



Epping Forest Centre Joint Consultative Committee

Date: FRIDAY, 19 APRIL 2013

Time: 11.30am

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

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

Enquiries: Rakesh Hira
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Lunch will be served at the rising of the Committee

**John Barradell
Town Clerk and Chief Executive**

AGENDA

Public Agenda

1. **APOLOGIES**

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

3. **MINUTES**

To agree the public minutes of the meeting held on 26 October 2012 (copy attached).

For Decision
(Pages 1 - 4)

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

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

For Information
(Pages 5 - 12)

5. **HEAD OF CENTRE'S REPORT ON THE PERFORMANCE OF THE CENTRE IN 2012**

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

For Information
(Pages 13 - 18)

6. **HEAD OF CENTRE'S REPORT ON PROGRESS IN 2013**

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

For Information
(Pages 19 - 20)

7. **QUESTIONS**

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

9. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

To be held at 11.30am on 9 October 2013 at Guildhall.

Agenda Item 3

EPPING FOREST CENTRE JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE **Friday, 26 October 2012**

Minutes of the meeting of the Epping Forest Centre Joint Consultative Committee held at Committee Room - 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Friday, 26 October 2012 at 11.30 am

Present

Members:

Alderman Gordon Haines (Chairman)
Barbara Newman (Deputy Chairman)
Verderer Peter Adams
Verderer Richard Morris
Mr. Chapman
Mr. Kington

Officers:

Jacky Compton	- Town Clerk's Department
Alison Elam	- Group Accountant, Chamberlain's Department
Paul Thomson	- Superintendent, Epping Forest
Jo Hurst	- Epping Forest Estate Office
Steve Bunce	- Field Studies Council
Mark Bolland	- Field Studies Council

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Director of Open Spaces, Antony Fenwick, Anthony Thomas, Andy Simpson and Richard Walker and Robert Lucas.

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

There were none.

3. MINUTES

The public minutes of the meeting held on 20 April 2012 were agreed as a correct record.

Matters Arising

Epping Forest Visitor Services Activities (page 8) – A Member enquired with regards to the tender process for the existing visitor centre building that was scheduled to take place in July or August. The Superintendent stated that he would be submitting a report to the next meeting of the Committee on the outcome.

4. **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.

The Head of Centre advised that the number of unique visitors to the Centre's Facebook page had increased to more than one thousand in some weeks.

RECEIVED.

5. **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 33 different schools. The Centre was keen to maintain contacts with the schools where possible.

The Head of Centre advised that there were still some minor amendments to be made and that hard copies would be made available for the Teacher Workshop on 16 November. He stated that he hoped that there would be a fairly good turnout for this event.

Questions were raised around the Legacy of the DEF and whether enough work was being done to keep the legacy going for future years. The Head of Centre stated that funding was an issue especially for Key Stage 1 and 2 and that external funding was needed. The Superintendent advised that a fund-raising pack for individual schools to enable them to approach businesses for funding was being developed

RECEIVED.

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

The Committee considered a report of the Head of Centre relative to the draft 2013 Action Plan and 2013 Financial Estimates.

The Head of Centre stated that he was into the cycle for 2011/14 and that everything was working well. He also stated that he hoped that the City would continue to fund the Centre at the same level as the previous year.

The Chairman together with the Superintendent informed the Head of Centre that it was currently too early to confirm what the figure would be but would hope to find out from the Epping Forest and Commons Committee in November the final figure.

The Chairman also noted that the budget projected a loss but FSC confirmed that any loss would be borne by them.

RESOLVED: That the plan be approved, subject to the following additional conditions:

- The City's budget process; and
- Discussions between the FSC's Director of Finance and the Chamberlain in relation to FSC Central costs that had previously been agreed at 14% of the Centre's budgeted operating expenditure

7. **QUESTIONS**

There were no questions.

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

There were no items of further business.

9. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Epping Forest Joint Consultative Committee would be held at 11.30am on 19 April 2013 at the Epping Forest Field Centre.

The meeting ended at 12.55pm

Chairman

**Contact Officer: Jacky Compton
Tel: 020 7332 1174
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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 final Discovering Epping Forest (DEF) Workshop

Purpose of report:

This report is intended to provide information to the Committee in relation to the final Def workshop and the steps to build on the legacy of the DEF Project. I recommend that this report be RECEIVED.

This is the final report of the DEF project and follows the publication of the full Project report. It refers to:

- the seventh and final Champions' Workshop
- the Project legacy
- the future

The seventh and final Champions' Workshop was held at Epping Forest Field Centre (EFFC) on 12 September 2012 and (with this report) concluded the delivery of the DEF project and provided the opportunity to present the Project report 2009 -2012 to participant schools.

The Workshop was used as means to bring the project to an end and to facilitate the transition to post-DEF collaboration of the partners involved (ie the schools and the learning providers) in taking forward the DEF legacy.

Workshop programme

- Discovering Epping Forest the legacy and the future (Steve Bunce, EFFC)
- Learning opportunities in Epping Forest (Learning Providers)
- Workshops + 'clinics':
 - Try out learning activities
 - View learning materials
 - Biodiversity and taxonomy in the New Curriculum
 - Ask questions
 - Plan for the future

- Lunch – screening of Discovering Epping Forest DVD
- Keynote external speakers:
 - Learning Outside of the Classroom accreditation (Sally Thompson)
 - Real World Learning at the leading edge (Anthony Thomas)
- Workshops + ‘clinics’: *[Refreshments]*
 - LOfC accreditation
 - Eco-schools
 - Ask questions
 - Plan for the future
- Closing remarks

The workshop was generously supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund as part of the ‘Branching Out’ project and was designed to:

- Inspire teachers to continue to champion the aims of the ‘Discovering Epping Forest’ project.
- Encourage continuing use of the services of Epping Forest Learning providers
- Highlight the legacy of Discovering Epping Forest including the learning programmes, resources, networking and collaboration.

Teachers from primary schools had the opportunity to experience or observe a range of exciting key stage two learning activities including ‘leading edge’ science and ‘ESD’ programmes as well as having the opportunity to discuss with learning providers plans for ongoing learning in Epping Forest. Participants also heard about plans for continuing and improved access to online learning resources and the Learning Outside the Classroom (LOtC) Mark for schools as well as receiving copies of the Discovering Epping Forest report and DVD.



Rosie Withill (EFFC) introducing Steve Bunce



Teachers viewing display material

Steve Bunce

Steve drew attention to the Project report and to some significant numbers :

- **12,150** learner experiences across three years – mass participation
- **93%** of teachers ranked 'overall' satisfaction of the programme in the highest category on a 5-point scale – outstanding quality
- **0.012%** of learners received a injury (only very minor) – terrific safety record

He also asked participants to reflect on and build on the DEF legacy and confirmed that the discovering.ef@field-studies-council.org can still be used for any communication in the knowledge that communications will be receive an appropriate response with forwarding, as appropriate.



Rosie Withill introducing Anthony Thomas
World Learning'



Antony Thomas *presenting 'Real*

Sally Thompson

Quality Badge Development Manager for the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom

Sally explained how LOtC is valued by the government and OFSTED and is gaining widespread recognition. She introduced the new LOtC Mark for schools answered questions that teachers raised regarding LOtC in general and the LOtC Mark in particular.

Anthony Thomas

Formerly Chair of the Real World Learning Steering Group reporting to HM Government, Chairman of the Forest Education Initiative and CEO of the Field Studies Council. Trustee of

the Royal Geographical Society and Trustee of the Council for Learning Outside the Classroom

Tony gave an inspirational presentation on real world learning to encourage Champions to take forward the DEF legacy and answered questions about the latest developments in education.

Discovering Epping Forest Report and DVD

A free copy of the Discovering Epping Forest short film (DVD) and the Discovering Epping Forest 2009 – 2012 Report was provided to each of the participant schools

Both the Report and DVD will be available soon on the City of London website.

Summary of the DEF legacy taken from the full DEF Report

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'.
- A growing number of primary schools have built DEF work or activities into their programming with intentions to use the Forest on a frequent basis.
- 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 has increased understanding in relation to how the Forest can be accessed with to help to minimize travel costs and the impacts of traffic upon the Forest.
- Increased understanding and appreciation of each Forest Learning Provider that enabled more effective working relations.
- Promotion of all the Forest Learning Provider 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.
- Web based learning resources.

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'.

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.

3. Website resources

DEF-derived teaching support material from all partners is now available to download from the EF section of the CoL website:

<http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/green-spaces/epping-forest/learning/Pages/Teaching-Support-Material.aspx>

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.

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.

2. Partnership working

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

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.

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.

3. Cascading learning

Learning by EFFC from the innovation and delivery of the successful City Bridge Trust funded 'Sustainable SchoolsTM' project (2004-2007) allowed cascading of experience to develop the Discovering Epping Forest project.

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 to carry out teaching at sites near the learners.

6. Teaching modules

EFFC has developed a stand-alone KS2 course which examines the impacts of humans on Epping Forest.

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.

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.

Attendance list

Champion Name	School Name
Tracey Lapado	Carpenters Primary School
Amy Barnes	Lambourne Primary School
Claire Houghton	Parkside Primary School
Noel Tuohey	St Edward's Catholic Primary School
Kathleen Jones	St Mary's Catholic Primary School
Natasha Bowen	Uphall Primary School
Alison Gilligan	Uphall Primary School
Michael Pearmain	Sandringham School

Victoria Bettelheim	Central Park Primary School
Adam Dobson	Roding Primary School
Sinead Crick	Roding Primary School
Khaledha Begum	Ranelagh Primary School
Allan Love	Coppice Primary School
Carolyn Perret	Oakdale Junior School

The future

There are good things that are in place as part of the legacy that are now part of ongoing work and there are many things we will be able to do if we are successful in acquiring new funding.

The Epping Forest Learning Providers Forum continues to provide an opportunity to explore these things further on the basis of this legacy. It is anticipated that these discussions will be informed by the Review of Learning in Epping Forest undertaken by consultants for the City.

Steve Bunce, Head of Centre

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stevebunce.ef@field-studies-council.org

Inspiring environmental understanding through first-hand experience



Epping Forest Field Centre
Head of Centre's report on activity in 2012



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

With **22,140** learner experiences (target exceeded), it was only the ending of the Discovering Epping Forest (DEF) project and the changed location for the 'Santa' event that made 2012 the second best year in the Centre's history and not quite in line with the 2011 record.



Learning for 
Biodiversity *A project for Londoners and London's biodiversity*

This **City Bridge Trust** (CBT) funded project was successfully extended from schools to include informal learning (families and adults). All participants indicated that their experiences had led to a significant increase in understanding of issues affecting London's biodiversity as well as learning in relation to taxonomic and identification skills.

The **HLF** funded 'Discovering Epping Forest' (DEF) project came to an end with the production of the final project report and DVD. The EFFC team had led the three year project, and together with our partner organisations (City of London, EF Centenary Trust and Suntrap) delivered 12,150 learning experiences for KS2 students and training and support for 90 teachers, who would have not otherwise visited Epping Forest.

Activities relating to the pan European project 'Lessons from Nature' were trialled in advance of a planned rollout to 30 schools in 2013.

"It has helped me to realise the potential of using nature to solve future problems"
KS3 Learner



The Centre team currently uses 44 learning sites within and outside of Epping Forest. Providing learning at 'outreach' sites away from the Centre itself continues to take learning closer to the learners offers the potential of reduced travel costs to schools and families. We continue to maintain good links with London Biodiversity Officers and Open Spaces/ Community officers, and are collaborating with them on the potential for the utilization of other sites and other funding sources.



James Bromhead and Tania Oram spent two days in the heart of Epping Forest improving their bush craft survival skills so that they can make improvements to our provision to children, families and adults.



Service user feedback:

>98% of all learners reported a significant increase in understanding of the environment and that their expectations had been met or exceeded.

'An excellent learning experience. Great mixture of kinaesthetic, auditory and visual learning.'

'A totally engaging and inspiring learning experience.'

'Really excellent, Matched the AS specification perfectly and sparked the student's interest in Biodiversity.'

(Visiting teachers)



'Brilliant. Learnt loads and really enjoyed it.'

'Brilliant, far more complexity and comprehensiveness than expected. Lovely people, well timed and organised. Well related to the real world.'

'Friendly and professional instructors. Learnt a lot and would recommend the course.'

(Adult Natural History and Local Interest learners)

'Superb experience for kids.'

'We all have had a great morning. Today has encouraged the children to want to explore the outdoors'

'The kids haven't stopped talking about it. I think they would have stayed!'

(Family learners)



This year we were able to introduce the third formal education module in our **City Bridge Trust (CBT)** funded 'Learning for Biodiversity' project where staff visited the six partner London borough primary schools to work with two classes of Year 5 pupils (aged 10-11 years old) in their school and grounds. The aim was to build on the previous modules and to discover biodiversity present. Pupils took part in a variety of re-cap classroom activities in the morning with a selection of outdoor practical tasks in the afternoon aimed to enhance the biodiversity of their school grounds.

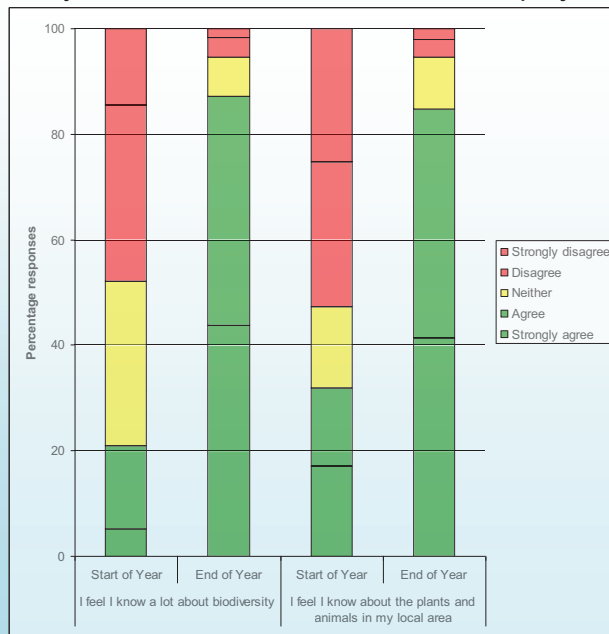
"This was a phenomenal, once in a life time experience."

"I love biodiversity!"

KS2 Learners

"I just had to write and thank you for the amazing work done to our wildlife area, it is absolutely superb, and the children will be so excited. We will make sure we stay on top of it now." Head teacher

This graph shows percentage of pupils responding, on a 5-point scale, how much they feel they know about biodiversity, at both start and end of the CBT project year.



A team from Epping Forest Country Care and their volunteers spent a day in February at the Centre removing plant overgrowth from the two centre ponds and from the reptile mound.

In addition to teachers reacting well to 'Mind the Gap' online resources, we were pleased to have the opportunity to collaborate with EU partner organisations in the Netherlands, Hungary, Bulgaria and Slovakia on this EU funded project. We are exploring possible future collaborations with these partners and our other EU partners from other EU projects including Spain, Latvia and Romania. In May Sarah Etherington and Michelle Savage joined Jonathan Oldham in Astana, Kazakhstan to work with Nazarbayev University.



We are continuing to develop a wide range of UK partners including John Muir, BSA (Crest awards), BES, Country Care and Archimedes (the leading commercial Forest Schools organisation in the UK).

The Associates 2013 Action Plan approved at Associates of Epping Forest Field Centre AGM on 28 November reveals the transformation of the Associates into an active community based organisation and a focal point for volunteering. Special thanks go to former Epping Forest Superintendent, John Besent, who retired as the Associates President. There are currently 723 members of the Associates. In 2012 the Associates transferred £770 to fund activities at the Centre. The Associates of Epping Forest held a plant sale in May to raise money for resources and secured a donation of 54 pairs of wellingtons from Shoezone and Stead and Simpson. Wellingtons are vital for students visiting the centre who cannot afford to buy boots for a one day fieldtrip.

Tutor Dr Laurence Jarvis delivered a talk on his PhD research (ecology of juvenile Great Crested Newts) to the British Herpetological Society in December following on from his participation at 'Aquatics Live' in Brighton in November.

Income and expenditure:

The 2012 Plan had made reference to the need to respond to a potential operating deficit that could have occurred with rising basic costs and reduced DEF and City of London income. As indicated previously to the JCC, the initial response included the making the administrator post of redundant, not replacing a Trainee Tutor and not reverting a 0.4 FTE Tutor post to full time. A further cut to staffing costs (with an eye on the 2014 salary budget) was then made in the summer of 2012 when tutor, Christian Kiel, left and was not replaced. (This had been possible with the reduction of 25 DEF group/days in the Autumn compared to previous years and because, after a good period of staff retention) the remainder of the teaching team were sufficiently capable of covering some additional teaching across all levels and subjects.

Grant income for 2012 was better than had been forecast in October 2011 with some EU project work coming in 2012 rather than 2011 as previously anticipated together with some additional FSC Kids Fund bursary income.

The combination of the significant reduction in salary costs in 2012 (compared to 2011) and better than forecast grant income produced a significantly healthier financial out turn than had been anticipated at the time of budgeting.

Account Heading	Code	2012 Budget	2012 Actual
Teaching	173	£288,800	£280,651
Grants, sponsors / restricted funds	192 / 194	£30,303	£43,645
Other (sales, hire, rent, professional services / internal sales, grant aid)	180/ 181 / 185/ 186 / 191 / 171 / 193/ 197 / 184	£23,000	£22,178
Investment fund	212	£2,340	£2,534
Sub total		£344,443	£349,008
City of London Corporation Funding		£54,217	£54,217
TOTAL EFFC Income		£398,660	£403,225
Salaries	270	£302,595	£278,989
Training	281	£1,000	£490
Heat & light	280	£13,750	£12,869
Insurance	285	£8,000	£8,414
Transport	290-297	£4,500	£2,974
Library & equipment	311 / 312	£3,400	£3,165
Food	321	£3,100	£3,252
Cleaning	322	£950	£1,657
Uniform	384	£250	£231
Premises / furniture/ estate	331 / 332 / 325	£2,550	£2,333
Admin	340 - 355	£10,800	£9,267
Rates/water	372-5	£7,460	£7,116
Depreciation	394 / 410 / 411	£50	£953
Gross EFFC Operating Expenditure		£358,405	£331,710
FSC Central Costs at 14% of budget (includes auditing, HR, H&S, marketing and promotion)		£50,177	£50,177
Total Operating Expenditure		£408,582	£381,887
Operating Surplus / Deficit		£-9,922	£21,338

2012 data with past year comparisons	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Total income	310,679	334,950	380,843	421,165	403,225
CoL contribution	59,655	60,113	60,113	58,988	54,217
Salaries costs	217,835	235,881	252,295	295,092	278,989
FSC HO costs (agreed at 14% of budgeted expenditure)	40,324	43,242	43,074	49,762	50,177
Total operating expenditure	314,691	332,689	350,745	394,892	381,887
Visitor numbers	18,871	19,694	22,204	23,241	22,140
Surplus	-4,012	2,261	30,098	26,273	21,338
FSC HO costs as % total expenditure	13%	13%	12%	13%	13%
CoL contribution per visitor #	3.16	3.05	2.71	2.54	2.45
CoL contribution # as % of total income	19%	18%	16%	14%	13%
Total income per visitor	16.46	17.01	17.15	18.12	18.21
Salaries costs per visitor	11.54	11.98	11.36	12.70	12.60
Total expenditure per visitor	16.68	16.89	15.80	16.99	17.25

The City of London contribution excludes maintenance costs and/or figure in respect of the valuation of the provision of buildings. The figure shown represents the actual payment for the calendar year of 2012.



Publicity

Improvements have been made to existing publicity material, newsletters and the use of social media. Facebook now has 77 more 'likes' than 2011, and twitter has 240 more followers.

Facebook photo galleries have proved popular including October's 'Fungi of the day' feature, so we have recently set up a flickr group to enable more people to share their photos with us.

Volunteers remain extremely important to us in supporting our work and we are most grateful to them

"It's great working in an outdoor environment as part of a friendly team that always make me feel valued."
Michele Gannon, volunteer



In 2012 EFFC was one of the sample learning locations for the successful re-accreditation of FSC for the Investors In People award.



Past and present staff, volunteers and Associates celebrated **Steve's 20th Anniversary** as Head of EFFC with a surprise party in April and marked the occasion with the planting of a commemorative Yew tree.

Steve Bunce, Head of Centre

020 8502 8500

stevebunce.ef@field-studies-council.org

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 2013

Purpose of report:

The purpose of this report is to inform the Joint Committee on progress at the Epping Forest Field Centre in 2013. I recommend that the report be RECEIVED.

Criteria	2013 Targets	2013 Performance at end of first quarter
Learner experiences	22,000	On target to date; future booking pattern unclear.
Volunteer days	500	On target
	Maintain standards for IIP. [Externally assessed in 2012].	Maintain standards and seeking continuous improvement.
	Exceed the standard for the Quality Badge in external assessment	Assessment scheduled for 22 & 23 April.
 	Achieve Safety Shield Gold	External assessment by Northgate Arinso due summer 2013.
Meet or exceed service user expectations	> 90% of service users to record 'yes' on feedback forms	On target
Increase environmental understanding of service users	> 90% of customers to record 'yes' on feedback forms	On target

Staff turnover arising from the departures of our Team Leaders and one of our tutors (with responsibilities for publicity and Lessons from Nature) in the early months of 2013 created an opportunity to make further cuts to staff costs. Both replacement appointments were made at the starting point on the FSC tutor scale. The resultant salary savings, together with confidence now that we shall exceed estimates for grant income, should help to ensure that we will now have a modest operating surplus by the end of 2013. (The estimates presented to the Committee in October had shown a deficit).

I and the remaining two Team Leaders are attempting to cover the operational management and leadership responsibilities formerly undertaken by the outgoing Team Leader. Even with effective and efficient systems we have struggled a little at times with the cuts to staffing but we have managed to avoid any significant service issues. We are pleased to have successfully recruited two suitably experienced and talented tutors to join our team in place of the highly valued leavers from our team. We remain broadly on track to deliver the 2013 Plan but there will be significant challenges in delivering the KPIs alongside ambitious project work arising from these changes.

Looking ahead we have lots of scheduled 'Forest Families' activity days throughout the year as well as eco-activities for children and a wide range of leisure learning and professional development courses for adults alongside our normal schools provision. Notable events include:

- an evening session for teachers in Lea Valley Park on 22 May in partnership with other Essex Learning for Sustainability (ELFS) providers #
- an informal Open Day for families on 25 July a walk for FSC Life Members and members of the Associates of EFFC on 7 September #

these events are linked to plans to recognise the FSC's 70th anniversary.

In relation to the recommended actions arising from the Fire Risk Assessment that took place in 2012, as reported to the JCC in October, it is my understanding that City of London Officers have asked its contractors to address all of the items that I referred to the Superintendent as potentially CoL responsibilities. Some of the work has already been completed and it is envisaged that the remaining actions will be completed in the near future.

The aspiration in the 2011-2014 EFFC Plan to make Lessons from Nature a major part of the learning provision of the Centre has been moved forward with the creation of new a new website www.lessonsfromnature.org the content of which has been developed by the EFFC team.

Steve Bunce, Head of Centre

020 8502 8500

stevebunce.ef@field-studies-council.org