



Epping Forest Centre Joint Consultative Committee

Date: FRIDAY, 20 APRIL 2012

Time: 11.30am

Venue: EPPING FOREST FIELD CENTRE, PAUL'S NURSERY ROAD, HIGH BEACH, LOUGHTON, ESSEX, IG10 4A

Members: Barbara Newman (Chairman)
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

Chris Duffield
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

AGENDA

Public 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 26 October 2011 (copy attached).

For Decision
(Pages 1 - 4)
4. **HEAD OF CENTRE'S REPORT ON ACTIVITY IN 2011**
Report of Head of Centre, Epping Forest (copy attached).

For Information
(Pages 5 - 10)
5. **HEAD OF CENTRE'S REPORT ON PROGRESS IN 2012**
Report of Head of Centre, Epping Forest (copy attached).

For Information
(Pages 11 - 14)
6. **HEAD OF CENTRE'S REPORT ON DISCOVERING EPPING FOREST**
Report of Head of Centre, Epping Forest (Copy Attached).

For Information
(Pages 15 - 18)
7. **EPPING FOREST FIELD STUDY CENTRE - OUTCOME OF BUILDING CONDITION SURVEY**
Report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest (copy attached).

For Information
(Pages 19 - 26)
8. **EPPING FOREST VISITOR SERVICES ACTIVITIES**
Report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest (copy attached).

For Information
(Pages 27 - 36)
9. **QUESTIONS**
10. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**
11. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**
To be confirmed.

EPPING FOREST CENTRE JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 26 OCTOBER 2011

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EPPING FOREST CENTRE JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE HELD AT THE GUILDHALL, NORTH WING ON WEDNESDAY, 26 OCTOBER 2011 AT 11:30AM.

Present

Members:

Verderer Peter Adams (Chairman)	City of London Corporation
Verderer Richard Morris	City of London Corporation
Chris Kington	Field Studies Council
Anthony Thomas	Field Studies Council
Steve Bunce	Head of Epping Forest Field Centre
Geoffrey Brown	Field Studies Council
Roger Chapman	Field Studies Council

Officers:

Sureka Perera	- Town Clerk's Department
Katie Odling	- Town Clerk's Department
Mark Jarvis	- Chamberlain's Department
Sue Ireland	- Director of Open Spaces
Paul Thomson	- Superintendent of Epping Forest
Jo Hurst	- Epping Forest Department
Tony Fenwick	- Epping Forest Department
Mark Bolland	- Field Studies Council
Robert Lucas	- Field Studies Council
Richard Walker	- Field Studies Council

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Barbara Newman, Alderman Gordon Haines and Andy Simpson (Field Studies Council).

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 11 May 2011, were agreed as a correct record subject to the following amendment:

Item 4 – Budget Reductions: 'These might have to be revisited should the CBT grant application prove unsuccessful. Discussions regarding the 2012 grant *would take place in October.*'

4. PROGRESS AT EPPING FOREST FIELD CENTRE IN 2011

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

The Head of Centre referred Members to the 'Summer 2011 Newsletter' and provided a brief overview of its content. He announced that on 17th October 2011, the Centre had received its 500,000th learner and a press release would be published in the coming week. He added that the Centre hoped to see further progress in the final academic year of the three year Discovering Epping Forest (DEF) project.

Following a query raised, the Head of Centre informed Members that a Teachers Workshop would be held in July 2012 to undertake the final evaluation of the project and share learning experiences and priorities. Following the evaluation process, teachers would be further consulted, following which, the final report would be produced and brought for consideration at the October/November 2012 meeting of the Epping Forest Joint Consultative Committee. Members also acknowledged the importance of an 'exit strategy' at the end of the three year DEF project.

Finally, Members were informed that a London based company had been commissioned to produce a short DVD in respect of Epping Forest for presentation to future funders.

RECEIVED.

5. DRAFT 2012 EPPING FOREST FIELD CENTRE PLAN AND FINANCIAL ESTIMATES

The Committee considered a Report of the Head of Centre which sought the approval of the Epping Forest and Field Centre 2011 Plan and Financial Estimates.

With the pressures on the Epping Forest Budget in mind, the Head of Centre proposed that the 10% reduction in the City's contribution be phased across two years with a 5% reduction in 2012 and a further 5% in 2013, but noted that this request could be challenged and the Centre would need to demonstrate why it was eligible for exceptional treatment. Members noted that the budget had not yet been brought before the Epping Forest and Commons Committee and the report would therefore be referred to the next meeting on 7 November 2011. A Member expressed concern that an exceptional case had not been presented.

Reference was made to the broad objectives in the Plan on page 11 of the report in respect of programme development and delivery, external affairs and projects and systems.

Alternative means for generating income for the Centre were being considered and the Centre was working with volunteers and associates of Epping Forest to move this matter forward.

Members discussed the account estimates on page 14 of the report which demonstrated the Head of Centre's realistic assessment of the level of income the Centre could generate in the next financial year.

Members noted that the Centre was continuing to improve its ways of working to develop the effectiveness of volunteers, however, it was difficult to predict volunteer numbers. Members noted further that the Centre had seen an increase in the number of volunteers claiming travel expenses.

RESOLVED:- That,

- (i) the report be noted, and
- (ii) the report be referred to the Epping Forest and Commons Committee at its meeting to be held on 7 November 2011, to determine the City Corporation's contribution to the Epping Forest Budget.

6. VISITOR SERVICES ACTIVITIES

The Committee considered a report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest which summarised the Visitor Services Activities undertaken between April and September 2011.

Members discussed staff movement from the visitor centre at High Beach to the Chingford Hub and, although the staffing budget had not increased, it was noted that the Chingford Hub required adequate resources in order to operate successfully. The transfer of the management of High Beach to a 3rd Sector partner was being considered and had been discussed with the Heritage Lottery Fund, who were sympathetic to the case. A further report to the Epping Forest and Commons Committee regarding this matter would be presented for consideration in due course.

The Chairman congratulated the Epping Forest Division for their work and highlighted the importance of continued dialogue between the Field Centre and the City Corporation.

RECEIVED.

7. VALUATION OF SITE

The Committee considered a report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest which sought to address the request of the Epping Forest JCC of 29 October 2010 to ensure that, in addition to the annual operating grant provided to the Field Studies Council, a monetary value was ascribed to the value of the provision and maintenance of the teaching and staff accommodation provision at High Beach.

Members noted professional valuers Bidwells and the City Surveyor had provided guidance on the market rental value of the education research building and the residential accommodation, indicating a rental value in the region of £77,200 pa. Bidwells had also undertaken an exercise to compare educational facilities across the country and it was agreed this information

would be circulated to the Committee. The Field Studies Council expressed the view that the valuation was much higher than their experience would suggest.

Members supported the principle of placing a value on the education research building; however, considered a further discussion was necessary in order that the Committee was confident the figure was accurate.

RESOLVED:- That,

- (i) the notional figure of £77,200, which represented the value of the City Corporation's contribution towards the provision of accommodation for the purposes of the Field Studies Council, be agreed pending further discussion to ensure that the Committee was confident that the figure was accurate,
- (ii) Subject to (i) above, the amount be acknowledged in any further licence negotiations and declared in Field Studies Council accounts as a benefit in kind, and
- (iii) the market rent value be reviewed on a minimum five year basis.

8. QUESTIONS

There were no questions.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items of further business.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting of the Epping Forest Joint Consultative Committee would be confirmed in due course.

The meeting closed at 12:25pm.

CHAIRMAN

Contact Officer: Katie Odling
tel. no. 020 7332 3414
e-mail: Katie.odling@cityoflondon.gov.uk

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Epping Forest Field Centre Head of Centre's report on activity in 2011



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

Purpose of report: To inform the Joint Committee; I recommend that this report be RECEIVED

Criteria		2009 Actual	2010 Actual	2011 Targets	2011 Actual
Learner experiences		19,694	22,004	22,000	23,241
Volunteer days		410	502	500	389
People			Maintain Standards	Maintain Standards	We believe that we exceed standards; no known issues or concerns.
Quality				Maintain Standard	We believe that we exceed standards; no known issues or concerns.
Health & Safety			Meet the standard for Safety Shield Gold		 Met 100% of criteria; certificate awarded October 2011.
'Overall' visitor feedback score	Schools	4.9	4.9	>4.9	>4.9
	Families	4.9	5.0	>4.9	>4.9
	Adults	4.8	4.8	>4.8	>4.8

2011 was the **40th Anniversary** of the official opening of Epping Forest Field Centre and the year in which we received the Centre's **half millionth learner**, Isabella Lushington from Woodford Green Preparatory School, who visited the Centre with her class on 17 October. We were pleased to host the FSC AGM on 4 June and a successful open day on 4 September as part of our 40th anniversary celebrations. The achievement of a new all-time record of more than 23,000 learning experiences in 2011, whilst maintaining outstanding levels of 'customer' satisfaction, is pleasing. Local artist Janet Lazelle generously donated a banner for our entrance hall:



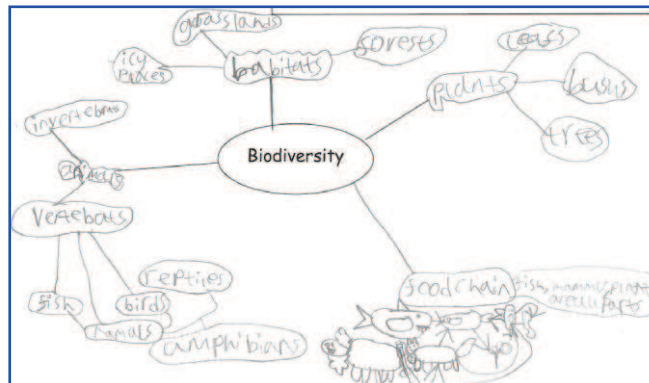
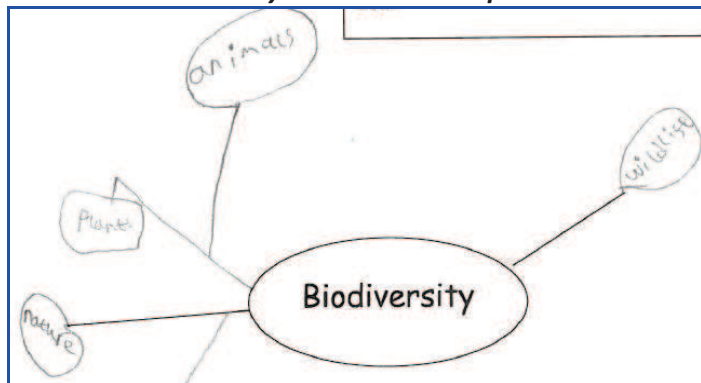
We initiated a three-year **City Bridge Trust (CBT)** funded **'Learning for Biodiversity'** project forming new school partnerships with 6 primary schools in economically deprived areas of London boroughs Newham, Redbridge and Waltham Forest.

"It was the best and most amazing day of my life and it was the first time I have been to a forest and I completely loved it." KS2 Learner

"I just had to write to thank you for the amazing work done to our wildlife area....it is absolutely superb...the children will be so excited." Head teacher

We researched and trialled innovative 'Green Space Kits' in the Centre which were then installed in the grounds of these partner schools to enhance biodiversity. Centre staff will continue to work with pupils and teachers to further enhance biodiversity in the school grounds for biodiversity teaching across the whole school.

Learner baseline and year end mind map data:



In addition to funding learning experiences for pupils in year 5 at Epping Forest Field Centre and at local learning sites, CBT funding also covers the delivery of family days. These were developed in response to our research that suggested that the target families do not frequently take their children to areas of open green space. The programme also recognises the value of families learning together.

During the first two weeks of August, sixty youths aged 8 to 14 mainly from Croydon and Lewisham visited the Centre as part of the **'Elevating Success' Summer Scheme**. The children took part in activities that had an emphasis on experiential learning, enjoyment, active participation and teamwork. The visit was part of the 'Elevating Success' two week summer scheme that aims to develop the skills and/or enhance the quality of life of individuals by offering them the chance to try activities and projects. Financial support for their visit was provided by the **FSC Kids Fund**.

Learner baseline and end of project questionnaire:

FSC Learning for Biodiversity
 Name: Ben
 School: St. Antony's
 Pupil Baseline Questionnaire

Question:	Answer
1. What does biodiversity mean to you?	
2. Why is biodiversity important?	
3. I feel I know a lot about biodiversity.	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree or disagree Disagree Strongly disagree
4. How many times in the past year have you and your family been to a local wildlife area?	Never Once Twice Several Lots of times
5. I feel I know about the plants and animals in my local area.	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree or disagree Disagree Strongly disagree
6. Name some animals or plants you may find in your local park.	Rabbits, fox, squirrel, and owl.
7. How could you attract wildlife to your garden?	For some time must be better than others. Small animal or anything that is on the ground.

"It was a tremendous trip. I'd definitely come back and recommend it to everyone"
 KS2 Learner

The HLF funded **'Discovering Epping Forest'** (DEF) project continued through 2011 and is now in its final academic year. DEF learning experiences accounted for 75 group days in 2011. In the autumn term we delivered

module 1 for the final time with all 25 schools rating the programme in the highest category on a five point evaluation scale, suggesting that the formative evaluation process had worked well. Our teacher workshops also received 100% top marks. Impacts of the DEF project include:

- Other classes from the same school have visited the Centre and Forest independently of the project
- One school now has a 'Forest module' (integrated curriculum) which will continue after the lifetime of the project
- Another school has 'working weekends' with parents and the community
- Improved LoTC skills for teachers

FSC Learning for Biodiversity
 Name: Ben
 School: St. Antony's
 Date: 17/06/11
 Pupil Baseline Questionnaire

Question:	Answer
1. What does biodiversity mean to you?	Biodiversity means the variety of wildlife in a place.
2. Why is biodiversity important?	Because if there were there a biodiversity some of the animals behind in the food chain.
3. I feel I know a lot about biodiversity.	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree or disagree Disagree Strongly disagree
4. How many times in the past year have you and your family been to a local wildlife area?	Never Once Twice Several Lots of times
5. I feel I know about the plants and animals in my local area.	Strongly agree Agree Neither agree or disagree Disagree Strongly disagree
6. Name some animals or plants you may find in your local park.	Grasshopper, cricket, spider, ladybird, slug, ants, beetles, sawtooth.
7. How could you attract wildlife to your garden?	With Flower and food.

It is pleasing to note the significant shift in teacher confidence with visits to Epping Forest and in their perceptions of the pupil knowledge of Epping Forest; teachers from 24 of the 25 DEF schools are now confident about visiting Epping Forest and using it as a learning resource (up from less than half at the start of the project). Similarly, the number of teachers that believe that pupils in their school are knowledgeable about the social history, natural history and human impacts upon the Forest has been trebled.

Thanks to funding from the **Epping and Theydon Garnon Joint Charities** through the Associates of Epping Forest Field Centre, we were able to deliver two **'Family Biodiversity Drop in Days'** for families from these Essex parishes. Evaluation data shows that 'overall' enjoyment received a 100% rating in the highest category on a five-point scale.



"Fantastic Centre – the children really enjoyed themselves. Had an amazing time – Thank you very much"
 Family learners

Winter Wonderland Week, which was delivered in partnership with the Epping Forest Centenary Trust for the 17th consecutive year, enabled 56 subsidised learner experiences for students with a wide range of special needs. (EFFC costs were part-covered by the 'Associates' utilising a donation from Felix Dennis).

We were pleased to provide Map and Compass activities as part of the launch of the City of London's **Green to Gold** campaign on 6 June. The Green to Gold campaign aims to get more people involved in sport and activity across open spaces with one year to go until the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Over 120 local school children enjoyed a day of outdoor activities including our orienteering session and others such as football, rounders, army boot camp fitness and bike riding lessons in Epping Forest.

We continued to utilise project funding to develop new courses in new locations; offering outreach experience options to schools for which transport costs are a barrier is perceived to be an issue of increasing importance. We are currently using more than 40 learning sites across Epping Forest together with a further dozen learning locations outside of Epping Forest (West Ham Park, Garnon Bushes, Valentines Park, four Newham Parks, Seven Kings Park, Lea Valley Park, Waltham Abbey and Roding Valley). We developed improved links with London Biodiversity/Parks/Community officers. We initiated collaboration with them on the potential for further utilization of other London sites and exploration of possible funding that working in these areas might attract. Our aspiration to link learning in Epping Forest with learning at sites local to schools, in school grounds and in classrooms remains strong. In October we were involved in delivering activities at Roding Valley Meadows as part of an event run by **Epping Forest Countrycare** (Epping Forest District Council). We have continued to build a partnership with this organisation and as a result have submitted a joint funding application that could see the Centre jointly delivering further family activities in the Valley.

Resources and activities developed from projects have proved beneficial across our core programmes and helps with our quest for continuous improvement alongside our 'core' course review systems.

Publicity actions undertaken by Epping Forest Field Centre staff in 2011 included:

- Improvement to information on FSC EFFC website, Associates website and project websites
- Experimenting with Facebook (60 'likes'), Twitter (40 followers) and You Tube
- Establishment of the Associates Publicity Action Team (volunteer support) including poster distribution

We have have worked collaboratively with the FSC HO team on the European project 'Mind the Gap' online resource that supports fieldwork.



The live feed from the webcam bird box proved extremely popular with Centre visitors, children and adults alike. It provided some excellent photo and discussion opportunities with groups of learners and a nice story for our newsletters.



More than 85% of our core school customers rebooked from 2010 and we were able to welcome 97 new teaching groups this year.

'I learnt new things and I am very grateful because I can use these skills later on in life', 'Fun and educational' (KS4/3 learners)

'Excellent ... every year there are improvements ... ever more relevant experiences for our students' (Visiting teachers)

'Tutor was excellent and very enthusiastic', 'All FSC staff very helpful and friendly' (Adult Natural History and Local Interest learners)

'The quality of teaching was superb', 'Unexpectedly wonderful' (A2/AS learners)

'We had a fantastic day', 'I would like to come again' (KS1/2 learners)

The 'Associates' Action Plan was approved at Associates of Epping Forest Field Centre AGM on 4 September and steps have been taken to progress actions over the period 2011-2014 plan to complete the transformation of the Associates into an active community-based organisation and a focal point for volunteering input. In 2011 the Associates transferred £7156.27 to fund activities. There are currently 366 members of the Associates.

We continue to work at developing long term partnerships and to maintain a flexible and creative business unit.

The figures for the first 3 quarters of 2011 show that we have reduced total CO₂ emissions by 8183kg. This is a 23% reduction in the first 3 quarters against last year. Improved insulation in the roof and walls and following our eco-code will have helped with this reduction together with milder conditions in autumn and fewer resident staff.

We were very pleased to achieve a score of 100% and a gold award as a result of reassessment by Northgate Arinso for health and safety this year. Facility improvements in 2011 have included a comprehensive redecoration of the Centre by City of London contractors. We have installed an insect hotel in the Centre grounds. This has received very positive comments from visitors.

2011 was a very good year for Epping Forest Field Centre setting a challenging benchmark for 2012 that we shall, of course, endeavour to match.



EFFC Income & Expenditure for 2011 shown against estimates approved by JCC:

Account Heading	Code	2011 Budget	2011 Actual
Teaching	173	£284,865	£295,024
Grants, sponsors / restricted funds	192 / 194	£56,270	£47,722
Other (sales, hire, rent, professional services, internal sales, grant aid)	180 / 181 / 185 / 186 / 191 / 171/ 193/ 197/ 184	£26,520	£17,062
Investment fund	212	£2,340	£2,369
Sub total		£369,995	£362,177
City of London Corporation Funding		£60,113	£58,988
TOTAL EFFC Income		£430,108	£421,165
Salaries	270	£305,607	£295,092
Training	281	£1,500	£1,038
Heat & light	280	£12,300	£8,798
Insurance	285	£6,500	£7,835
Transport	290 - 297	£2,500	£2,769
Library & equipment	311 / 312	£2,700	£2,428
Food	321	£3,500	£4,621
Cleaning	322	£950	£1,002
Uniform	384	£200	£405
Premises / furniture/ estate	331 / 332/ 325	£2,325	£2,425
Admin	340-355	£10,350	£10,648
Rates/water	372-5	£6,960	£7,219
Depreciation	294 / 410 / 411	£50	£850
Gross EFFC Operating Expenditure		£355,442	£345,130
FSC Central Costs at 14% of budget (includes auditing, HR, H&S, marketing and promotion)		£49,762	£49,762
Total Operating Expenditure		£405,204	£394,892
Operating Surplus / Deficit		£24,904	£26,273

2011 data with past year comparisons	2008	2009	2010	2011
Total income	310,679	334,950	380,843	421,165
CoL contribution	59,655	60,113	60,113	58,988
Salaries costs	217,835	235,881	252,295	295,092
FSC HO costs (agreed at 14% of budgeted expenditure)	40,324	43,242	43,074	49,762
Total operating expenditure	314,691	332,689	350,745	394,892
Visitor numbers	18,871	19,694	22,204	23,241
Surplus	-4,012	2,261	30,098	26,273
Salaries costs as % total income	70%	70%	66%	70%
Salaries costs as % total expenditure	69%	71%	72%	75%
FSC HO costs as % total expenditure	13%	13%	12%	13%
CoL contribution per visitor #	3.16	3.05	2.71	2.54
CoL contribution # as % of total income	19%	18%	16%	14%
Total income per visitor	16.46	17.01	17.15	18.12
Salaries costs per visitor	11.54	11.98	11.36	12.70
Total expenditure per visitor #	16.68	16.89	15.80	16.99

excludes maintenance costs

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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.

Criteria		2012 Targets	2012 Performance at end of first quarter
Learner experiences		22,000	On target
Volunteer days		525	On target
People		Able to demonstrate meeting of IIP standards for internal or external assessment	FSC re-accredited with IIP (assessment included EFFC) March 2012 
Quality		Maintain standards and prepare for re-assessment in 2013	Standards being maintained.
Health & Safety		Maintain standard of Gold Shield and prepare for re-assessment in 2013	Standards being maintained.
'Overall' visitor feedback score	>4.9	>4.9	On target
	>4.9	>4.9	On target
	>4.8	>4.8	On target

In common with all other FSC centres we now ask two crucial questions of our customers:

- 'Overall did your experience with us match or hopefully exceed your expectations?' (yes/no)
- Did your learning experience lead to a significant increase in your understanding of the environment?' (yes/no)

It is pleasing to be able to report that, as at the end of the first quarter there have been no instances where the answer 'no' has been recorded.

The 2012 Plan presented to the last meeting made clear reference to the need to respond to rising basic costs and also to recover 'lost' income relating to:

- delivery of DEF modules (in the autumn term)
- funding for the management & evaluation of the DEF project (in the autumn term)
- the reduction in the City of London payment
- any additional costs incurred in securing new income

With this in mind we have:

- reduced administration staff from 1.5 full-time equivalent to one by making the post of administrator (part time) redundant (retaining the post of Bursar)
- not replaced a Trainee Tutor whose contract ended in December
- kept a Tutor role at 0.4 full-time equivalent and not made this full time for the peak season as originally envisaged

Whilst this inevitably brings additional pressures and challenges the current team have all worked effectively together for more than 12 months and we are now getting some efficiency gains that we hope will still enable us to deliver our 2012 Plan.

The Lessons from Nature Project (as described in the EFFC 2011-14 Plan) is a current focus of attention with trialling of this exciting new programmes taking place in the summer term – see next page for further information.

Our Easter '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 circulation date later in mid April].

Steve Bunce, Head of Centre

020 8502 8500

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Epping Forest Field Centre introduces Lessons from Nature



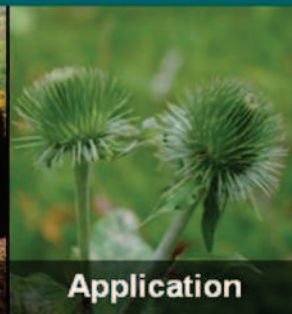
Inspiration



Discovery



Understanding



Application

Using insights from nature to inspire and build a brighter future

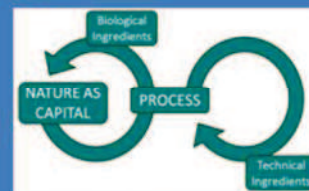
An exciting opportunity for a group of students to participate in trial of an innovative learning experience. Learners will be encouraged to provide feedback on their experience to shape this exciting new European wide project.

Lessons from Nature is designed to enable and inspire learners to:

- use insights from nature to critically examine and re-design products and production systems
- search for new solutions to sustainability problems that are relevant and interesting to the learners
- embrace discovery learning and learning outside of the classroom
- develop knowledge, understanding and a range of competencies including critical thinking

Insights from nature in the trial programme include:

- Multiple benefits
- Diversity gives strength
- Waste equals food (closed loop systems)



Visit our website to find out more about the project
www.field-studies-council.org/centres/eppingforest/lessons-from-nature-project

All activities at Epping Forest Field Centre are led by appropriately qualified and experienced tutors and are fully risk assessed. The project costs (excluding transport) are met as a result of the Lessons from Nature project. The project aims to boost attainment in a range of subject areas. This project is available for up to 30 pupils from each school. Lessons from Nature has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication [communication] reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. We are pleased to be working on this in collaboration with our partner organisations from Bulgaria, Latvia, Netherlands, Romania and Spain.

EACEA
Education, Audiovisual & Culture
Executive Agency

Epping Forest Field Centre

April 2012

Challenge Anneke
Team Leader Anneke is facing a number of challenges in 2012 including the London marathon
[Read more](#)



Celebrating 20 years of Steve!

Staff past and present, associates and friends of Epping Forest Field Centre came together for a surprise party
[Read more](#)



Have EFFC staff got the skills to survive?

James and Tania spent two days in the heart of Epping Forest. Did they survive?
[Read more](#)



Enhancing Learning Environments

The Centre team needs all the help it can get to maintain and enhance the learning environments within the grounds. A team from Epping Forest Countrycare and their volunteers spent a day at the Centre removing plant overgrowth from two ponds. Find out the reason for this and how you can help
[Read more](#)



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

Project Updates



- Teachers react well to Mind the Gap online resources developed by EFFC staff in an EU project [Read more](#)

"Links well with topics used in school. It's great to see students being encouraged to look at and engage with their local area."

"Excellent activities with great resources."

Articles in other Newsletters

- [Easter Safaris](#)
- [Family Fun](#)
- [Science for All](#)
- [Geography Under Control](#)



Pauls Nursery Road, High Beach, Loughton, Essex, IG10 4AF
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)

DEF exit strategy and legacy

Purpose of report:

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

Whilst there is some more work to be done before the funding stops and the Project closes there are no known issues in relation to the delivery of Project and we shall soon be able to demonstrate that:

- all Learning Partners contributed effectively to and benefited from the project
- the project achieved its aims, delivered the intended outcomes, achieved some valuable unintended outcomes
- the project has a worthy legacy
- valuable further work could be undertaken should further funding become available

There is good evidence of achievement against the intended outcomes identified in the Learning Plan [Section 5.4 'Legacies and new resources for learning which will become available through the project']:

- *Increased awareness and appreciation of Epping Forest among participating students and teachers.*
- *A clear agreed statement of the new relationship between the partners who deliver the programme for schools with/for the CoL, using the strengths of each.*
- *Promotion of all the Forest Learning Partners' services through the programme and online materials, raising the profile of Epping Forest.*
- *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 which have it built into their timetables and 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 this way without schools incurring any costs, and without bringing extra traffic.*

The only exception to this is in relation to the following:

- *Higher profile within the local area for the EcoSchools award scheme and more schools taking part in it.*

In this case an agreed change to the content of the learning programmes, prior to the commencement of the Project, made this unimportant. (The learning was focussed strongly on the character of Epping Forest and learning for sustainability course content was withdrawn). With this in mind it has been an agreed intention that Eco-schools will be signposted to DEF schools in the remaining two workshops as an optional 'next step' for those schools who choose to undertake this rather than distracting schools with unsupported content during the active phases of the Project .

At Workshop four (reflecting on the second academic year of the Project) Champions were asked to identify the DEF Project impacts. These are some of the things they said:

- *Children worked in home and at school.*
- *Parents were involved from the start and received a handout with the learning objectives. The children were set homework based on this (this resulted in parents and children taking trips to Epping Forest independently).*
- *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.*
- *The children were able to do follow up work across other areas of the curriculum including: poetry, instruction writing, IT skills, persuasive writing and art.*
- *Sustainability: The plan is to continue to take the children to the Forest after the lifetime of the project.*
- *Children created books based on projects the idea being:*
 - *Children have something to be proud of*
 - *Encourage the parents to take children out into the Forest – to learn more about the Forest together*
- *Learning has been shared with the rest of the school.*
- *School has 'working weekends' with parents and the community.*
- *Other year 5 groups have visited the Forest independently of the project.*
- *Teachers involved feel confident to take other year groups (Champion has taken her Year 1 class to the Forest independently).*
- *Whole school approach – school now has a vegetable patch and wildlife area.*
- *School held an 'Environment Day' at a local open space.*
- *Teachers feel more confident taking children to the Forest and leading activities.*
- *The Project has provided ideas and activities.*
- *Improved professional skills as a teacher as a result of being involved.*
- *Parents got involved which was really good as the community the school is based in rarely leave their local area.*
- *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 on the project.*
- *DEF work can be incorporated into all curriculum subjects.*
- *Activities have been used across the school in KS1 as well as KS2.*

One of the operational negatives has been that staff turnover in schools has resulted in having to induct a significant number of replacement Champions in partner schools and also to replace a few partner schools where their capacity to continue with the Project made continuation untenable. Ironically this could add to the legacy in that significantly more than the intended number of Champions have benefited from learning and development and the Network has, in a sense, been widened. Workshop five (preparing Champions for the final academic year) included a presentation from EFFC staff on 'Spreading the word' – encouraging schools to do more outside of the visits as well as asking Champions to draw up 'top tips' they would pass on to new Champions.

The Learning Providers (CoL, EFFC, EFCT and Suntrap) met at the Warren on Friday 10th February 2012 specifically to discuss exit strategy and the Project legacy. These discussions will continue, as appropriate, at EF Learning Provider Forum meetings and learning and at the next Teachers' Workshop and at the Learning Provider end of Project debriefing meeting. The following DEF outputs were agreed at that meeting:

- A full evaluation report on the Project (an Executive Summary) will be written by EFFC staff with input and comment from the other providers. The report will refer to each of the six modules and to the teacher workshop with analysis of feedback from teachers, pupils and learning provider delivery staff. The City of London will commission the production of 50 full colour copies (one copy for each school, three copies for each Learning Provider, two copies for the HLF and two copies for the London Metropolitan Archives with nine spare copies. These will be professionally bound to include the project DVD that has also been commissioned by the City of London.
- The finalised temporary DEF website will have loads of valuable content and this will be migrated and re-presented for an exciting public access internet learning location that the City of London will develop and host. This will continue long after the temporary site expires (February 2013). The new site will be more accessible.
- The Learning Providers are continuing to explore other legacy opportunities and these will be discussed at the Teachers' Workshop that will be held on June 29th at the new Visitor Centre, Rangers Road, Chingford. This workshop will also be a celebration event, with invites sent to HLF monitors. We will give strong encouragement to Champions to liaise with other non-participating schools to use the online resources and other Learning Provider services as part of extending the Local Teachers' Forest Schools Network.
- The final Workshop (the seventh) will be held in November 2012 at Epping Forest Field Centre. In addition to being the opportunity for schools to receive their copies of the evaluation report and see the first public screening of the Project DVD, this workshop will outline the exciting offer of the learning services available in Epping Forest emphasising how DEF schools can continue to benefit from the legacies of the project.



I am intending to bring a further report to the JCC in October 2012 after all work other than the final Project workshop will have been concluded.

Agenda Item 7

Committee(s):	Date(s):	Item no.
Epping Forest Joint Consultative	20 April 2012	
Subject: Epping Forest Field Study Centre – Outcome of Building Condition Survey		Public
Report of: Superintendent of Epping Forest		For Information
<u>Summary</u>		
<p>This report seeks to inform your Committee of the findings of a Building Condition Survey of the Epping Forest Field Study Centre. The survey was commissioned by the City Surveyor in October 2009 to highlight the extent of internal and external repairs that the EFFSC required. The report also provides information on current and projected maintenance expenditure. The report also, summarises maintenance spending of £33,059 in 2011/12, together with plans to invest a further £154,350 in 2013/14 and £53,800 in 2014/15.</p>		
Recommendation		
It is recommended that this report be received for information		

Main Report

Background

1. Since 1970 the City of London Corporation, acting as the Conservators of Epping Forest, has provided Environmental Education Classrooms and staff accommodation at the Field Studies Centre, High Beach as part of an agreement to support an educational partnership with the Field Studies Council (FSC).
2. The above agreement also established that the building would be provided rent free and that the City of London would be responsible for maintaining the building. A proposal to value this contribution was considered by your committee on 26th October 2011.
3. In October 2009, the City Surveyor commissioned a Building Condition Survey by Stace Construction and Property Consultants. The findings of this survey have not previously been reported to committee.

4. The Field Studies Centre, the 'High Beach Environmental Education and Research Campus' currently consists of 6 permanent buildings:
 - i. The Qvist Building – this teaching and research block provides teaching and ancillary office accommodation with net internal area of 5,236 sq ft.
 - ii. The Timber Hut Classroom
 - iii. Boot and Oil Store
 - iv. 'Ravensmead' – Residential Accommodation Block – consisting of 6 bedrooms, 5 ensuite, with shared kitchen, living room, dining room and drying room and has a gross internal area of 1,582 sq ft
 - v. 'Buxton' - 2-bed detached Bungalow measuring c. 635 sq ft
 - vi. 'Harting' - 2 bed detached Bungalow measuring c. 1,591 sq ft.

Summary of Building Condition Survey

5. The Inspection revealed that generally, the buildings are in reasonable condition and housekeeping has been undertaken to a good standard with exception of some communal areas of Ravensmead (Hostel) for which a regime of cleaning is required.
6. The survey notes that externally the buildings are in good condition apart from the detached garage at Buxton, which requires replacement. Recent improvements include pitched roofs which were installed in 1998, with many of the windows being replaced approximately 12 years ago. External decorations to entire complex were completed in 2010.
7. Internally ad hoc repairs and replacements have been undertaken over the years, however there are a number of areas/items which require attention such as toilets, insulation, mould growth which visually mar the buildings and in some instances are unhygienic and could be detrimental to health. The whole complex requires internal decorations but the report notes that the responsibility for repairs (particularly internal) is unclear. It's also questionable where internal decorations would rank on a priority system when there were many more fundamental items to be addressed.
8. Fixtures and fittings such as blinds, notice boards, cupboards, and whiteboards are usually replaced or repaired by occupiers/tenants and are excluded from internal decoration requirements.

9. Some of the prices from the Stace survey appear to be higher than the City Surveyor would expect. The prices will be reviewed nearer to time of works implementation.
10. The buildings are now 38 years old and many of the fixtures, fittings and finishes are original, additionally the number of visitors to the centre has increased over the years and thus toilet facilities are probably inadequate and unlikely to meet any further increase in demand.
11. Listed below, for each property, are items for which works were are required in the next few years commencing from 2011/12 with all costs, all of these items will be included in the twenty year plans along with all other components required for future years.
12. The Qvist Building
Services engineers will be reviewing the heating control systems in the next few months as part of the additional works programme. There is finance of £10,000 available for their replacement if required. Around £100,000 of works to the main heating systems are planned for 2015/16 but this will be reviewed nearer the time to ensure that replacement / major overhaul is appropriate. The ability of the toilet facilities to cope with increased demand is questionable, but if to be upgraded, the present estimates are circa £50,000 with possible works in approximately 3 years time.
13. Timber Hut Classroom
No items of significance required in short term.
14. Boot and Oil Store
No items of significance required in short term
15. Ravensmead
Boiler replacement is due in one year (2013/14). Possible improvement works in the next three or four years include shower upgrades, increased insulation and an upgrade of the communal drying room. If responsibility for repairs falls to City Of London then the City Surveyor may be able to partially fund from future the Additional Works Programme. Any residual cost would fall potentially to Epping Forest Local Risk.
16. Buxton (Senior Tutors House)
Boiler replacement is due in one year (2013/14). Possible cyclical and improvement works in next three or four years include bathroom/toilet refurbishment, increased insulation (£2,000), replacement of detached garage (£15,000), and the replacement front door and side panels (£3,000).

Carpets in the lounge and bedroom require replacement (£1,200) though this cost is normally met by occupants.

17. Harting (Wardens House)

Boiler replacement is due in one year (2013/14). Possible cyclical and improvement works in next three or four years include bathroom/toilet refurbishment (£4,000), relaying patio (£3,500) replacement shed (£2,000), increased insulation (£2,000), replacement front door and side panels (£3,000) and a shower upgrade (£1,000).

Current Position

18. The Condition Building Survey was conducted in October 2009. Since then all external decorations have been completed and internally the corridors and toilet areas were decorated. During 2011/12, as part of the 'Additional Works Programme' City Surveyor spent £12,583 on the following:

19. Ravensmead- Damaged fences and gates have been replaced around the property.

20. Harting- Damaged fences and gates have been replaced around the property, the shower and toilet have been refurbished and a shed replaced.

21. In addition to the above, in 2011/12, City Surveyors also carried out repairs, maintenance and contract servicing, at costs of £20,476.

22. It is anticipated in 2012/13 that the City Surveyor will spend £6,500 on Timber classroom. Fire Alarm Replacement (£1,500), Landlords Lighting and Power rewire and Panel Heater Replacement.

Future Position - 20 Year Plan

23. The following tables are an extract of the 20 Year Planned Maintenance Programme for all of the six Field Study Centre buildings. This investment expenditure is subject to final approval of the Corporate Asset Sub-Committee. Investment of £154,350 is planned at High Beach for 2013/14 and £53,800 in 2014/15.

24. The Qvist Centre

Description	2013/14	2014/15
Building Breakdown Maintenance	£9,900	£9,900
Building Contract Servicing	£700	£700
Electrical Breakdown Maintenance	£1,500	£1,500
Electrical Contract Servicing	£600	£600
Mechanical Breakdown Maintenance	£1,800	£1,800
Mechanical Contract Servicing	£1,600	£1,600
External Decorations	0	£10,000
Flooring Replacement	0	0
Moss Removal From Roof	£3,500	0
Internal Decorations	£10,000	0
Toilet Refurbishment	£55,000	0
Electrical 5 Year Test & Inspection	£900	0
Water Hygiene Remedial Work (Incl Cottages At FSC)	£5,000	0
Total	£90,500	£26,100
Planned Maintenance costs between years 2015/16 and 2032/33 is £818,000		

25. Timber Classroom

Description	2013/14	2014/15
External Decorations	0	£2,700
Timber Floor Treatment	0	£1,000
Electrical 5 Year Test & Inspection	£300	0
Total	£300	£3,700
Planned Maintenance costs between years 2015/16 and 2032/33 is £61,500		

26. Oil Stores

Description	2013/14	2014/15
Doors/Windows Replacement	0	£2,500
External Decorations	0	£1,500
Roof Replacement ((Felt) (Flat))	£3,000	0
Electrical 5 Year Test & Inspection	50	0
Total	£3,050	£4,000
Planned Maintenance cost between years 2015/16 and 2032/33 is £8,850		

27. Ravensmead

Description	2013/14	2014/15
Communal Bathroom Refurbishment Room 6	£3,500	0
En-Suite Room 1 Refurbishment	£3,500	0
En-Suite Room 3 Refurbishment	£3,500	0
En-Suite Room 4 Refurbishment	£3,500	0
En-Suite Room 7 Refurbishment	£3,500	0
En-Suite Room 8 Refurbishment	£3,500	0
External Decorations	0	£2,500
Flooring Replacement	0	£15,000
Electrical 5 Year Test & Inspection	£500	0
Boiler Replacement	£6,000	0
Total	£27,500	£17,500
Planned Maintenance costs between years 2015/16 and 2032/33 is £128,700		

28. Buxton

Description	2013/14	2014/15
Detached Garage Overhaul/Replacement (Timber Structure)	£15,000	0
External Decorations	0	£2,500
Electrical 5 Year Test & Inspection	£500	0
Boiler Replacement	£3,000	0
Total	£18,500	£2,500
Planned Maintenance costs between years 2015/16 and 2032/33 is £66,500		

29. Harting

Description	2013/14	2014/15
Bathroom Refurbishment	£5,000	0
External Decorations	£3,000	0
Walls And Roof Space Insulation	£2,000	0
Electrical 5 Year Test & Inspection	£500	0
Boiler Replacement	£4,000	0
Total	£14,500	£0
Planned Maintenance costs between years 2015/16 and 2032/33 is £67,800		

Financial and Risk Implications

30. The 20 year plan seeks to schedule all significant maintenance and repairs responsibilities.
31. The FSC has been operating from the premises since its opening in 1971. It was established in 1943 for the purpose of encouraging and providing facilities for environmental education and the pursuit of field studies in the arts and sciences and is a registered charity (Number: 313364)

Legal Implications

32. Section 27 of the City of London (Various Powers) Act 1967 contains (inter alia) the following provision: “Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 7 (Conservators to keep the Forest unenclosed) of the Epping Forest Act 1878, the Conservators may use, acquire or erect and maintain buildings in Epping Forest suitable for the use for the purpose of accommodating a centre for the study and teaching of biology and ecology and allied subjects for the instruction of children and the public generally in the natural history and conservation of the Forest”.

Property Implications

33. The City is providing substantial accommodation to the Field Studies Council free of charge and is further expending significant sums in maintaining the Field Studies Centre premises for its benefit. Although it is appreciated that the City perceives benefit by supporting the Field Studies Council in this way, the occupation appears commercially unsustainable.

HR Implications

34. There are no direct HR implications within this report.
35. FSC residential employees have hitherto not been asked to sign the Service Occupancy agreement provided to all City of London employees.

Strategic Implications

36. The above meets the *City Together* vision of a *World Class City* and, specifically, 4 of its 5 themes for ‘A world class City that supports our communities; protects, promotes and enhances our environment; is competitive and promotes opportunity; and is vibrant and culturally rich’.

Conclusion

37. The Building Condition Survey highlighted some areas of concern. The City Surveyors Department have scheduled these concerns through the 20 year Planned Maintenance Programme which will continue to see planned investment in the maintenance and repair of the Environmental Education 'Campus' at High Beach.
38. All concerns will be addressed in a timely manner, subject to the continued availability of resources and the approval of the corporate Assets Sub-Committee.

Background Papers:

Report: Building Condition Survey. City Surveyors (October 2009)

Contact:

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Agenda Item 8

Committee(s):	Date(s):	Item no.
Epping Forest Joint Consultative	20 April 2012	
Subject: Epping Forest Visitor Services Activities	Public	
Report of: Superintendent of Epping Forest	For Information	
<u>Summary</u>		
<p>In previous years, the Visitor Services Team has provided reports summarising the previous six months of service provision for visitors to Epping Forest. This is the first report where the Visitor Services Team sets out its programme of work for the coming financial year.</p> <p>The first part of the report is a summary of the Visitor Services Team's staffing structure and operational priorities. The second part of the report addresses priorities for the next twelve months and is particularly focussed on the staffing structure and operational priorities associated with the implementation of the Epping Forest Staffing Review and the opening of the new Visitor Centre situated on Rangers Road, Chingford in Spring 2012.</p> <p>Recommendations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• That this report be received.		

Main Report

Background

1. In previous years, outcomes from the Epping Forest Visitor Services Programme have been reported retrospectively to the Epping Forest Joint Consultative Committee, with respect to the six month Summer and Winter activity programmes. Following a decision by the Epping Forest and Commons Committee, this report is now presented to both your Committee and the Epping Forest and Commons Committee as an operational programme for the forthcoming 12 months, setting out the operational activities for the Epping Forest Division's Visitor Services Team.

Current Position

2. Staffing - Current Visitor Services staffing is detailed in Appendix 1.

3. There are seven areas the Visitor Services Team focus on and they are as follows –
 - i) Delivering an information service to Epping Forest visitors through three Forest Visitor Centres
 - ii) Providing memorable visits through complimentary retail activity
 - iii) Providing Life Long Learning sessions
 - iv) Entertaining visitors to Epping Forest through the management and hosting of Forest Events
 - v) Interpreting the significance of Epping Forest through exhibitions, publications and website presence
 - vi) Developing a communications presence for Epping Forest through publications, the City of London Website, Press statements and social networking platforms such as Twitter
 - vii) Developing wider public participation in formal sport, especially football at Wanstead Flats.

Operating the Forest Centres

4. The Visitor Services Team currently delivers an information service for Epping Forest visitors from three buildings: The Epping Forest Visitor Centre, a purpose built building located at High Beach and opened in 1991; The Queen Elizabeth Hunting Lodge built in 1543 and specifically protected under the Epping Forest Act 1878 and managed as a visitor attraction since 2001; and The Temple at Wanstead Park, restored in 1995 and currently offering information services over weekends and Bank Holidays.

4.1 Visitor Centre Opening Times

	VC	QEHL	Temple
Winter opening hours (October to March)	7 days a week, 10.00a.m. – 3.00p.m.	Friday to Sunday, 11.00a.m. – 4.00p.m. (Booked groups Mon-Thurs)	Saturday and Sunday, 10.00a.m. – 3.00p.m.
Winter hours per week	35	15	10
Summer opening hours (April to September) (October to March)	Every day, 10.00a.m. – 5.00p.m.	Wednesday to Sunday, 12.00p.m. – 5.00p.m. (Booked groups Mondays and Tuesdays)	Saturday and Sunday, 12.00p.m. – 5.00p.m.
Summer hours per week	49	25	10

4.2 The current three Visitor Services buildings received 63,997 visits during 2011. The Epping Forest Visitor Centre at High Beach received 28,560 visitors in 2011, the Hunting Lodge received 23,219 (not including booked Educational visits) and the Temple received 12,218 visitors.

4.3 The Visitor Centres are also responsible for income generation from retail activity and income has grown in the last three years. 2011/12 has been our most successful year with turnover predicted to break £80,000 for the first time ever.

Visitor Centre Income (£k)

Year	Visitor Centre	Hunting Lodge	The Temple	Total
2008/09	43,346	9,445	5,480	58,271
2009/10	46,397	12,396	7,280	66,073
2010/11	54,022	12,095	7,508	73,625
2011/12*	54,951*	11,390*	6,895*	73,236*

* = As at end of January 2012, two months still short of financial year end.

4.4 Delivering Life Long Learning Sessions

4.4.1 Learning sessions are on an upward curve reflecting the endeavours of the current Learning Officer. Learning sessions have been as follows –

Year (April – March)	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Sessions	47	97	123	118*	132 (as at Feb 2012)

* Year 2010 saw a slight dip as we had to close for a 10 day period to allow unacceptably noisy building work to take place at the Chingford Hub site.

4.4.2 These figures include all learning sessions, including the Discovering Epping Forest Modules, Gun Powder Sessions and Sensory Sessions.

4.4.3 The Lifelong Learning Officer also hosts a Teachers Forum where approximately 20 local teachers meet on a quarterly basis to discuss educational issues.

Public Events

5. The Visitor Services Team leads on numerous events each year that include outdoor theatre events, family learning events, guided walks, cycle rides and exhibitions. Visitor Services also play a supporting role in advertising and promoting many further events led by our close partners such as Friends of Epping Forest, Field Studies Centre and others.

Year (Jan – December)	2009	2010	2011	2012 (taken from 2012 Events Diary)
Visitor Services Events	62	66	65	60
Total Events	203	210	185	232

Producing Forest Interpretation

6. Each year Visitor Services produces;
- i) Three editions of the ‘Forest Focus’ visitor news with a total print run of 7,000 per edition.
 - ii) Annual Events Diary highlighting events run by all the main organisations in the Forest. Print run of 15,000.
 - iii) Subject specific leaflets.
 - iv) Forest Signs including stock signs such as ‘Beware Cattle’; seasonal signs for dog control during ground nesting bird season; fungi picking etc. and site specific signage.
 - v) Football Season Handbook.
7. Epping Forest is also on the Social Networking site ‘Twitter’ that gives us the opportunity to post short messages on key news and subjects and we produce our own Press Releases as well as updating our Website on at least a weekly basis.

Developing Football and other sports

8. There are 58 football pitches and 3 separate sports pavilions within the Wanstead Flats site of Epping Forest. Currently the Grounds Staff (4) report to the Assets Officer within the Business Team whilst the Football Development Officer reports into the Visitor Services Manager.
9. The Football Development Officer works towards implementing objectives outlined in the Football Development Plan and has key goals including maximising occupancy of the football pitches, development of female football, increasing the amount of qualified coaches and referees through formal training and examinations and assisting any disability groups through formal and informal football.

10. Wanstead Flats also hosts a weekly 5km ‘parkrun’ event and hosts weekly health walks every Tuesday mornings.

Proposals

11. As well as continuing to deliver the areas set out above the following changes will take place in 2012/13

Visitor Services Staffing Structure

12. The proposed staffing structure is set out in Appendix 1.

Proposed Changes

13. By incorporating the Wanstead Flats Grounds Staff into the Visitor Services Department there will be a greater emphasis placed upon on the quality of the visitor experience, together with improved marketing and promotion. Summer Football Tournaments will grow in number and there will be a greater emphasis with regard to a chain of custody in the customer booking process. Communication and co-ordination between the Grounds Staff and the Football Development Officer will be improved and the greater involvement of local volunteers will be nurtured.
14. Similarly the incorporation of staff at Chingford Golf Course into the Visitor Services Department will see a greater focus on communication between the Grounds staff, the Golf Professional and golf users with a focus on improving the quality of play; the maintenance and improvement of the course and the overall profitability of the operation.

Operating the Forest Centres

15. The future of the High Beach Visitor Centre is currently under discussion, however, there is a proposal to change the opening times when the new Visitor Centre opens at Chingford to reflect the location proximity to Chingford Town Centre and to capitalise on the opportunity to increase visitor numbers and generate more income.

Proposed Opening Times

	VC @ Chingford	QEHL	Temple
Peak Opening Hours (13 weeks of school holidays and all weekends)	7 days a week, 10.00a.m. – 5.00p.m.	7 days a week, 10:00 a.m. – 5.00 p.m.	Saturday and Sunday, 10.00a.m. – 3.00p.m.
Peak hours per week	49	49	10

Off Peak Opening Hours (Monday to Friday during Term Times)	5 days a week, 10.00a.m. – 5.00p.m.	5 days a week, 12.00p.m. – 5.00p.m. (Booked groups in morning)	Saturday and Sunday, 12.00p.m. – 5.00p.m.
Off Peak hours per week	35	25	10

Delivering Life Long Learning Sessions

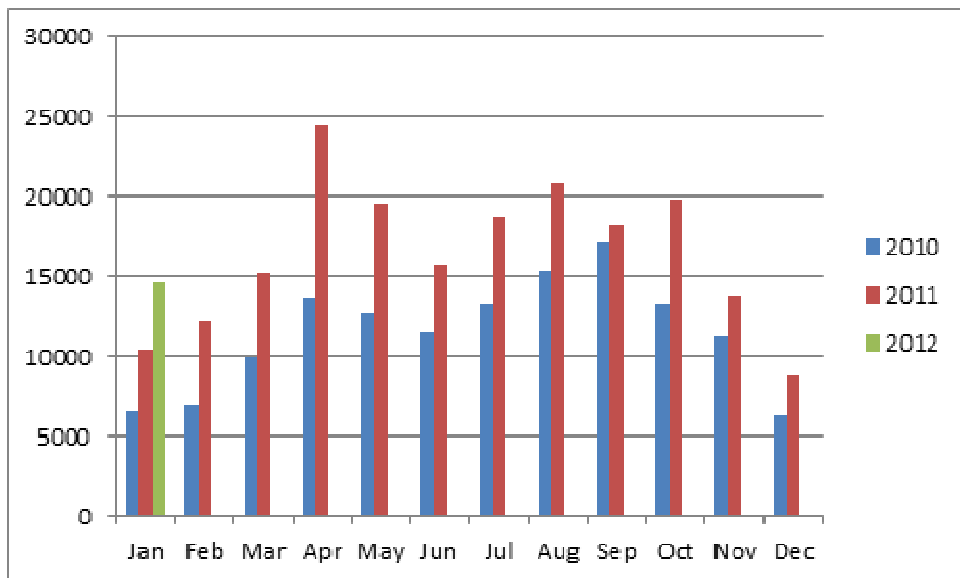
16. The current Learning Provision is delivered by the Life Long Learning Officer. The reliance on a single officer to deliver a popular educational programme remains a challenge with the opening of the new Community Room at the new Visitor Centre, which will stimulate the expansion of our Learning Provision,.
17. Under the Service Review, two Information Assistant posts will be realigned to focus on delivery of learning sessions that will give the current Life Long Learning Officer the chance to develop their role into the ‘Forest Centre Officer’ ethos whilst still retaining the leadership on all learning events. This will ensure we can continue to grow our education sessions by 5% for the next three years, in line with the City Bridge Trust targets.

Public Events

18. Visitor Services will continue to provide a varied programme of events including 3 Outdoor Theatre Events, Family Learning Events during all Half Term Holidays, exhibitions at the Temple and weekend events.
19. 2012/13 will also see a full programme of Temporary Exhibitions, held at the new Visitor Centre at Chingford in the dedicated Temporary Exhibition space. The first two months (April and May 2012) will see a children’s art exhibition and then June and July will see a ‘Royalty and the Forest’ temporary exhibition held. Further exhibitions are currently being planned.

Producing Forest Interpretation

20. Visitor Services will continue to produce three editions of Forest Focus and the Events Diary for 2013 as well as ensuring a stock of promotional leaflets are available. We will continue to develop relationships between the local press and ourselves by continuing to produce Press Releases.
21. Particular allocation will be focussed on the development of our digital communication with the public by re-launching our Web Site in June 2012 with the intention of increasing web hits beyond the 2011 182,000 2011 total. The Team will also concentrate efforts on our Twitter account seeking to increase the number of followers.



22. Visitor Services are also playing an integral role in undertaking an audit of all Forest Signage to produce a programme of improvement. Visitor Service staff are also assisting with setting and agreeing the Forest Standards for all Forest furniture including the Gateways, benches, bins and any other ‘furniture’.

Developing Football and Other Sports

23. The Football Development Officer will continue to develop coaching schemes and community outreach projects in line with the Sports Development Plan.
24. There are 58 football pitches and three separate Sports Pavilions at Wanstead Flats. The Harrow Road Sports Pavilion was redeveloped during 2009. The other facilities at Aldersbrook Road and Capel Road remain in need of upgrading and improvement. Prior to progressing any works to the Capel Road Changing Rooms, a future management strategy for this property should be established. It was previously proposed as the potential third phase of a three phased approach of the Wanstead Flats Refurbishment Project that was reported on the 13th November 2006, with the intention at that time to undertake a structural survey to identify the extent of works to meet Football Foundation standards. There has been subsequent considered as to whether it would be possible or desirable to amalgamate the Aldersbrook Road and Capel Road facilities. If Capel Road is to be improved, a management strategy would help inform the scope of works in the short to medium term to ensure that it represents value for money. Any works proposals will now need to be subject to the City's Project Approval process.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

25. The proposal, if approved, supports the following themes of the Community Strategy:

- A Vibrant and Culturally Rich City

Additionally the proposal supports the following aim of the Open Spaces Business Plan:

- Providing high quality, free, accessibly Open Spaces for the benefit of London, its environs and the nation.

Conclusion

26. The Visitor Services programme provides a variety of opportunities for active and virtual engagement of visitors with a wide variety of recreational activities at Epping Forest. The Visitor Services Team also plays a vital role in providing information with regard to the active stewardship of the Forest by the Conservators of Epping Forest.

Appendices

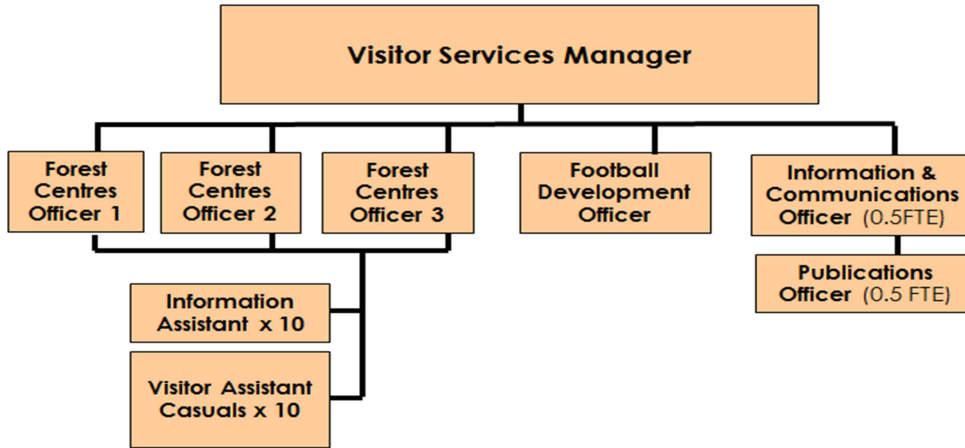
Appendix 1 - Staffing Structure

Contact:

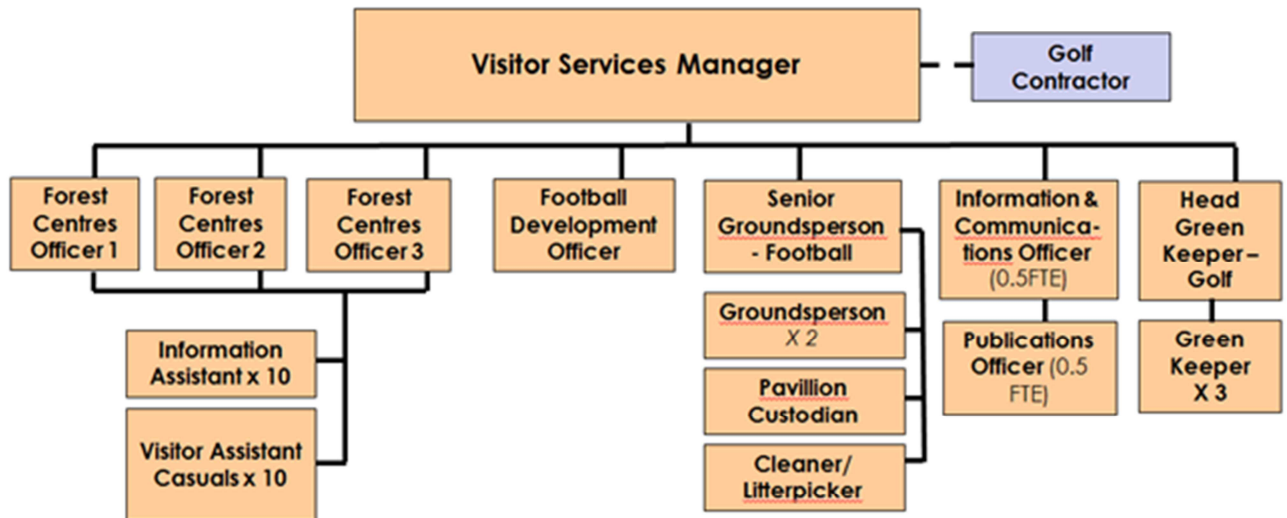
Antony Fenwick | antony.fenwick@cityoflondon.gov.uk | 0208 532 5315

Visitor Services Staffing Structure (Appendix 1)

As at February 2012 –



Proposed Structure –



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