and families are on offer at the Centre this Autumn including:
 - Family Pond Dipping Event on 30th October
 - Highwayman's Trail and Creepy Crawlies events on 31st Oct. [Read more](#)



Brilliant place to volunteer

"It's great working in an outdoor environment as part of a friendly team that always make me feel valued". [Find out](#) what else our volunteer Michele Gannon has to say about her time at Epping Forest Field Centre and how you can become a volunteer too!



Learning in Epping Forest event

On the 16th November the Centre is hosting a **free** of charge event for primary headteachers, teachers, classroom assistants and governors. Experience a range of exciting learning activities and participate in workshops. [Read more](#)



Adult courses

Natural History and Leisure Learning courses:

- Fungi for Beginners
- A Brief History of British Woodlands

[Read more](#)



Details of 2013 courses will be available online from 15th October.

Learning for Biodiversity update

The Learning for Biodiversity for Londoners project is an exciting new programme delivering learning for biodiversity (including education in classification and the science of taxonomy). [Read more](#)



www.field-studies-council.org/centres/eppingforest/newsletters



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Tel: 0208 5028500. E-mail: enquiries.ef@field-studies-council.org
Website: www.field-studies-council.org/eppingforest
Managed by FSC for and on behalf of the City of London Corporation, Conservators of Epping Forest.
Registered Charity Number: 313364

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Inspiring environmental understanding through first-hand experience



Epping Forest Field Centre



The Centre is managed by FSC for, and on behalf of, the City of London

Head of Centre’s report on Discovering Epping Forest (DEF)

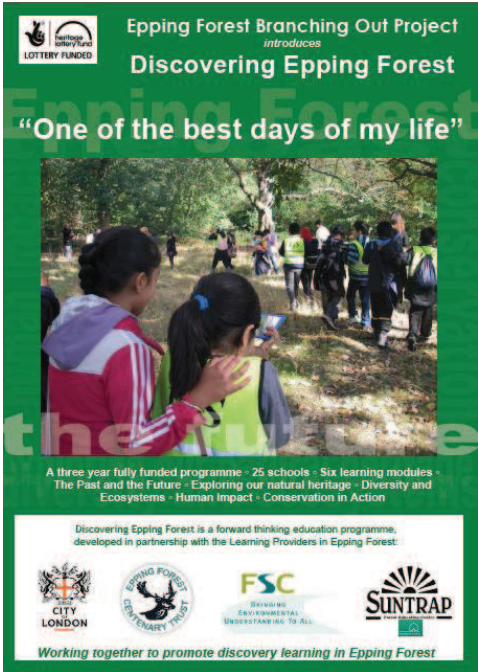
Purpose of report:

This report is intended to provide information to the Committee in relation to the DEF Project. I recommend that this report and be RECEIVED.

The penultimate draft of the end of project report is attached for information and it is hoped that this will confirm to the Committee the success of this multi – year project. The report includes an overview of the project and information on outputs, outcomes and impacts that we hope will be lasting. The report will be made widely accessible via the internet.

The final report is due to be printed in time for the final Workshop (the seventh) to be held on 16 November 2012 at Epping Forest Field Centre.

In addition to being the opportunity for schools to receive their copies of the report, this workshop will outline the exciting offer of the learning services available in Epping Forest with an emphasis on how DEF schools can continue to benefit from the legacies of the project. The funded phase of the project is essentially complete and the Workshop will be presented as part of a new phase of encouraging schools to utilise Epping Forest as a learning resource.



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Epping Forest Branching Out Project

Discovering Epping Forest

Project Report

2009 - 2012



More than 12,000 learning experiences for primary school pupils



Working together to promote discovery learning in Epping Forest

Discovering Epping Forest

Contents

1. Executive summary.....	3
2. Introduction.....	5
Background.....	5
The Learning Providers.....	6
The project schools.....	8
3. Project aims.....	8
4. Project delivery.....	9
Development and management of the project.....	9
The learning modules.....	10
Examples of learning materials.....	12
Pupil mind maps.....	17
Examples of completed pupil work.....	18
5. Health and safety.....	20
6. Achievements.....	22
Summary.....	22
What was innovative about DEF?.....	25
Outcomes of the project.....	26
7. Project evaluation	27
The evaluation process.....	27
Evaluation results.....	28
1. Pupil feedback.....	28
2. Champion feedback.....	31
3. Champion's workshops.....	32
4. Activity improvement.....	32
5. Teacher comments.....	34
6. Pupil comments.....	36
8. Learning points and programme improvements.....	37
9. The legacy of the project.....	39
Summary of the DEF legacy.....	39
Legacy for the schools.....	40
Legacy for the Learning Providers.....	41
10. Acknowledgements.....	46
Appendix 1. Evaluation reports 2009 - 2012.....	47
Appendix 2. List of participating schools.....	48
Appendix 3. Example teacher and pupil evaluation forms.....	50

This final evaluation forms a summary to all the detailed reports which have been produced over the period 2009 - 2012. They may all be found in Appendix 1 and at the following website:

<http://www.discoveringeppingforest.org.uk/>

Discovering Epping Forest

Executive Summary

The Heritage Lottery funded Discovering Epping Forest (DEF) project was delivered in the academic years 2009 to 2012 by four Learning Providers. A total of 2,025 pupils from 33 schools undertook six learning modules to develop their knowledge and understanding of the heritage, history, ecology and conservation of Epping Forest.

- 12,150 learner experiences for key stage two learners
- Training and support for 90 class teachers and 56 Champions
- 25 schools per year; 33 over three years



Main Project Outcomes:

- Increased knowledge and understanding of pupils in the heritage, history, ecology and conservation of Epping Forest, delivered through learning outside of the classroom.
- Production and delivery of learning material for pupils with a range of learning needs and backgrounds from the socially diverse London boroughs of Newham and Redbridge.
- Partnership was developed between the City of London, Epping Forest Centenary Trust, Epping Forest Field Centre and Suntrap Forest Education Centre.
- Pupils and school staff gained in confidence to visit open spaces outside of the project.
- ‘Champions’ within each school were established to develop whole-school environmental understanding.



“Fantastic outdoor learning & hands on experiences.”
Class teacher, Module 1

“Superb - pitched at the correct level - lots of scientific enquiry”
Class teacher, Module 3

“One of the best days of my life.”

Discovering Epping Forest



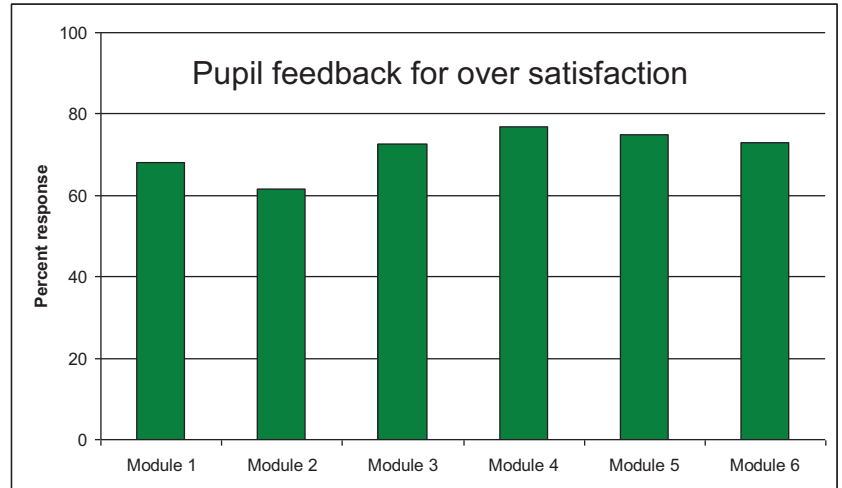
The Discovering Epping Forest project was an innovative programme which brought together four Learning Providers within the Epping Forest area. Over three years pupils experienced aspects of Epping Forest which for many this was their first time. The project received encouragingly positive feedback from teachers and pupils.

“It was a tremendous trip. I'd definitely come back and recommend to everyone.”

Pupil, Module 6.

“The children were totally inspired and engaged all day.”
Teacher, Module 3.

Across a total of 18 modules, **93%** of teachers rated overall satisfaction in the highest category in a 5-point scale.



“An excellent way of raising awareness, valuing history & creating an innovative way of educating the younger generation.”

Teacher, Module 1.

In addition to the inspiration and learning provided, the project leaves a legacy of resources, enhanced capacity for the delivery of learning experiences in Epping Forest and improve networking and collaboration.

Discovering Epping Forest

Introduction

Background

Discovering Epping Forest was part of the Heritage Lottery funded Branching Out project led by the City of London (CoL). A need to further develop learning provision in Epping Forest was identified by the City of London, along with other projects, including: improving visitor provision, education facilities, habitat restoration and access improvements within the Forest. The Discovering Epping Forest educational component involved the four principle Learning Providers within Epping Forest (more on pages 7 & 8). The programme consisted of six annual modules delivered to pupils from 25 primary schools over a three-year period, 2009 to 2012. The project's main aim was 'To develop knowledge and understanding of the heritage, history, ecology and conservation of Epping Forest together with its modern-day management and significance in visitors' lives' (Learning Plan, 2009). The project was a significant success, delighting pupils and teachers with significant achievements (more on pages 24 to 28) and a worthy legacy (see pages 41 to 48).

“Outstanding. The children were totally absorbed. This has been an excellent and totally child-centred experience.”

Class teacher, Module 3

Discovering Epping Forest

The Learning Providers



City of London Corporation learning service



The City of London's Forest Centres Officer for Lifelong Learning leads fun, educational tours and workshops at Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge (QEHL). This unique, atmospheric Tudor building is where the CoL's DEF component took place. Since July 2012, CoL also has teaching facilities at the new visitor centre next door called 'The View'. Learning workshops can incorporate teaching in the Forest nearby. Children's leisure groups ranging from pre-school to teenagers, enjoy sessions on the Forest's Longhorn Cattle, Deer, or Tudor past. The curriculum-oriented workshops ranging from KS1 'Looking at a Tudor Building' to KS2 'Epping Forest Through History (case study: Victorian Times)' are particularly popular with schools. Guided tours of QEHL, craft events and lectures are available for adults. Free family learning events take place during the school holidays on Forest-related themes. CoL also has a Community Liaison Officer who undertakes outreach work with local communities.

Epping Forest Centenary Trust



Our vision is to inspire people, through supporting them to get involved and contribute to conservation, access and education projects in Epping Forest. For us, Epping Forest is a special place and special people can really make a difference!

The Trust works with a variety of groups, particularly young people and those who may find it more difficult to access the Forest on their own. Groups include schools, special needs groups, scouting organisations, volunteer groups, and community and youth groups. Through our activities, we want to make a positive difference to their lives and the Forest environment.

Epping Forest Centenary Trust is both a Company limited in England by guarantee No.1339783. Registered office: The Warren Lodge, Loughton, Essex IG10 4RN and Charity No 01339783.

Discovering Epping Forest



Epping Forest Field Centre

Epping Forest Field Centre (EFFC) is situated in the heart of Epping Forest. The Centre is managed by the Field Studies Council (FSC) on behalf of the City of London, and was established to commemorate the European Year of Conservation in 1970. The FSC is an independent environmental education charity committed to helping people discover, explore, understand and be inspired by the natural world. The Centre connects people from London and surrounding areas with the natural environment and delivers the City of London's environmental learning service in Epping Forest.

EFFC specialises in connecting people of all ages with the natural environment by providing safe and enjoyable learning experiences in Epping Forest and the surrounding area. The emphasis is on first-hand investigations and discovery learning. In February 2009, the Centre was among the first Centres in the UK to be awarded the LoTC (Learning Outside the Classroom) Quality Badge developed by The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) with the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom. Its work has been described by Chris Warn (former Senior Ofsted Inspector) as 'outstanding'.

In recent years Epping Forest Field Centre has developed and led a range of innovative projects that have extended outreach capacity to bring learning nearer to the learners and increase the impacts of its work.



Suntrap Forest Education Centre

Situated within Epping Forest, Suntrap provides environmental education and adventurous activities led by fully qualified, experienced outdoor education tutors and teachers. The Centre has three ponds, four large class-rooms and a range of equipment and resources.



Discovering Epping Forest

The partner schools

The learning providers worked with 25 partner schools in each year. Some schools were unable to participate every year due to significant issues taking place in the schools themselves including significant staff turnover. In all, 33 partner schools took part in the project and all of them indicated they had valued their partnership. A full list of participating schools appears in Appendix 2.

Project aims

The project's main aim was 'To develop knowledge and understanding of the heritage, history, ecology and conservation of Epping Forest together with its modern-day management and significance in visitors' lives' (Learning Plan, 2009).

A number of objectives were developed:

- 1. To develop knowledge and understanding of the heritage, history, ecology and conservation of Epping Forest together with its modern-day management and significance in visitors' lives.*
- 2. To provide opportunities for learning that meets the diverse needs of visitors and potential visitors.*
- 3. To provide accessible, stimulating and enjoyable learning spaces, places and materials.*
- 4. To develop effective partnerships to maximise the opportunities for learning for all.*
- 5. To contribute to the protection of Epping Forest by inspiring, enthusing and engaging with the local community.*
- 6. To ensure that every resident within the Forest boundaries has the opportunity to visit and enjoy Epping Forest.*
- 7. To use the Forest as a resource for creative and artistic projects.*
- 8. To help participating schools achieve recognition for their outdoor learning through the Eco-Schools award scheme.*

Discovering Epping Forest

Project delivery

Development and management of the Project

1. Project management

Epping Forest Field Centre managed the overall project with support from other Learning Providers.

Regular meetings of the Learning Providers in the Epping Forest Learning Provider Partnership were utilised to ensure careful monitoring of the project.

2. Project coordination

1. Module delivery

Staff at Epping Forest Field Centre coordinated effective delivery of all the DEF modules. This included:

- Selecting and recruiting primary schools.
- Acting as a key point for telephone and email communication with schools.
- Ensuring other Learning Providers had no problems with module delivery.
- Organising coach transport for school pupils and staff to EFFC and Suntrap.
- Collecting and filing all paperwork in relation to all schools.

2. Module development

EFFC developed lesson plans and activities for half the DEF modules: 1, 5 & 6. This included developing innovative activities for Module 5: Human impacts on Epping Forest and Module 6, which drew together all the prior learning gained through the project. The City of London developed Module 4a at the Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge, Epping Forest Centenary Trust developed Module 4b and Suntrap Modules 2 & 3.

3. Champion workshop coordination and delivery

A total of 7 Champions workshops were organised and delivered through the project, led by staff at Epping Forest Field Centre, with contributions from other Learning Providers. These were hosted at all Learning Provider locations. Workshop planning included developing programmes for day or evening sessions, providing interesting and relevant activities as well as organising refreshments.

4. Management of the evaluation process

The evaluation process was developed and managed by Epping Forest Field Centre. This included development of evaluation tools, implementation, collecting forms from each Learning Provider as well as data collation, analysis and report writing. A total of 46 evaluation reports were written over the course of the three year projects. All Learning Providers contributed completed forms as required.

Discovering Epping Forest

The model for project development

The model for the project was Epping Forest Field Centre's 'Sustainable Schools™'* project that was delivered with funding support from the City Bridge Trust from 2004 to 2007. The learning from this 6 module project with three Newham Schools was used to inform the DEF project (<http://www.field-studies-council.org/centres/eppingforest/sustainable-schools-project.aspx>).

(* this project preceded the HM Government's Sustainable Schools programme that was first promoted for consultation in 2006.)

The Learning Modules

Module 1: Introduction to Epping Forest

Pupils gained a greater appreciation for Epping Forest, considered travel choices and their impacts on the environment and used a variety of senses to discover more about the local trees and plants. *Delivered by staff from Epping Forest Field Centre on-site at several locations within Epping Forest.*



Module 2: Seeing the Wood from the Trees

Pupils found out more about trees and wood pasture of Epping Forest. They gained a greater understanding of tree function and life cycle, interactions between plants and animals and an appreciation of the past and present management of Epping Forest. *Delivered by staff from Suntrap Forest Education Centre on-site at several locations within Epping Forest.*

Module 3: Diversity and Ecosystems

Pupils gained a greater understanding of the adaptations and interdependence of animals and plants living in freshwater habitats, as well as gaining an idea of the history of ponds in Epping Forest, their development and importance as a habitat. *Delivered by staff at Suntrap Forest Education Centre.*



Discovering Epping Forest



Module 4: The Past and the Future

During the morning session, pupils gained a greater understanding of the chronological order in which humans have used and managed the Forest and compared and contrasted the use of the Forest in the past. In the afternoon pupils used maps and compasses for route finding and then took part in practical conservation work using loppers. *Delivered by the City of London Corporation staff (am) at the Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge and by Epping Forest Centenary Trust (pm) in a nearby Forest site.*

Module 5: Human Impact

Pupils gained a greater understanding of the pressures people exert on the Forest and that some natural features have been shaped by humans. Activities included observational impact assessments, using quadrats and field sketching. *Delivered by Epping Forest Field Centre staff in local Forest sites.*



Module 6: Conservation in Action

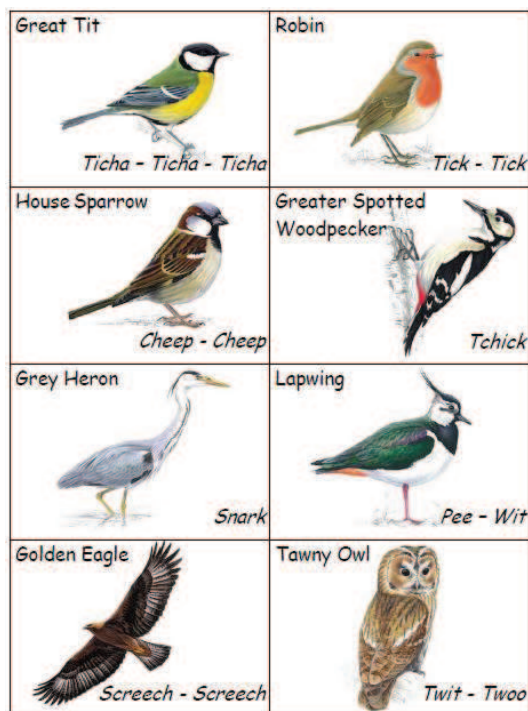
In the morning pupils took part in a practical conservation task e.g. scrub clearance, to provide pupils with a sense of responsibility of their local area of Epping Forest. In the afternoon pupils consolidated on the project and reinforced the understanding gained from previous modules: that they are stakeholders in the future of the Forest. *Delivered by Epping Forest Centenary Trust (am) and Epping Forest Field Centre (pm) at local Forest sites.*



Discovering Epping Forest

Examples of learning materials

Cards for the Bird Call game: Module 1



This activity introduced the pupils to UK bird species in a fun and kinaesthetic way.

A series of cards were produced, each with a picture of a UK bird species along with the sound it makes. There were two of each type of card. In this activity, the whole class were taken to an open space and a card given to each pupil. On the blow of a whistle, each pupil had to imitate the sound of their given bird species, moving around until he/she located their partner who was also making the same call.

Pre- and post- course activities: Module 2

Pre and Post Visit Suggested Activities

Pre Visit Activities

- Get pupils to do a thought shower of what they already know about Epping Forest and the trees. Then get them to think about what else they might want to find out during the visit to the forest.
- Have a look at the woodland Trusts Nature detective website which has a number of resources to print and make in order to enhance your trip. Suggested activities are minibeast bug dial, leaf hunt sheet, leaf dial, fruits and seeds identification sheet.

<http://www.naturedetectives.org.uk>

Post Visit Activities

- Repeat the thought shower and compare with knowledge before the visit.
- Using IT pupils could to further research about either the trees or minibeasts seen on the visit and create a project or presentation about them.
- Collect a variety of leaves and natural materials during the visit and then use these for art activities for example leaf rubbing pictures, collages or woodland art.


Discovering Epping Forest

Writing postcards: Module 4a



One interactive activity reviewed and consolidated the knowledge gained about the Victorian history of Epping Forest, whilst exercising art and literacy skills. First, the children were given a random selection of postcards which had photographs from the period on one side. They were asked to write a postcard influenced by the image and other Victorian times they had learnt about, as if they were a working class day-tripper to the Forest from that time. This included drawing an appropriate

stamp. Next they were given postcards with different text on (see example illustrated below). Pupils were asked to fill in the missing text and drawing a colourful picture representing the words they had read. This led to discussions about whether the Victorian world was actually in sepia! Finally, they posted their postcards in a Victorian-style post box (see photo above). The children discovered how popular postcards were and how much more efficient the post service was in the late nineteenth century.

20th May 1889	
Dear	
I am eating a sandwich in Butler's Retreat next to Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge.	
The air in the Forest smells better than in smoky London. I tripped and got mud on my best trousers! Hope you will like the wild flowers I have picked for you. We could press some of them in between books when I get home.	
From	

Discovering Epping Forest

Post-course activity: Module 4a

The following is one of the post-module activities suggested in support sheets for teachers.

Copies of Victorian/Edwardian tickets were given to the class. Either as teams, pairs or individuals, the children looked carefully at the tickets and imagined the day they would have had if they had bought them. This was then portrayed through story-telling/writing, role-play or through artwork.

Questions asked:

- When would this have taken place? e.g. year, time of year (therefore what type of weather), on a special occasion?
- Where would they have travelled from and how?
- How and when would they have returned home? e.g. do they have a day return ticket?
- What sort of person might they have been?
- How might they have dressed for the visit?
- Who might have gone too?
- What aspects would they have enjoyed most/least and why?
- What would the experience have been like, particularly if they had come from a contrasting environment?
- What other activities would they have experienced? e.g. refreshments, other entertainment.

Pre-course activity: Module 4b

Discovering Epping Forest

Activity 1: Loppers safety poster

Aim: To recognise loppers and begin to come up with rules about how to use them safely and effectively

Directions:

1. Use the PowerPoint presentation but: Using loppers safely only up to slide number 7 for now. See if for each slide the if the students can spot the correct and incorrect techniques.
2. Discuss as a class what the obvious safety issues are in some photos. See if they can spot the correct and incorrect techniques are (See answer sheet to using loppers safely for guidance).
3. Give the students worksheet 1: Using loppers safely.
4. Students should write a list next to each picture of how the tools are being carried and what the issues are with the incorrect techniques.
5. They could then use this to draw up a safety poster or they could write a play or film a safety video of how to use loppers.

Activity 2: Compass directions Game

Aim: To know and understand the eight basic directions on a compass, N, E, S, W, NE, NW, SE, and SW.

Directions:

1. In a large open space assign the four directions of North, East, South and West to the four sides of the area or classroom. The students must stand in the middle of the area and when a compass direction is shouted out by the leader they must run (or walk if you prefer!) to the side representing that direction.
2. You can make it more complex by making the corners represent NE, SE, SW and NW. To make it even more complicated you can change it so that whoever is shouting the directions stands in the middle and whichever way they are facing becomes North making the game harder for everyone. It can also be extended by using the numerical bearings that represent each compass direction (see below).

Discovering Epping Forest

The True/False trail: Module 5

Pupils had to navigate a route within Epping Forest, find the questions and correctly assign true or false answers to each question.



A Forest is an area that only has trees in it

People used to cut down trees to make charcoal in Epping Forest

You might see a tiger in Epping Forest

Epping Forest covers an area equivalent to almost 8000 football pitches

The ponds in Epping Forest have sharks living in them

There are rare animals in Epping Forest

Hornbeam, Oak, Beech, and Silver birch are the most common trees in Epping Forest

If you are lucky you might see deer in Epping Forest

There are 200 ponds in Epping Forest

The technique called Pollarding means burning the tree to stop it from growing

Environmental Impact Assessment: Module 5

Pupils were given the task of using scientific equipment to assess the impact of humans on Epping Forest.

Discovering Epping Forest

The impacts people have on Epping Forest today

Name:

Date:



What have people done to damage the environment?

The Pillow mounds have lots of visitors all year round. They like to go for walks, have picnics, play football and other relaxing activities.

Look around you. Is there anything you could add to the impacts from the puzzle?

Now complete the table comparing the two areas.



What could we measure to show the impacts that people have on Epping Forest?

Discovering Epping Forest

Post course activities: Module 6

Forest Finale

As the final follow-up for Discovering Epping Forest, pupils need to reflect on their experiences and what they have learned during the 6 Forest visits.

They must then decide on what they think were the highlights of their experiences in Epping Forest, and how they would like to communicate these to the school.

Possible ideas for follow up, subject to resources available at your school, are given below. Also note that options will depend on the activity carried out by pupils during the morning.

Creative work on paper

- Before and After

Pupils can print out selected photographs showing their Forest site before, during and after practical work they have carried out. These could be made into a photo montage, or simply stuck to a large sheet of paper to create a poster with pupils' annotation and drawings.

- Information Sign

Pupils will have had plenty of opportunities to consider the impacts of people on the Forest, so they can now design an information sign for visitors. This may range from simple do's and don'ts for protecting the Forest, to information about what people might see, or showing a map for a pupil-designed walk that visitors could take at their Forest site. The last two options would also benefit from photographs to illustrate interesting sights and landmarks.

- Creative Writing

Pupils may also wish to write poems about Epping Forest. If pupils think of words relating to different aspects of the forest during their last visit, these can be used for creative writing. On return to the classroom, pupils can be split into groups and given a random selection of these 'statements' which they then rearrange into a piece of creative writing. The pieces of paper can then be glued to a larger sheet in the desired order to make a collage, or pupils can re-write the whole piece.

Epping Forest Quiz: Module 6

Module 6 Quiz questions

Module 3

1. What is a habitat?
A) How an animal behaves
B) A shop where animals go to buy things for their homes
C) A place where animals live
2. What do carnivores eat?
A) Animals B) Plants C) Chocolate
3. Why do tadpoles have to stay in water?
A) They can't breathe in air B) they like to swim C) to stay safe from predators
4. Which two things do the plants in a pond provide for the animals living there?
A) Medicine and clothes B) sunlight and shelter C) oxygen and food

Discovering Epping Forest

Examples of completed pupil work



Discovering Epping Forest



Name one period in history and say how people used Epping Forest then.

Roman They grew cabbages and onions and fought other tribes

What are veteran trees and why are they important?

Because they cut trees to build houses

Thursday 16th September 2020 Maizi


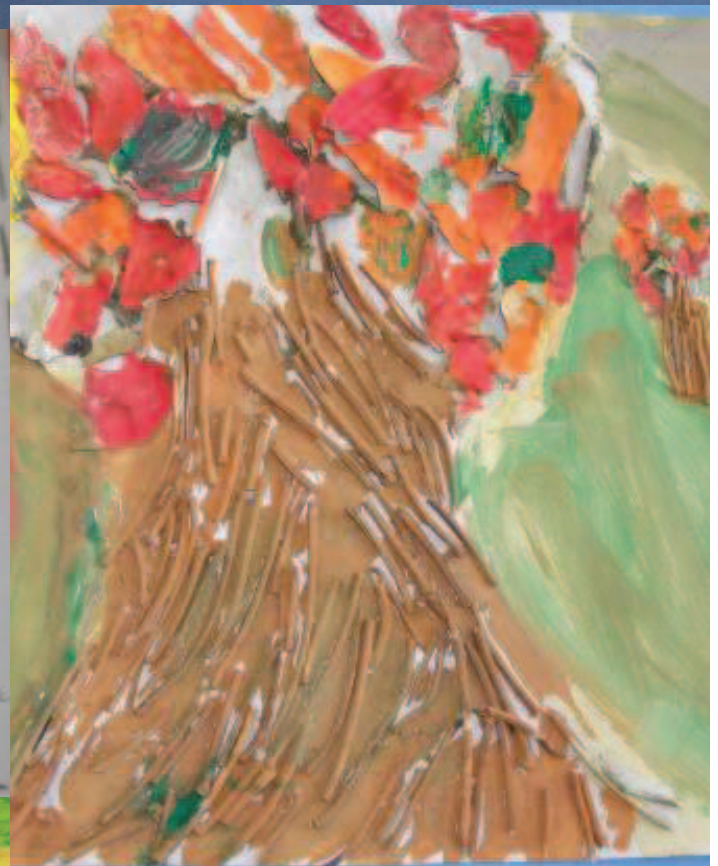
Recipe for smelly smoothie!

You will need:

- Butter
- leaves
- grass
- Acorns
- mud
- Cup
- feathers
- string stick

Method:


1. First find a cup
2. Next find a thin but strong stick to stir the mixture
3. Now walk a while around putting nature in the cup
4. After that stir your smelly smoothie so its mixed up
5. Next smelly smell your smelly smoothie
6. Finally empty your cup.

Whirlig-Beele

Whirlig-beetle real size

I



In spring time and early summer the whirlig beetle is very obvious on the surface of the water. You will see large numbers of them whirling about in the manner that gives them their name. They are small beetles about 15mm long. They whirl about on the surface to disturb the creatures they eat.

Discovering Epping Forest

Health and Safety

Risk Assessments

A risk assessment was produced for each learning site and activity to take into account of the needs and abilities of the participants. These were based on industry best practice meeting the Codes of Practice of the Field Studies Council. Each risk assessment ensured minimum likelihood of accidents or incidents occurring. An example of a risk assessment developed by EFFC can be seen in on pages 22 and 23.

Summary statement of safety

During the three year project there were no major health and safety issues in any of the modules. This was due to effective procedures in place by each Learning Provider. There were only 15 reported minor injuries (e.g. cut fingers) across the whole three-year project. This represents just 0.012% of all learner experiences.

Discovering Epping Forest

Example of a risk assessment

Site: Hollow Pond



Group description:	All groups
Course description:	All approved EFFC programmes, courses and activities
Equipment may include:	Various equipment as appropriate by course subject to activity risk assessment

Site Specific Hazards	Risk without controls		Risk using site controls										Control measures					
	1	2	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		11	12	13	14	15
Generic site hazards																		Refer to OCoP P1 Refer to OCoP P1 Annex – EFFC generic control measures Refer to OCoP P1 Appendix 4 & 5 (freshwater and woodland) Refer to OCoP P1 Appendix 4 Annex – EFFC outdoor classroom risk assessment
Generic activity hazards																		Refer to OCoP P1 Appendix 6 (walking) Refer to OCoP P1 Annex – EFFC generic control measures Refer to appropriate EFFC activity risk assessments
Hazardous litter	3x5	15																Staff are instructed not to work within area of concern at site (refer to SWIC).

I confirm that this site is fully risk assessed with no further action required.

Hazard id reference numbers:

EFFC 05811

This form is not valid as an official EFFC Risk Assessment unless signed by a member of the EFFC management team.

Date Created:	26.09.11	Name:	Steve Bunce
Created By:	Hannah Rose	Date:	27/9/11
Signed:	<i>H.Rose</i>	Authorisation Signature:	<i>[Signature]</i>

Site Working Information Card

Centre Phone: 0208 502 8500
Mobile reception: Good

In an Emergency

- Direct emergency services to nearest car park, centre or The Warren and get rangers to assist with access
- Vehicle access at car parks off Snaresbrook Road (E11 1 PQ) and Whipps Cross Road (E11 1NW)
- City of London contact: 0208 532 1010

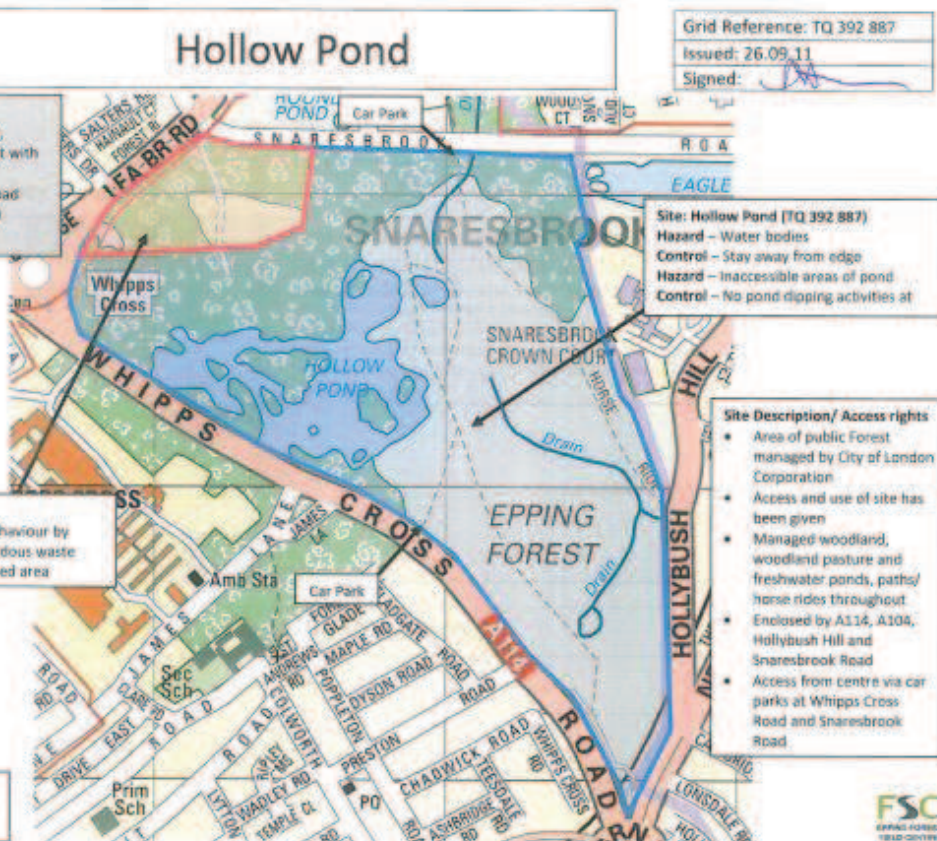
EFFC Risk Assessments

- Hollow Ponds
- Activity specific dependant on course
- Generic FSC Risk Assessments 'Out of classroom'
- Environment – Freshwater & Woodland
- Activity – Walking, Team games.

Site: 'X'

- Hazard – inappropriate behaviour by visitors and clinically hazardous waste
- Control – Stay out of marked area

Nearest Telephone, Dwelling and Toilets
Local residences and Whipps Cross hospital. No toilets on site.



Grid Reference: TQ 392 887

Issued: 26.09.11

Signed: *[Signature]*

Site: Hollow Pond (TQ 392 887)

Hazard – Water bodies

Control – Stay away from edge

Hazard – Inaccessible areas of pond

Control – No pond dipping activities at

Site Description/ Access rights

- Area of public Forest managed by City of London Corporation
- Access and use of site has been given
- Managed woodland, woodland pasture and freshwater ponds, paths/ horse rides throughout
- Enclosed by A114, A104, Hollybush Hill and Snaresbrook Road
- Access from centre via car parks at Whipps Cross Road and Snaresbrook Road



Discovering Epping Forest

Project achievements

Summary

The Discovering Epping Forest project was an innovative programme which brought together four principal Learning Providers in Epping Forest. This was the first project of this size and scope within the region and provided unique opportunities to 25 schools each year, their staff and pupils which otherwise they would not normally have. Pupils experienced aspects of Epping Forest for which many this was the first time. Activities included pond dipping, minibeast hunting, sensory exploration, visitor impact surveys, practical conservation such as coppicing, as well as discovering the history of the Forest at the Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge. In addition, learning took place at a number of outreach sites within Greater London and Essex, including Wanstead Park, Barn Hoppit, Highams Park and Theydon Plain.



- **25** schools per year; **33** over three years
- **2,025** participating pupils taking part in **12,150** learner experiences over three years
- **90** class teachers participated and **56** Champions developed
- **93%** of teachers rated overall satisfaction in the highest category.



Discovering Epping Forest

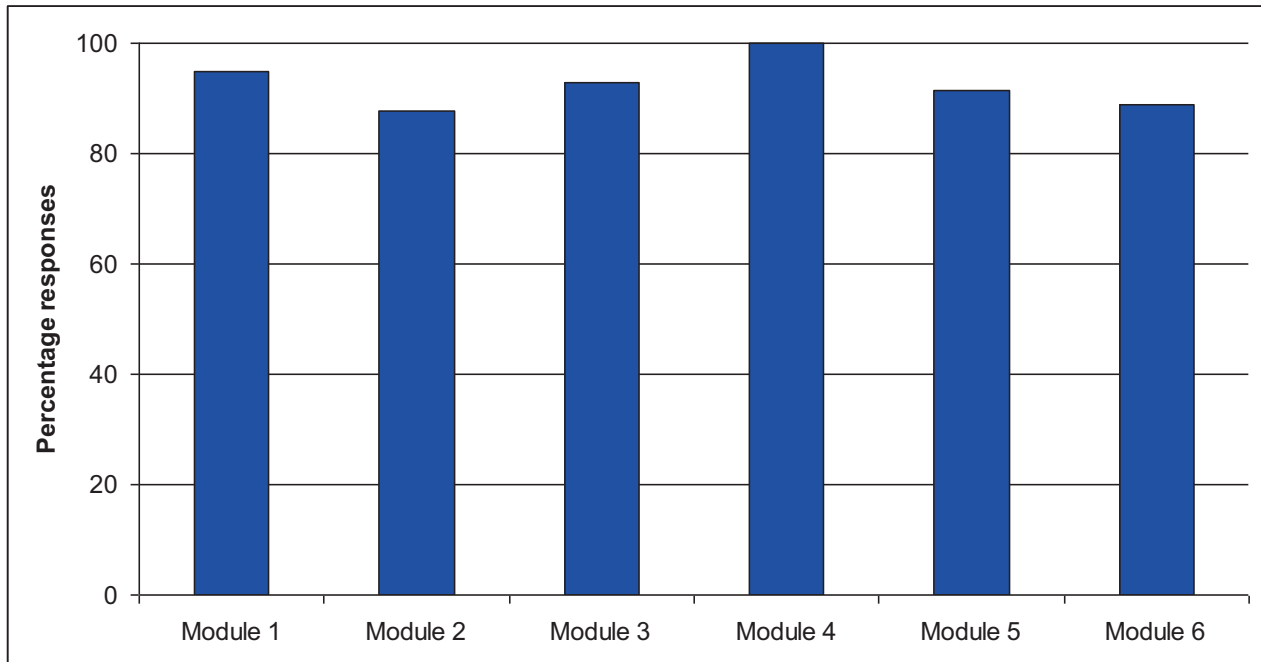


Figure 1. Percentage of teachers rating overall satisfaction in the highest category in a 5-point scale.

Note: Difficulties in getting feedback forms relating to Module 4 which ended on Chingford Plain resulted in a lower return rate and possibly a less representative sample.

Teachers were asked to complete evaluation forms at the end of each module. Across a total of 18 modules, **93%** of teachers rated overall satisfaction in the highest category in a 5-point scale. The scores for each module can be seen in Figure 1.

“It was fantastic, marvellous and spectacular in Epping Forest.”

Pupil, Module 1

“It is the best trip ever and it's amazing.”

Pupil, Module 3

“Magnificent. It couldn't have been better.”

Pupil, Module 4

Discovering Epping Forest



Pupils discussing a postcard, Module 4.



Completing a Forest trail, Module 5.



Pupils carrying out a tree report, Module 2



Enjoying discovering animals whilst pond dipping, Module 3

“Fantastic opportunity for children to learn how they can look after the Forest.”

Class teacher, Module 5

“Fantastic balance of hands on activities/games/ reflecting on learning.”

Class teacher, Module 6

Discovering Epping Forest

What was innovative about Discovering Epping Forest?

- This was the first education project in Epping Forest which involved collaboration of four Learning Providers. This has improved the mutual understanding of, and co-operation between, the Learning Providers.
- The project involved multi-site working at a variety of learning sites within Epping Forest including at locations close to schools.
- Learners were from a diverse range of backgrounds.
- Participating pupils took part in a coherent programme of modules which led to them become 'Forest Guardians': individuals who have an understanding of the Forest and the importance of its protection and the ability to pass this knowledge on to others (e.g. family and friends).
- Learning Providers worked with school teachers, providing them with the necessary knowledge and experience to allow them to teach independently at Epping Forest sites.



Left: Forest Guardians holding newly created pendants. *Right:* Example of pendants made by pupils to show their achievement across 6 modules.

Discovering Epping Forest

Outcomes of the Project

Intended aim	Outcome
1. To develop knowledge and understanding of the heritage, history, ecology and conservation of Epping Forest together with its modern-day management and significance in visitors' lives.	<p>Learning providers delivered 6 educational modules each year to primary pupils within 25 schools across three years.</p> <p>Increased knowledge and understanding of pupils about heritage, history, ecology and conservation - see page 29 - 34 for graphical evidence.</p>
2. To provide opportunities for learning that meets the diverse needs of visitors and potential visitors.	<p>Modules provided learning material that catered for pupils with a range of learning needs and backgrounds from the socially diverse London boroughs of Newham and Redbridge as well as Epping Forest.</p>
3. To provide accessible, stimulating and enjoyable learning spaces, places and materials.	<p>Modules were carried out at a variety of learning locations within Epping Forest including: Barn Hoppit, Highams park, Hollow ponds, Theydon Plain and Wanstead park.</p> <p>Varied and accessible learning materials created by Learning Partners. See pages 13 - 17 for examples of learning materials.</p>
4. To develop effective partnerships to maximise the opportunities for learning for all.	<p>Partnership was developed between the City of London, Epping Forest Centenary Trust, Epping Forest Field Centre and Suntrap.</p>
5. To contribute to the protection of Epping Forest by inspiring, enthusing and engaging with the local community.	<p>Learning Providers delivered learning opportunities which were aimed at improving equality of access to under-represented groups, especially within Newham and Redbridge as well as Epping Forest.</p> <p>Education material delivered outcomes relating to increasing understanding of the Forest (Modules 1-3), the impact of humans on the Forest (Module 5) and how the Forest is managed (part of Module 4 & 6).</p>
6. To ensure that every resident within the Forest boundaries has the opportunity to visit and enjoy Epping Forest.	<p>By visiting local areas within Epping Forest, pupils and school staff gained in confidence to visit areas outside of the project.</p>
7. To use the Forest as a resource for creative and artistic projects.	
8. To help participating schools achieve recognition for their outdoor learning through the Eco-Schools award scheme.	<p>Learning Providers worked closely with 'Champions' within each school who helped develop whole-school environmental understanding.</p>

Discovering Epping Forest

Project Evaluation

The evaluation process

Project evaluation was managed and carried out by Epping Forest Field Centre. Participating pupils, school teachers and champions all completed evaluation material. EFFC utilised a number of evaluation methods to ensure effective monitoring of the project which are described below. There was also a process of 'illuminative' assessment which identified and recorded unforeseen outcomes to provide broader and deeper reporting back to all partners, the Heritage Lottery Fund and other stakeholders.

1. Diagnostic

Prior to starting the programme, pupils were given a questionnaire to assess their level of knowledge and understanding of Epping Forest. This enabled the level and detail of future activities to be planned. In addition, at the start of the programme the children were asked to draw a mind map. Pupils were given a piece of paper with the word 'Forest' in the middle, then write as many words as they could think of radiating from the centre, linking related words with a line – see examples on page 18). This gave teaching staff an idea of where the children were at the start in relation to knowledge and expectations and gave an indicator of their baseline level from which they could improve on over the course of the project.

2. Formative

Pre- and post-visit questionnaires for each module were completed by pupils to assess learning gained from previous sessions and to ascertain prior knowledge/expectations before the next visit. Responses were categorised and presented graphically for easy analysis of results (see following graphs). This was useful in determining experience of topics prior to delivery and to facilitate tracking pupil progress throughout the course of modules.

3. Summative evaluation

Each pupil was given a final questionnaire at the end of each year relating to the project. This gave valuable information in seeing how the level of knowledge and understanding changed throughout the course of the modules. The mind map activity was carried out at the start and repeated at the end of the programme. The longest list of connected words (longest chain length) was compared (and shown graphically) to measure the increase in pupil knowledge and understanding of the Forest.

4. Consultation

Meetings between the Learning Providers, tutor 'reflections', conversations with teachers at workshops and out in Epping Forest all provided 'captured' feedback that has been considered in the evaluation of the project and the production of this end of project report.

Discovering Epping Forest

Evaluation Results

All Learning Providers contributed effectively to and benefitted from this project. The project aims were achieved and the intended outcomes were delivered to achieve a worthy legacy (see pages 40-46). The Learning Providers have an improved understanding in relation to how the project could be extended further should funding become available.

The following provides some examples of evaluation feedback provided by pupils, teachers and champions. Full results from all feedback can be found in individual module reports. Although the majority of evaluation was extremely positive, constructive feedback was implemented into learning points for programme improvement– see page 38.

1. Pupil Feedback

a) Pupils' overall satisfaction

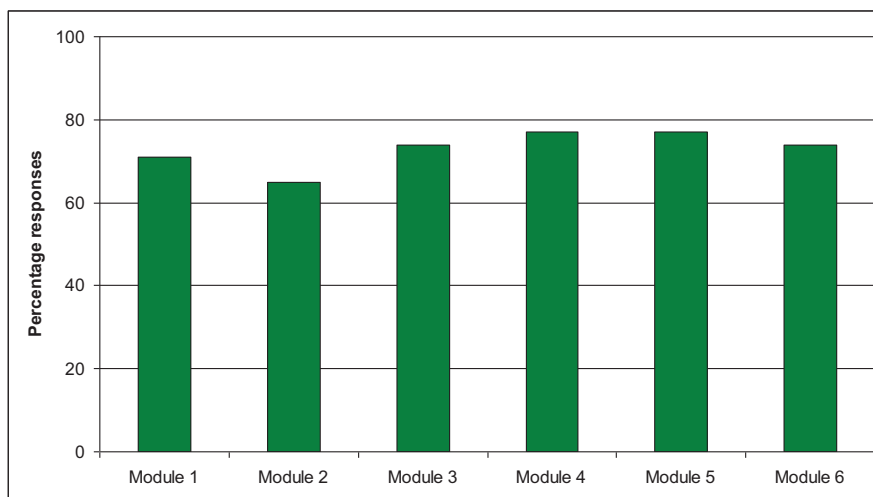


Figure 2. Percentage of pupils rating overall satisfaction in the highest category on a 5-point scale.

Overall pupils were very satisfied with all the project modules with over **63%** rating overall satisfaction in the highest category on a 5-point scale.



Using a compass (Module 4)



Preparing Victorian food (Module 4)

Discovering Epping Forest

b) Pupil learning: 'What animals would you expect to find in Epping Forest?'

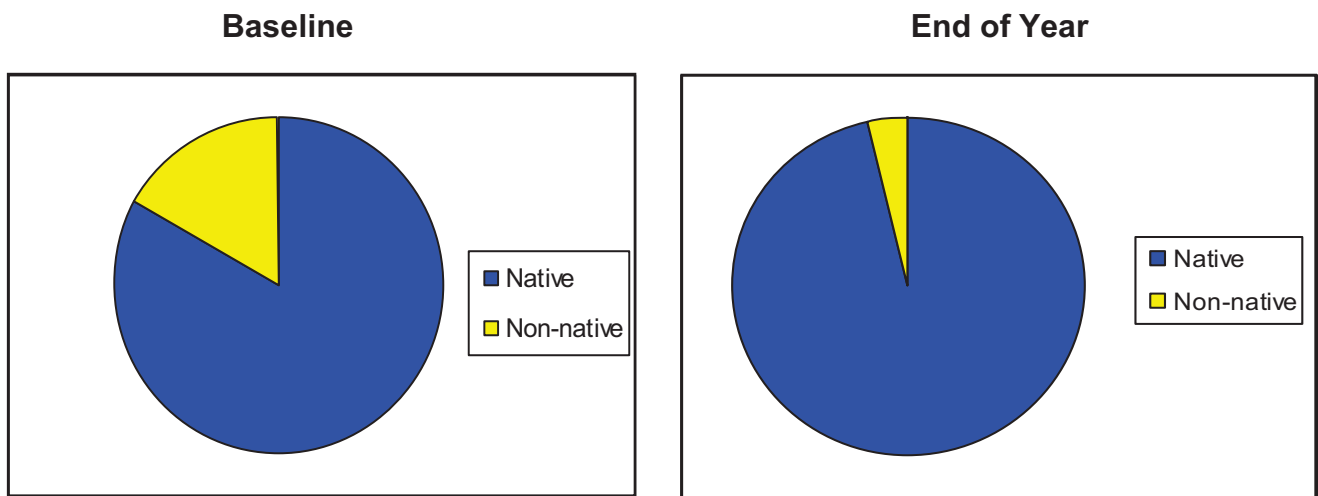


Figure 3. Percentage of pupils naming species which they considered to be either native or non-native to Epping Forest at baseline and the end of the year (Year 3).

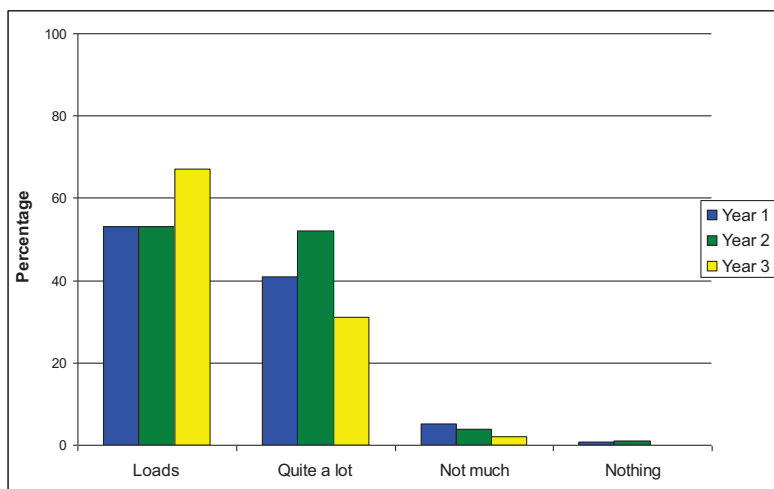
These two graphs show that pupils gained in their understanding of the types of animals that may be found in Epping Forest. At baseline many thought they might find tigers, lions and monkeys. By the end of each year, pupils considered it likely to find squirrels, foxes, insects and a variety of pond invertebrates.



Pupils exploring the Forest in Module 1.

Discovering Epping Forest

c) Pupil learning: 'How much did you learn about ponds?'



The majority of pupils thought they had learnt 'loads' or 'quite a lot' about ponds with only a small percentage in the lowest categories. Learning improved through the project, demonstrating that formative evaluation had been used to enhance programme delivery.

Figure 4. Percentage of pupils considering how much they had learnt about ponds, Module 3.

d) Pupil learning: 'How much did you learn about why we should look after trees?'

Pupils learnt a lot about why they should look after trees during their practical conservation work in Epping Forest (part of Module 4) including the damage people do to the Forest. Learning was higher in the last two years of the project.

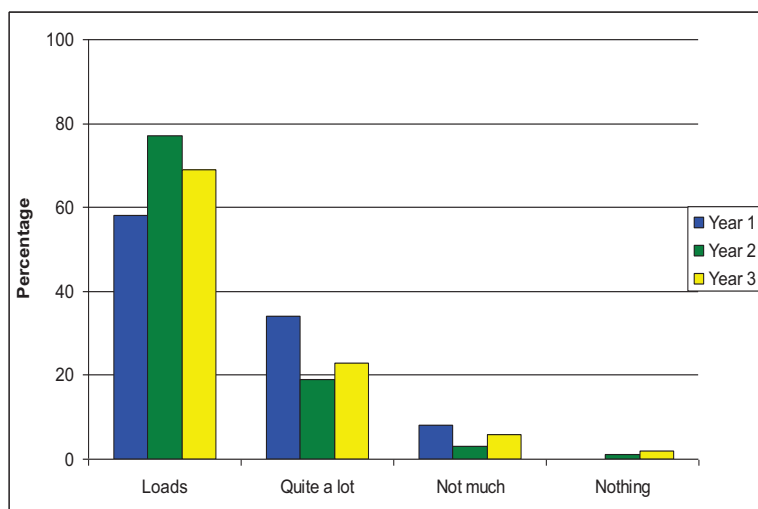


Figure 5. Percentage of pupils considering how much they had learnt about why they should look after trees, Module 4.

e) Pupil learning: 'How much did you learn about the damage people can do to the Forest?'

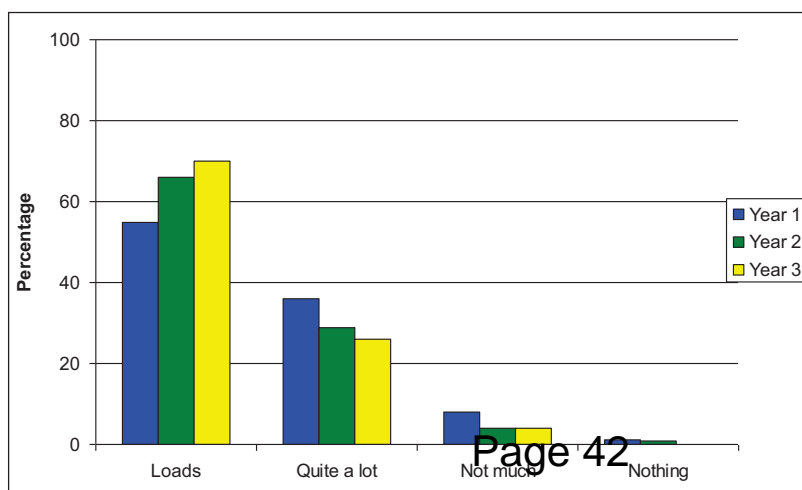


Figure 6. Percentage of pupils considering how much they had learnt about how people can damage the Forest, Module 5.

Discovering Epping Forest

2. Champion feedback – baseline and end of year

Forest Champions were asked the same set of questions at the beginning and end of each academic year.

Baseline, Year 3: September 2011

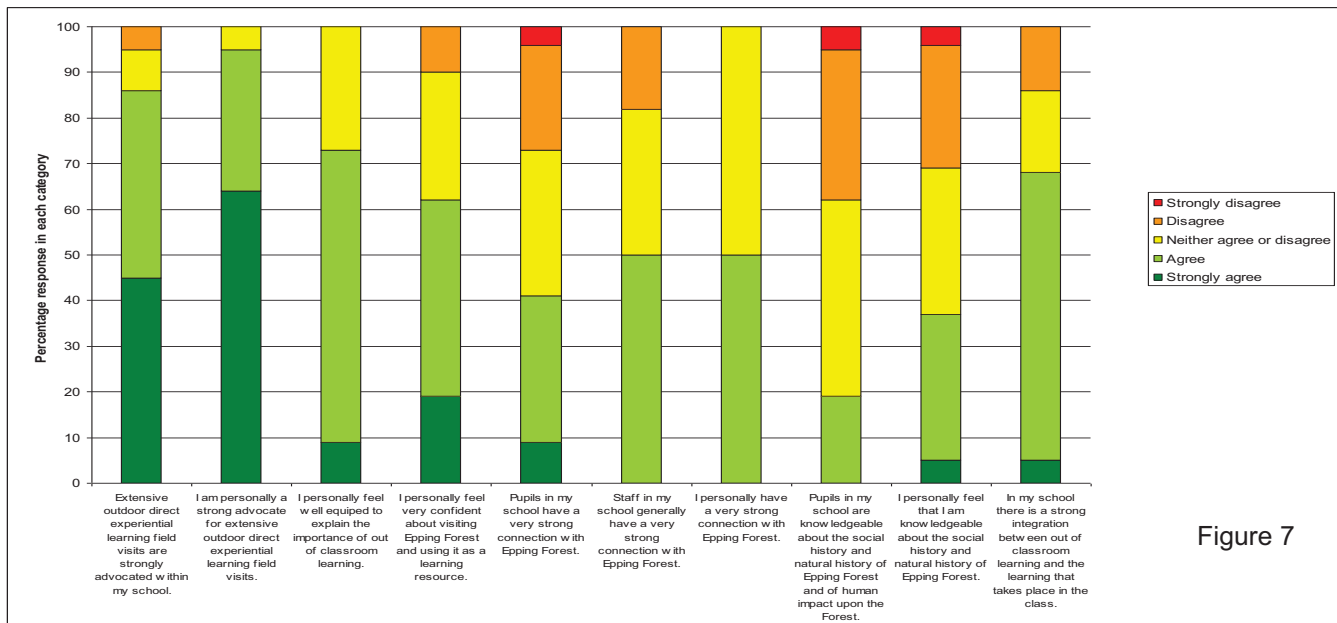


Figure 7

End of Year 3: July 2012

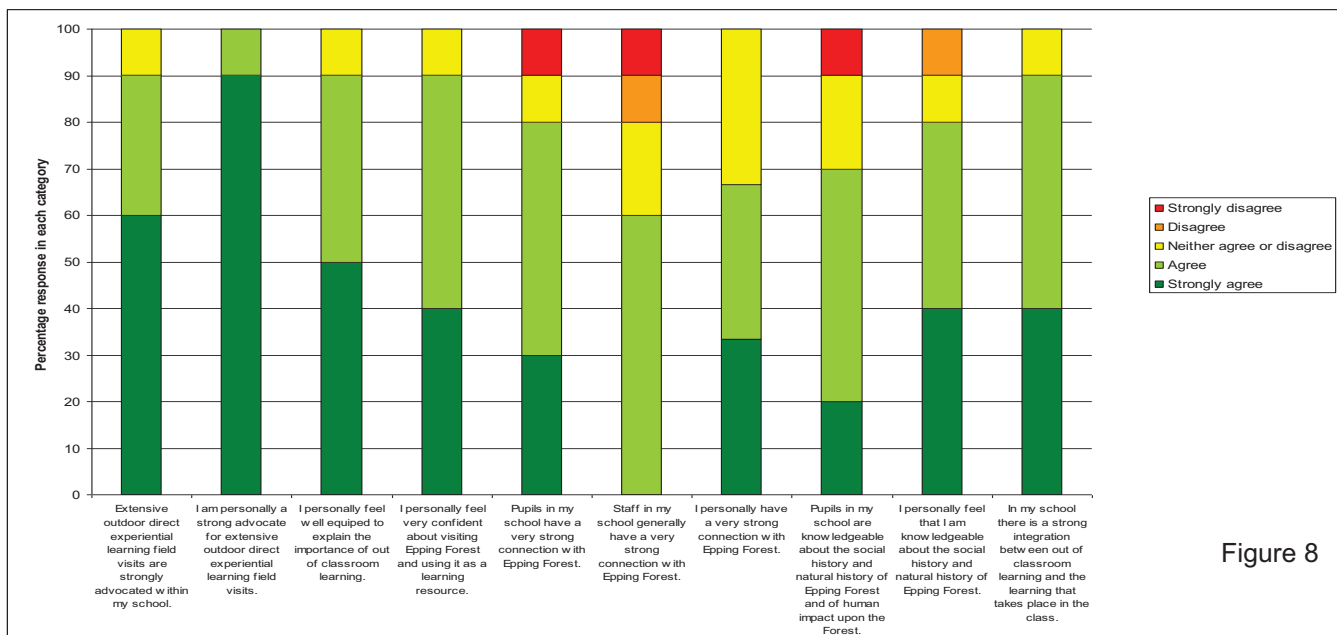


Figure 8

Champions showed a considerable improvement in responses across the course of one year. Overall champions thought they, their school and pupils were more confident in their knowledge and understanding of Epping Forest.

Discovering Epping Forest

3. Champion's workshops

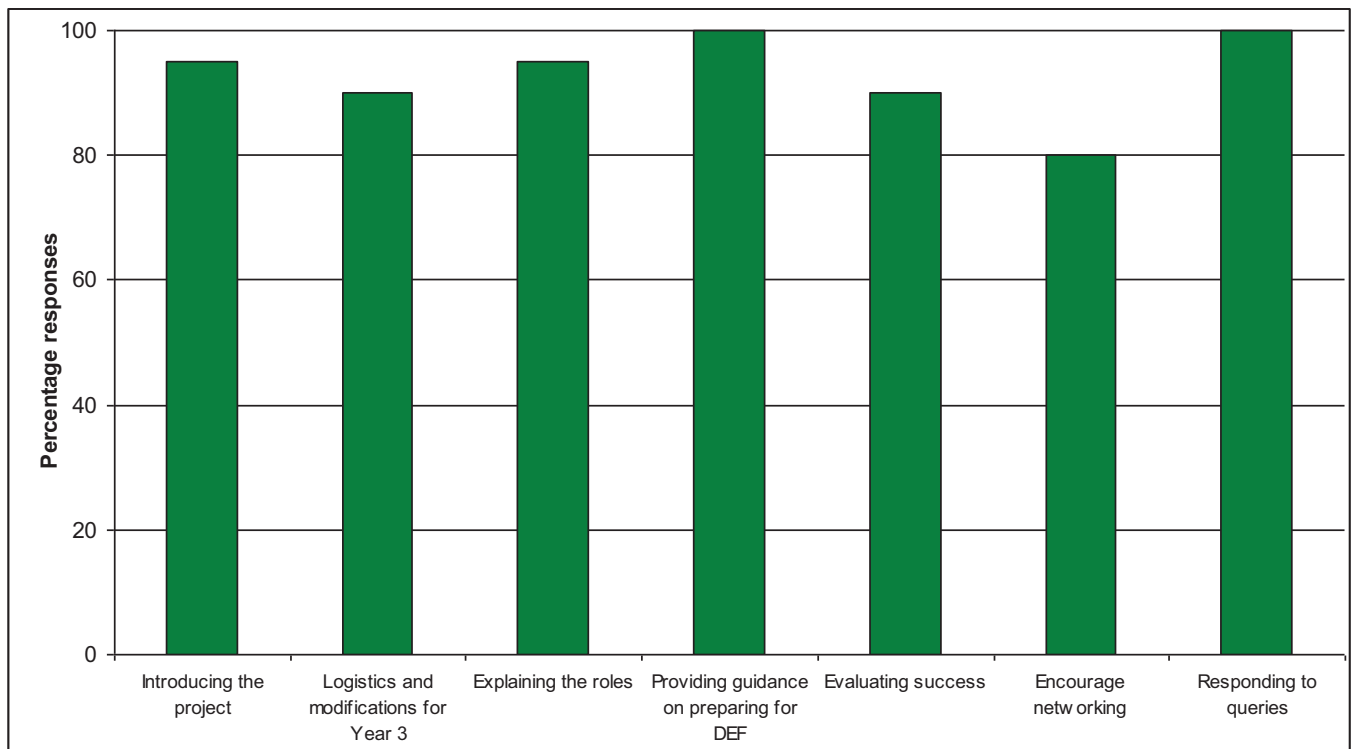


Figure 9. Percentage of champions rating in the highest category in a 5-point scale to various criteria asked at the start of Year 3.

Champions were very satisfied with the workshops, with over 80% of all feedback rated in the highest category on a 5-point scale. Figure 9 shows responses by champions to Workshop 5 at the start of Year 3 of the project.

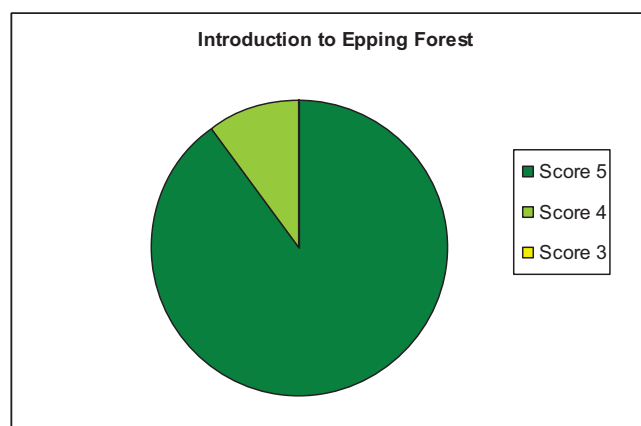
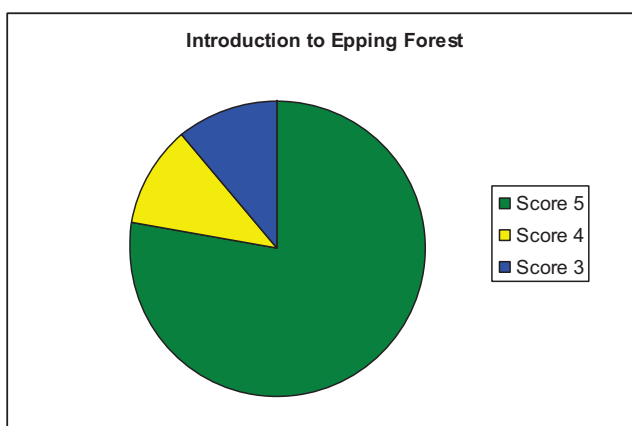
4. Activity improvement

Teachers were asked to score the delivery and success of each activity within modules. Below is a selection of graphs which demonstrate activity improvement across the course of the project.

Module 1

Year 2

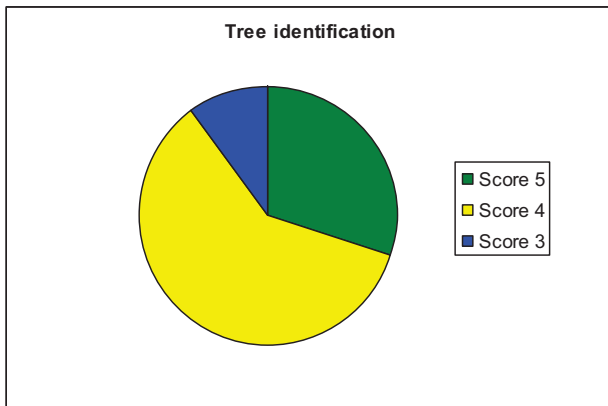
Year 3



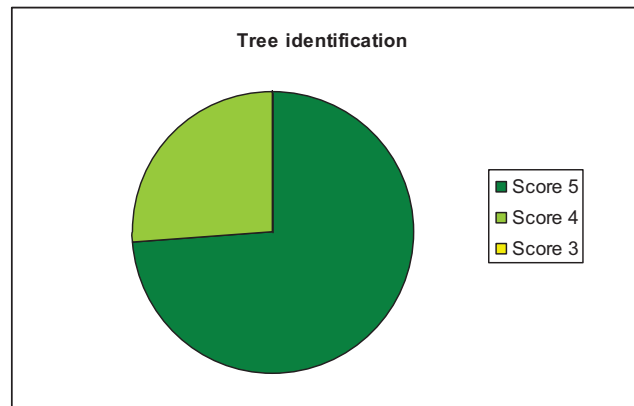
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Module 2

Year 1

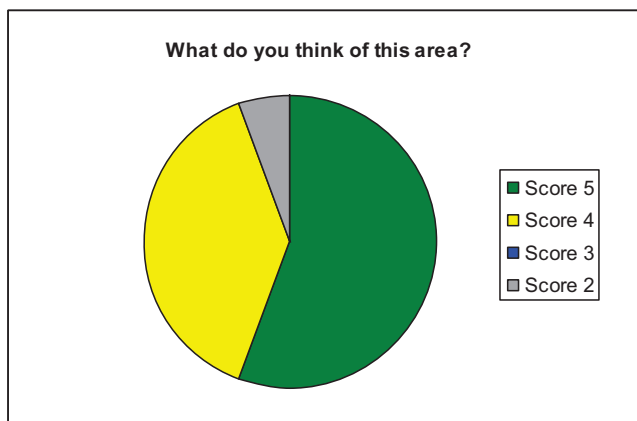


Year 3

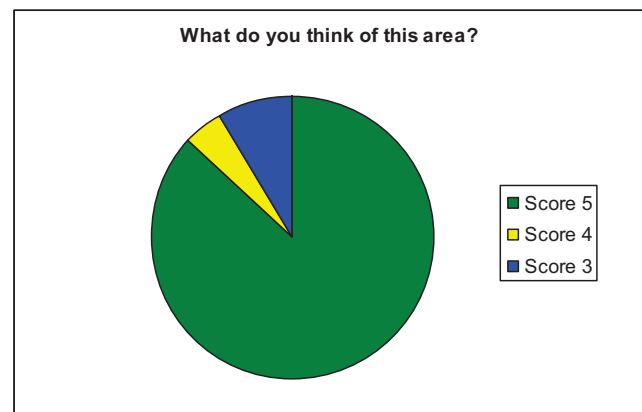


Module 5

Year 1



Year 2



Pupils carrying out a tree report, Module 2

Discovering Epping Forest

5. Teacher comments

What did you appreciate most?

Module 1

"Fantastic outdoor learning & hands on experiences."

"Children were excited and motivated. They had a great first introduction to the Forest."

"Lovely introduction to the Forest. Children used many senses to discover the wonders of the Forest."



Module 2

"An excellent experience for the children with relevant & well structured activities."

"Fantastic! Children have learned a great deal about their local site as well as general scientific knowledge about plants."

"Very enjoyable. Complex processes simply explained in a visual & kinaesthetic way."

Module 3

"Superb - pitched at the correct level - lots of scientific enquiry."

"Outstanding. The children were totally absorbed. This has been an excellent and totally child-centred experience."

"The children were totally inspired and engaged all day. They appeared to be learning throughout."

Discovering Epping Forest



Module 4

“Really interactive, kinaesthetic and interesting for the children, and cross curricular.”

“Children learned such an amazing amount about how the Forest was used in the past - they were really engaged with the activities which furthered their learning.”

“Excellent. The children built on previous learning when asked to recall historical and scientific information.”

Module 5

“Fantastic opportunity for children to learn how they can look after the Forest.”

“Excellent sessions on investigating the effects of trampling on path in Epping Forest.”

“Busy, relevant, interesting and child-centred.”



Module 6

“Excellent. The delivery and learning is second to none.”

“Fantastic balance of hands on activities/games/ reflecting on learning.”

“The whole atmosphere was positive and involving, with positive outcomes for staff and public.”

Discovering Epping Forest

6. Pupil comments

Describe your day in Epping Forest

Module 1

"One of the best days of my life."

"I learned a lot about Epping Forest, the trees, acorns, animal habitats and loads more."

"My day was fantastic and adventurous."

"It was fascinating and full of wonder."

Module 2

"So calm and peaceful it feels fresh and I love being near nature."

"Really good and I had a FANTASTIC day."

"Golden 10/10, 100%."

Module 3

"I enjoyed myself very much with exploring and learning and discovering."

"It was amazing learning about new animals. I like the type of equipment because it made me feel like a scientist."

Module 4

"I think Epping Forest is a beautiful piece of history and just to be there is a joy."

"Overall it was fantastic and I liked cutting the trees."

"Magnificent. It couldn't have been better."

Module 5

"Brilliant and super. I wish I didn't have to go home."

"Amazing - it gets better every trip."

"The most educational forest trip ever."

Module 6

"Fabulous, amazing, fun, enjoyable and superb!"

"I learnt quite a lot about Epping Forest and learnt about conservation. Amazing."

Discovering Epping Forest

Learning Points and Programme Improvements

As part of the formative evaluation and continuous programme improvement, class teachers and tutors delivering modules were asked to identify learning points that could be reviewed and used to lead improvements in each module over the three years.

Module	Learning Point	Action taken
1	In Year 1, staff from Epping Forest Field Centre (EFFC) went to partner schools prior to taking the pupils to learning sites for activities. There were a few problems: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many schools were not near bus stops routed to EFFC, making access difficult by staff. • Parking at schools and in local areas was highly restricted. • Schools had highly variable start/finish times making arrival and departure difficult. • Distance from schools to learning sites was often considerable, leading to a reduction in time for teaching. 	In Years 2 and 3, EFFC staff met schools at sites. This proved more time efficient as it enabled an extended learning time for the pupils in the Forest. <i>“The extra time in the Forest was really beneficial for the pupils,”</i> EFFC tutor. One aim of the project was for Champions to start leading school trips independently. Meeting schools at learning sites was the first step in achieving this.
	Site issues: litter, dog faeces and lack of toilets proved a problem at some learning sites.	The cleanest areas within learning sites were selected for activity use in subsequent years and City of London staff focussed the attention of litter pickers on sites used.
	Teachers/pupils did not always have suitable outdoor clothing.	This issue was raised more clearly at pre-course liaison/champion’s workshops in subsequent years.
	Class teachers did not always receive pre-course information.	Pre-course activities were emailed to schools prior to Module 1 in later years. Evidence this worked: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 1: 79% of feedback for pre-module information in top two categories. • Year 2: 95% in top two categories for the same criteria.
2	Some teachers suggested more interactive activities involving less listening time by children.	Activities were altered to involve more group work and hands-on experiences. Feedback by class teachers in later years demonstrated this: <i>“Good balance of listening and</i>

Discovering Epping Forest

2		<p><i>hands-on activities”.</i> <i>“Great hands-on experiences”.</i> <i>“Good activities and pace. Hands on, relevant learning”.</i> <i>“I thought that the fact that there was less written work than last year was a good thing”.</i></p>
	Pencils and other consumables were not always available at sites	Resource allocation was improved in Years 2 and 3 of the project.
3	Some teachers thought there were too many activities packed into one day.	<p>The programme was altered to allow fewer activities.</p> <p>Teacher feedback reflected this: <i>“The whole day flowed well”.</i> <i>“A fantastically organised day”.</i></p>
4	Too many pupils and school staff were inappropriately dressed for January in the Forest.	<p>Pre-course information highlighted the need for suitable clothing.</p> <p>There were only two comments by teachers relating to the weather in Years 2 & 3 combined.</p>
5	Teachers observed that there was overlap in module content between some of the modules in Year 1.	Clarification of module content was made at the end of Year 1 so changes to the programme could be made in Years 2 & 3.
	The pace of morning activities could have been more engaging in Year 1.	<p>In Year 2, activities were altered to make them more child-centred, exploratory and with further discovery learning. This led to an improvement in pupil and teacher feedback in Years 2 and 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 1: 79% of teacher feedback for fieldwork in the top category. • Year 2: 100% of teacher feedback for the same criteria in the top category.
6	Pupils did not like going back to school after being in the Forest.	In Years 2 and 3 the afternoon activities were changed so they did not have to be completed in the classroom. This resulted in more time being spent outside, except in poor weather, or if teachers specifically requested returning to the classroom.

Discovering Epping Forest

The Legacy

Summary of the DEF legacy

The legacies of the Discovering Epping Forest project include the following:

- Increased awareness and appreciation of Epping Forest among participating students and teachers.
- A network of teaching professionals in local schools committed to teaching in and about the Forest, acting as 'Epping Forest Champions'. This includes actively participating in the DEF modules, enthusing their schools with regards to Epping Forest, meeting with each other at least twice per annum and working together to develop cross-curricular educational resources for KS2, based on the programme modules.
- A growing number of primary schools have built DEF work or activities into their timetables and are thinking to use the Forest regularly.
- Raised levels of skill, knowledge and confidence about outdoor teaching within participating schools.
- Greater use of Epping Forest by schools arriving by foot or on public transport will increase understanding of how the Forest can be accessed without schools incurring any costs, and without bringing extra traffic.
- Increased understanding and appreciation of each Forest Learning Partner that enabled more effective working relations.
- Promotion of all the Forest Learning Partners' services through the programme and online materials, raising the profile of Epping Forest.
- An enhanced ability amongst the Learning Providers to work in partnership and understand how services can be delivered in a complementary manner.

Discovering Epping Forest

Legacy for the schools

Pupils and staff at partner schools now have increased awareness and appreciation of Epping Forest. These schools now have greater use of Epping Forest by arriving by foot or on public transport and have increased understanding of how the Forest can be accessed.

As a result of the DEF programme there is now a network of teaching professionals in local schools who are committed to teaching in and about the Forest, acting as 'Epping Forest Champions'. These individuals now have raised levels of skill, knowledge and confidence about outdoor teaching. They also enthuse their schools with regards to Epping Forest and have worked together and workshops to develop cross-curricular educational resources for KS2, based on the programme modules. It is hoped that they will continue to network and to utilise the support of the Epping Forest Learning Providers.

Teachers have identified a range of legacies within their schools including:

- 'Our school now has an integrated curriculum with its own 'Forest Module' which will continue after the Project'.
- 'The Project provided opportunities for relevant writing exercises which made it more interesting'.
- Sustainability: the plan is to continue to take the children to the Forest after the lifetime of the project.
- Other Year 5 groups have visited the Forest outside of the project.
- Teachers feel more confident in taking other year groups (e.g. one champion has taken her Year 1 class to the Forest).
- Whole school approach: one school now has a vegetable patch and wildlife area.

Discovering Epping Forest

- During a whole year trip, the children that had participated in the DEF module really stood out as they were more confident being outside and noticeably more knowledgeable about natural habitats because of their experiences in the project.
- The Project has provided ideas and activities for school teachers.
- DEF work can be incorporated into all curriculum subjects e.g. science, geography, creative writing.
- 'The parents got involved which was really good since the community surrounding the school rarely leave their local area'.
- Activities have been used across the school in KS1 as well as KS2.

A legacy for the Learning Providers

City of London Corporation learning service

1. Course development

As a result of developing a module for the DEF project, the QEHL now has a permanent school session entitled 'Epping Forest through History (Case study: Victorians) KS2'. This is available to all schools at Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge. The DEF module equipment is now used for this session. In addition, programme material has been incorporated into a highly successful public family learning event on the theme of the Second World War.

2. More learners at QEHL

The DEF project has increased confidence, enthusiasm and ability among DEF Champions to continue using the Forest as a learning resource for classes. This should boost the number of learners to the QEHL. Many classes and the adults have intentions of returning to use the newly built The View and this will help to ensure that the new centre is well-used by the public for leisure and learning.

A wider and larger audience has been engaged than our resources had previously allowed. It has been especially gratifying to work with schools that had not brought classes to us before,

Discovering Epping Forest

particularly those from deprived areas, and to see them continue to come after the project period.

In addition, some of the former DEF Champions will add to the nucleus of teachers already involved in the City of London-led Teachers' Forum. In this way they will perpetuate the ambassadorial network of Forest-using teachers and inform development of future services including those springing from DEF modules.

3. Website resources

Some of the worksheets created for DEF will be made available as downloads from www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/eppingforestlearning. As well as encouraging more independent teaching in the Forest, the online resources will encourage greater user of the City of London website which serves other Forest-user needs. People using the website should become more aware of the other activities available. We would like to work with the other Learning Providers to ensure that the online teaching support material is added to and updated in the future.

4. Repeat visits to QEHL

We have lots of anecdotal evidence that participating children and adult helpers have spread enthusiasm for the Forest among friends and family. This has led to repeat and new visits to CoL-run Forest Centres and to events held at them. The commitment some of the children have expressed to being life-long 'Forest Guardians' provides optimism for the Forest's future well-being.

Epping Forest Centenary Trust (EFCT)

1. Delivery capacity

The Discovering Epping Forest Project has helped develop the confidence and capacity of the Trust, to secure and manage grant funded projects in the future. EFCT learned more about project management, financial accounting, development of learning plans, the identification of outputs and outcomes and evaluation.

2. Partnership working

The DEF Project increased our understanding of partnership working and the work of partners

Discovering Epping Forest

in the Forest. Through gaining a better appreciation/understanding of the other Learning Providers (including their work, role and ways of working), EFCT is better placed to develop its services in complementary areas in the future. This will contribute to the developing new Business Plan for the Trust.

3. Web site resources

The web based materials developed through the DEF project is enabling the Trust to better assist groups visiting the Forest and to expand its services to a wider range of groups.

4. Engaging new audiences

Through the DEF Project, EFCT was able to work with new audiences, increasing schools awareness of our services and encouraging new participants in the future.

Epping Forest Field Centre (EFFC)

1. Multi-partner working

The Discovering Epping Forest project enabled EFFC to develop multi-partner working with the City of London, Epping Forest Centenary Trust and Suntrap, which provided added value to core funding. EFFC developed experience in management and coordination of the programme delivery and managed an increased number of learner experiences with many pupils from the London area. The successful management and coordination of the DEF project is further evidence of EFFC's ability to manage complex projects with wide ranging outcomes.

2. Delivery capacity

Increased funding allowed an increase in Key Stage 2 delivery and allowed EFFC to teach groups and reach new audiences, especially those from the deprived London boroughs of Newham and Redbridge. The project enabled EFFC to deliver the mission of the Field Studies Council (FSC) of 'Bringing Environmental Understanding to All'.

3. Cascading learning

Learning by EFFC from the innovation and delivery of the successful City Bridge Trust funded 'Sustainable Schools™' project (2004-2007) allowed cascading of experience to develop the

Discovering Epping Forest

Discovering Epping Forest project. The Centre's reputation of receiving Outstanding in Provider Evaluation Form (PEF) assessment, obtaining the Quality Badge award in Learning Outside of the Classroom (LOtC) and excellent Health and Safety records enabled effective development and delivery of this project, which in turn has further enhanced the Centre's ability to work on further projects.

4. Best practice for documentation

By delivering the DEF project, EFFC was able to develop best practice for documenting and recording in a range of areas including: evaluation tools, pre- and post- course liaison, risk assessments, site working information cards, transport and schools liaison.

5. Outreach capacity

The DEF project enhanced the Centre's ability to deliver outreach projects at a number of learning sites within the east London area and in carrying out teaching at sites near the learners. This included developing knowledge of different learning sites, transport logistics and activity delivery. These newly acquired skills have already been applied to other projects including the City Bridge Trust funded 'Biodiversity Project'.

6. Teaching modules

EFFC has developed a stand-alone KS2 course which examines the impacts of humans on Epping Forest. This can be targeted at new primary schools thus increasing legacy of the DEF project.

Suntrap Forest Education Centre

1. Improved course delivery

Forming partnership with other Learning Providers allowed Suntrap to experience other teaching courses which resulted in improved course delivery.

2. Improved teaching capacity

Taking part in the Discovering Epping Forest Project resulted in an increase in teaching capacity by the Centre.

Discovering Epping Forest

3. Development of materials

The Centre has developed specific Epping Forest teaching resources which can be incorporated into other courses.

4. Teaching at Forest sites

The project allowed teaching at alternative Forest sites and has increased the capacity of the Centre to deliver at these locations in the future.

Other legacies

Volunteering opportunities

There are now an extended opportunities for volunteers to learn about the Forest and to be involved in helping others to learn.

Web-based learning resources

A 'learning' page on the existing CoL Epping Forest website, now includes web-based resources developed through DEF.

Networking

As a result of the DEF project there are now stronger relationships with many organisations/ influential groups active in and around the Forest including social clubs, faith groups and sports clubs. The links between the Learning Providers are stronger.

Links with other branching out legacies

The Discovering Epping Forest project was part of the HLF funded Branching Out project, that also provided new facilities for learning at the QEHL complex with updated displays the museum collection and other exhibits. Butler's Retreat has been created as an improved facility for users to Epping Forest. In addition there an increased emphasis on optimising learning throughout the Epping Forest events programmes.

Discovering Epping Forest

The future

At the time of the production of this report in October 2012 all of the project deliverables have been addressed with except of the delivery of the final champion's workshop. In addition to providing the opportunity to share this report the workshop will highlight the value of continuing to utilise the:

- Forest as a learning resource
- DEF learning materials that are available on the website
- Epping Forest schools network for mutual support
- Specialist services of the Epping Forest Learning Providers

It is envisaged that the learning from this project, at every level, will continue to inspire the future of learning within Epping Forest.

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to the Heritage Lottery Fund and City of London (match fund) for the funding for this project that could not have taken place without this support and to each of the Learning Providers for their cooperation and mutual partnership which made delivery of this project possible. We are grateful to all of the school staff, pupils and adult helpers who took part in this project. Lastly, we are especially grateful to all the volunteers who assisted in many aspects of project delivery and to the staff who invested huge efforts to ensure the success of this programme.

Discovering Epping Forest

Appendix 1. Evaluation reports 2009 – 2012

Module 1 detailed report Year 1	Module 1 detailed report Years 1+2
Module 2 detailed report Year 1	Module 2 detailed report Year 1+2
Module 3 detailed report Year 1	Module 3 detailed report Year 1+2
Module 4 detailed report Year 1	Module 4 detailed report Year 1+2
Module 5 detailed report Year 1	Module 5 detailed report Year 1+2
Module 6 detailed report Year 1	Module 6 detailed report Year 1+2
End of Year 1 report	End of Year 2 report
Champion's Workshop 1 evaluation	Module 1 detailed report Years 1-3
Champion's Workshop 2 evaluation	Module 2 detailed report Years 1-3
Champion's Workshop 3 evaluation	Module 3 detailed report Years 1-3
Champion's Workshop 4 evaluation	Module 4 detailed report Years 1-3
Champion's Workshop 5 evaluation	Module 5 detailed report Years 1-3
Champion's Workshop 6 evaluation	Module 6 detailed report Years 1-3
Champion's Workshop 7 evaluation	

Discovering Epping Forest

Appendix 2. List of participating schools

School name	Local Education Authority	Outreach site	Project years participating
Carpenters Primary School	Newham	Wanstead Park	1-3
Central Park Primary School	Newham	Wanstead Park	1-3
Chapel End Junior School	Waltham Forest	Barn Hoppit and Hollow Ponds	1-3
Chingford CofE Voluntary Controlled Junior School	Waltham Forest	Barn Hoppit	1-3
Chingford Hall Community Primary School	Waltham Forest	Barn Hoppit	1-3
Christchurch Primary School	Redbridge	Wanstead Park	1-3
Coppice Primary School	Redbridge	Theydon Plain and Wanstead Park	1-3
Edinburgh Primary School	Waltham Forest	Hollow Ponds	1-3
Elmhurst Primary	Newham	Wanstead Park	2-3
High Beech Primary	Epping Forest	High Beech	2-3
Kensington Primary School	Newham	Wanstead Park	1-3
Lambourne Primary School	Epping Forest	Theydon Plain	1-3
Lathom Junior School	Newham	Wanstead Park	1
Longshaw Primary School	Waltham Forest	Highams Park	1-3
Mission Grove Primary School	Waltham Forest	Hollow Ponds	1
Oakdale Junior	Redbridge	Wanstead Park	2-3
Parkside Primary School (was Wellington)	Waltham Forest	Barn Hoppit	2-3
Ranelagh Primary School	Newham	Wanstead Park	2-3
Ray Lodge Primary School	Redbridge	Highams Park	1

Discovering Epping Forest

School name	Local Education Authority	Outreach site	Project years participating
Roding Primary School	Redbridge	Wanstead Park	2-3
Sandringham Junior	Newham	Wanstead Park	2-3
St Edward's Catholic Primary School	Newham	Wanstead Park	1-3
St Luke's Primary School	Newham	Wanstead Park	1
St Mary's Catholic Primary School	Waltham Forest	Barn Hoppit	1-3
St Saviour's C of E VA Primary School	Waltham Forest	Hollow Ponds	1
Sybourn Primary School	Waltham Forest	Hollow Ponds	2-3
The Woodside School	Waltham Forest	Hollow Ponds	1
Thomas Willingale School	Epping Forest	Theydon Plain	1-3
Thomas Willingale School 2	Epping Forest	Theydon Plain	2-3
Tollgate Primary School	Newham	Wanstead Park	1
Uphall Primary School	Redbridge	Wanstead Park	1-3
Upshire Primary Foundation School	Epping Forest	Theydon Plain	1-3
Wells Primary School	Redbridge	Highams Park	½

Discovering Epping Forest

Appendix 3. Example teacher and pupil evaluation forms

Pupil evaluation: Module 1.

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Pupil Evaluation: Introduction to Epping Forest						
Name:						
School:						
Date:						
We hope that you enjoyed your day with us, and that what you have learned today will help with your appreciation of Epping Forest. Please help us to help our next group of pupils by filling in this feedback form with help from an adult.						
<i>Thank you for taking the time to complete this form</i>						
Please tick to show how happy you are with the following:						Please add any Comments here
Tutor friendliness						
Morning activities						
Afternoon activities						
Enjoyment of the day						
Overall						
How would you describe your day in Epping Forest?						

Discovering Epping Forest				
Reflection on Learning				
How much have you learned today about the following?				
Please Tick	Loads	Quite a Lot	Not much	Nothing
Epping Forest.				
How people have affected the forest.				
Trees				
What helped you to learn?				
How could the course be changed to help others to learn more in the future?				
This is my picture to show something that I have seen and learned about today:				

Percentages responses in each category (face) were calculated by dividing the number of pupils ticking in each category box by the total number of ticks made by all pupils for each module. The highest category (face) was taken as the smiley face to the left.

Teacher evaluation: Module 1.

Evaluation Form						
Your name:..... School:						
Tutor name:..... Module: Introduction to Epping Forest						
Date:						
Please help us to meet your needs, and to ensure we can continue to develop Discovering Epping Forest learning materials, by filling in this form and handing it back to the tutor.						
How happy were you with the following:						
The Booking:	Booking process					
	Helpfulness of staff					
	Pre-module information					
The Tutor:	Pre-module liaison					
	Friendliness of tutor					
	Relationship with pupils					
	Group management					
	Safety					
The Module:	Equipment					
	Site(s) visited					
	Fieldwork					
	Classroom work					
	Handouts					
	Relevance of day					
Overall:						
1. In a short statement how would you summarise your evaluation of the learning experiences provided for your class today?						
2. Would you be happy for us to use this quote attributed to you in any public material (eg website, reports etc). YES/NO (Please delete as applicable)						
3. What did you appreciate most?						
4. What did you like least? (*Please specify details of any concerns regarding the above)						

How well ...	Evaluation 1 point to 5 (see ?)	Comment/ Evidence
Did we meet the outcomes for the following Key Activities?		
Introduction to Epping Forest		
Consider how to travel to the Forest		
True or false		
Smelly smoothies		
Germination game		
Tree tag		
Eye in the sky		
Feely boxes		
Sound fists		
Nature's palettes		
Leaf relay		
Bird call game		
... did the pupils learn?		
... did the module meet the needs of different ability levels?		
... were equal opportunities catered for?		
... was the module 'accessible' for those with disabilities/ special needs?		
... suited was the site?		
... did the module provide a basis for which you can extend learning		
What went well?		
What would you do differently in future (and why)?		
What recommendations do you have for others?		

Inspiring environmental understanding through first-hand experience



Epping Forest Field Centre



The Centre is managed by FSC for, and on behalf of, the City of London

Head of Centre's report on the Centre's 2013 Plan and Financial Estimates

The **attached** draft 2013 Action Plan and 2013 financial estimates are presented to the Committee **FOR APPROVAL**.

The Plan is intended to support the visions of FSC and of the City of London and deliver the City's environmental education service in Epping Forest. Aims for 2013 include:

- respond imaginatively to the City of London's consultation on education in Epping Forest
- recognise FSC's 70th anniversary through 'branding' an 'open day' event and other activities as appropriate
- build on recent achievements and innovations and deliver the next phase of the 2011-14 Plan

The City of London payment has been estimated at a 12.5% reduction from the 2010 payment level and is believed to be consistent with the payment for 2012.

Recommendation

I would welcome questions and recommend that this Plan be approved.

Contact:

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2013 Plan - for JCC approval

This Plan has been developed by the Head of Centre and his team in response to feedback from stakeholders and customers and is submitted to the JCC for approval.

For a detailed background please refer to:

- Head of Centre's report on 2011 (presented at April 2012 JCC meeting)
- EFFC Business Plan 2011-2014 (approved at the April 2011 JCC meeting)



In 2013 we aim to:

- support the visions of FSC and of the City of London and deliver the City's environmental education service in Epping Forest
- respond imaginatively to the City of London's consultation on education in Epping Forest
- recognise FSC's 70th anniversary through 'branding' an 'open day' event and other activities as appropriate
- build on our recent achievements and innovations and deliver the next phase of our 2011-14 Plan including further development of our provision of learning experiences that are more locally available to north and east London with an emphasis on working with schools especially those in disadvantaged communities

We know that continuing to build the capacity of our team (to innovate, to generate new income, to find efficiency savings, to perform well against personal targets and to seek continuous improvement) remains crucial to the achievement of our Centre targets for 2013 and to maintain the progress of our work.

Key performance indicators	2009 Actual	2010 Actual	2011 Actual	2012 probable	2013 Target
Learner experiences	19,694	22,004	23,240	22,000	22,000 #
Volunteer days	410	502	388.5	470	500
People: IIP	FSC awarded: 	Standards maintained	Standards maintained	FSC awarded: 	Maintain Standards
Quality	Quality Badge awarded by 	Quality Badge awarded by 	Standards maintained	Standards maintained.	Exceed the standard for the Quality Badge in external assessment
Health & Safety	 Safety Shield Silver	Prepared to meet the standards for Safety Shield Gold	 Safety Shield Gold	Standards maintained.	Achieve Safety Shield Gold
Meet/ exceed customer expectations				90% of customers recorded 'yes' on feedback forms	> 90% of customers to record 'yes' on feedback forms
Increase customer environmental understanding				>90% of customers recorded 'yes' on feedback forms	> 90% of customers to record 'yes' on feedback forms

Note: 22,000 learner experiences is a very challenging target for 2013 because, for the first time in four years, there is no funding for DEF learner experiences to bolster numbers by up to 2,250 per annum. It is hoped that the breadth and attraction of our programmes, appropriate marketing and the work done to increase our capabilities to deliver outreach will help to make this achievable, even allowing for the difficult economic environment.

Our broad objectives by key theme area

[these will be converted to SMART objectives and be managed through personal action plans]

Programme development and delivery

- Achieve the 22,000 learner experiences target and associated target income with niche data monitoring and appropriate adjustments to marketing activity and optimising provision at local learning locations including the DEF learning sites
- Develop and deliver activities for a wide range of learners (especially for North & East London schools) meeting (curricular) needs and ensuring that all programmes consistently adopt our own best practice and external best practice and that they engender enjoyment and discovery learning.
- Use FSC's 70th anniversary branding to promote the work of the Centre especially at an open event in the summer
- Maintain our reputation for outstanding visitor satisfaction, responding effectively to issues and opportunities arising from feedback and meeting targets in relation to customer feedback
- Ensure that our operations are effective and that we exceed the standard of the 'Quality Badge'.

External affairs and projects

- Deliver intended outcomes for projects for which funding has already been secured [from City Bridge Trust, EU, British Ecology Society Centenary Fund, Epping & Theydon Garnon Joint Charities]
- Seek additional income for 2013 and beyond requesting support from the 'Associates' and from appropriate City and FSC HO staff [including grants, CSR projects, use of the Centre as a venue for hire, corporate training (team building), sponsorship, advertising, 'Associates' corporate membership and donations]
- Produce newsletters linked to enhanced web-based content (with search engine optimisation) to include the circulation to adult learners, associate tutors and some more partner organisations with ever increasing utilisation of social media as part of our marketing activity
- Seek support for marketing and publicity from appropriate City and FSC HO staff
- Seek funding to support the development of 'inspired by Epping Forest' (arts) provision

Systems

- Implement the Health and Safety plan and continue to meet 100% of the requirements of Northgate Arinso Safety Shield Gold standard
- Improve effectiveness and efficiency of all aspects of administration and non teaching work and ensure the production of timely, accurate and reliable management information to inform performance management
- Meet the requirements of IIP, ensuring an effective staff & volunteer team with a commitment to an exceptional level of performance, development and continuous improvement
- Liaise with VAEF, City of London and other partners to share ideas and to seek continued improvements in the relation to support for and benefits from volunteers.
- Collaborate effectively with City of London officers in relation to maintenance of the facilities and improvements to environmental impacts where feasible
- Maintain and improve where possible the Centre grounds for wildlife, learning and enjoyment, including (subject to feasibility) the upgrading the existing Met station to become fully automated with access to live 'data' and the provision of new features (viewing platform, low ropes course, improved access to wheelchair path and pond complex) - subject to permissions and feasibility.

In 2012 we experienced reduced income in comparison to 2011 (with rising basic costs) ; this will be compounded in 2013 with zero DEF income (this was approximately £21,000 in 2012). A significant part of our response in December 2011 was making our part-time Administrator role redundant and discontinuing the role of Trainee Tutor. In 2012 we have made further savings in relation to salary costs by:

- Leaving a Tutor role (Laurence Jarvis) at 0.4 full-time equivalent without reversion to full time as originally envisaged in 2012
- Not replacing a full-time Tutor (Christian Kiel) who left at the end of July 2012

Unfortunately mandatory changes to pension arrangements will increase pension costs within the salaries budget by estimated £7,000 that will offset some of the savings. Currently it is anticipated that the main impacts of the reduced staffing level will be continue to be in relation to the speed at which we can respond to new challenges and progress work of a developmental nature and some slippage from our aspiration of consistently 'outstanding' and continuously improving performance.

Our intention is to give a very high priority to the objective:

- 'Seek additional income for 2013 and beyond requesting support from the 'Associates 'and from appropriate City and FSC HO staff [including grants, CSR projects, use of the Centre as a venue for hire, corporate training (team building), sponsorship, advertising, 'Associates' corporate membership and donations]'

It is hoped that the additional income secured for 2013 will enable us to cover the deficit shown and to do more of the things that will take forward the visions of the City and FSC.

If we are unsuccessful in securing this 'additional' income some EFFC operations will be vulnerable in at least the medium and longer term. This vulnerability becomes acute with significant negative impacts occurring within the lifetime of this Plan if the income estimates shown below are not realised. As in past years there is no contingency funding in the expenditure estimates and any shortfall in income would have to be managed with cost savings. By way of illustration, if there was a shortfall in the region of £2.5 - 2.7k (equivalent to a further 5% drop in City of London payment or to 10% drop in courses income), these are the likely impacts:

- Withdrawal of offer of volunteer travel expenses and/or reduced number of volunteers. (impact will be a reduction in our capacity to deliver the Plan because we will inevitably have fewer volunteer days)
- Withdrawal of a proposed 'transitional relief discount' against full course fees for the previously wholly subsidised DEF schools (impact on DEF legacy)
- Discontinuation of 'Winter Wonderland Week' special needs provision if not fully funded from external support (impact on inclusiveness of programming)
- Cessation of the out of school activities 'Safaris' programme
- Cancellation of free taster family promotional activities and open day and seasonal celebrations event (impact on standing in community and promotional activity)

These aspects of our operations (with the exception of the more recent DEF project) have been built over many years and there is likely to be a shared disappointment amongst staff, stakeholders and service users if these cutbacks become necessary. However a much more serious situation would arise with deeper and more widespread negative effects if income shortfalls lead to reduced staffing levels. Staffing is the crucial controllable determinant of income as well as expenditure. It is also the resource that determines the degree of success in the delivery of mission and achievement of the objectives in this Plan including our commitments to funders; as always retention will be of crucial importance.

The demand for our services remains very strong and there is a clear trend of increasing income over the past 20 years and we have a greater than 50% success rate with grant applications so it is reasonable to assume that there will be additional income. The unknown factor is how much additional we will be able to generate before the end of 2013.

Account Heading	2013 Estimates
Teaching	£271,000
Grants, sponsorship & restricted funds*	£32,500
Others (staff rent, hire, professional services, sales)	£20,507
Investment fund	£2,375
Sub total	£326,382
City of London Corporation Funding	£52,752
Total EFFC Income	£379,134
Salaries & associate tutor costs	£293,000
Training	£650
Heat & Light	£13,000
Insurance	£8,700
Transport	£2,750
Library & equipment	£3,000
Food	£5,750
Cleaning	£1,350
Uniform	£200
Premises, furniture & estate	£1,500
Administration	£10,500
Rates & water	£7,360
Depreciation	£1,050
FSC Central costs (@14% of budgeted expenditure)	£48,833
Total Expenditure	£397,643
Operating Surplus/ Deficit	£-18,509