



## West Ham Park Committee

**Date:** WEDNESDAY, 11 OCTOBER 2017  
**Time:** 12.15 pm  
**Venue:** COMMITTEE ROOMS - SECOND FLOOR WEST WING, GUILDHALL

**Members:** Alderman Ian Luder  
Wendy Mead (Chief Commoner)  
Barbara Newman  
Graeme Smith (Chairman)  
Michael Welbank  
Justin Meath-Baker  
Robert Cazenove  
Catherine Bickmore  
Richard Gurney  
Councillor Bryan Collier MBE  
Councillor Joy Laguda MBE  
Jeremy Simons  
The Rev. Stennett Kirby  
Oliver Sells QC (Deputy Chairman)  
Deputy John Tomlinson

**Enquiries:** Natasha Dogra  
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**Lunch will be served in the Guildhall Club at 1pm**

**John Barradell  
Town Clerk and Chief Executive**

## **AGENDA**

1. **APOLOGIES**
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT**
3. **MINUTES**  
To agree the minutes of the previous meeting.

**For Decision**  
(Pages 1 - 4)

4. **SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**  
Report of the Director of Open Spaces.

**For Information**  
(Pages 5 - 8)

5. **BRINGING COMMUNITIES TOGETHER: EVALUATION OF 2017 EVENT AND PROPOSAL FOR 2018**  
Report of the Director of Open Spaces.

**For Decision**  
(Pages 9 - 18)

6. **WEST HAM PARK PLAYGROUND REFURBISHMENT**  
Report of the Director of Open Spaces.

**For Information**  
(Pages 19 - 34)

7. **YEAR 1 REVIEW OF LEARNING IN OPEN SPACES**  
Report of the Director of Open Spaces.

**For Information**  
(Pages 35 - 56)

8. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**
9. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT.**

## **WEST HAM PARK COMMITTEE** **Monday, 17 July 2017**

Minutes of the meeting of the West Ham Park Committee held at Committee Rooms  
- Second Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Monday, 17 July 2017 at 12.15 pm

### **Present**

#### **Members:**

Barbara Newman  
Graeme Smith (Chairman)  
Justin Meath-Baker  
Robert Cazenove  
Richard Gurney  
Councillor Bryan Collier MBE  
Jeremy Simons  
The Rev. Stennett Kirby  
Deputy John Tomlinson

#### **Officers:**

Natasha Dogra	- Town Clerk's Department
Alison Elam	- Group Accountant, Chamberlain's
Martin Rodman	- Superintendent, West Ham Park & City Gardens
Esther Sumner	- Open Spaces Business Manager
Lucy Murphy	- West Ham Park Manager
Colin Buttery	- Director of Open Space
Michael Bradbury	- City Surveyor's Department
Alison Hurley	- City Surveyor's Department

#### **1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies had been received from Oliver Sells, Alderman Ian Luder, Wendy Mead, Michael Welbank, Catherine Bickmore and Cllr Joy Laguda.

#### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

There were no declarations.

#### **3. MINUTES**

Resolved - that the minutes be agreed as an accurate record.

#### **4. SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

The update provided Members with an overview of the West Ham Park Committee on management and operational activities at West Ham Park since December 2016. Members noted that there had been a number of anti-social behaviour incidents at the park recently; however, the Committee was reassured that staff were given applicable training and measures were taken to ensure their safety. It was also noted that there would be enhanced security and temporary CCTV at the community festival taking place in the park soon.

Resolved – that Member received the report.

5. **OPEN SPACES BUSINESS PLAN**

The Committee noted the business plan and were informed that 2016/17 was a year of development within the department. The programme approach gathered pace and delivered a number of successes including the new learning team, sales of surplus fleet which were invested in energy efficiency and disposals of surplus lodges. Sites have done well to continue to deliver excellent services (as reflected by the high customer satisfaction) while delivering these changes. Having reflected on the last year, this report identifies a number of areas for improvement.

Resolved – that Members received the report.

6. **CYCLICAL WORKS PROGRAMME BID - 2018/19**

The Committee noted the provisional list of cyclical projects being considered for properties under the management of Epping Forest and Commons Committee under the “cyclical works programme”. The draft cyclical project list for 2018/19 totals approximately £1.46m and if approved will continue the on-going programme in the maintenance of the property and infrastructure assets.

Resolved – that the report be received.

7. **EVENTS POLICY**

Members noted that as part of the ongoing preparations for the passage of Open Spaces Bill through Parliament, we are required to develop a formal events policy. The report provided an update on the proposals to develop proposals and consult our communities. It is proposed the consultation takes place from autumn 2017 to early 2018 with the local Consultative Groups. This would allow the events policy to then be considered by each Committee prior to the spring.

Resolved – that the report be received.

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

There were no questions.

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

There was no urgent business.

10. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

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

11. **MINUTES**

Resolved – that the minutes be agreed as an accurate record.

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

There were no questions.

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

There was no urgent business.

**The meeting ended at 12.40 pm**

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Chairman

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<b>Committee(s):</b>		<b>Date(s):</b>
West Ham Park	- For Information	11 October 2017
<b>Subject:</b> Superintendents Update		<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Superintendent of Parks and Gardens		<b>For Information</b>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Summary</b></p> <p>This report provides an update to Members of the West Ham Park Committee on management and operational activities at West Ham Park since December 2016</p> <p><b>Recommendation(s)</b></p> <p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Note the report</li> </ul>		

## Main Report

### **Budget and Personnel**

1. The budget for West Ham Park is currently in line with anticipated expenditure for this time of year. The gardening team saw one of its gardeners leave in August, this place is currently being filled by a temporary position. A further temporary member of staff has also been assisting with duties over the busy summer months. Five individuals were interviewed for an apprentice position at West Ham Park, the successful candidate has been offered the post and subject to references will start work with the team and join Capel Manor College in October.

### **Community, Volunteering, Outreach and events**

2. Wild East Project: Outreach sessions continued throughout July and August reaching 444 participants, (65% BME). During September, the volunteers have begun to lead some sessions themselves and have been creating new activities included making conker shell hedgehogs. The team are holding a heritage walk to celebrate the parks past on the 29<sup>th</sup> October to coincide with London Borough of Newham's Heritage Week and will be involved in the Friends Leaf Pile event, creating a giant leaf painting with participants.
3. Wild Schools: During the 2016/17 school term, 3,800 children participated in outdoor learning session in the park. For the new term, four new schools have been identified and approached to join the programme. In the first year maths, geography, sciences and also some history and art are the main core subjects. This is also being expanded to include literacy, i.e. storytelling and

descriptive writing sessions, with the children being encouraged to create their own narratives using the outside world as their inspiration.

4. Friends of West Ham Park: The friends have been trialling ticketing their recent bat walks to control numbers due to their popularity. 60 people attended the walk in August, and the September walk is already fully booked. The friends have a busy autumn and winter season of events coming up as listed below.
  - a. 29<sup>th</sup> October 12pm – Wildlife Garden Maintenance and pond renovation
  - b. 5<sup>th</sup> November 1pm Newham's Biggest Leaf Pile
  - c. 22<sup>nd</sup> November 6pm – Stargazing
  - d. 8<sup>th</sup> December – Park in the Dark and Moon Watch
5. Wildlife Garden: The use of the wildlife garden at the rear of East Lodge has recently been reviewed. The garden is not big enough to accommodate a whole class of children and the pond is in need of renovation due to the liner being punctured. A PHD student has joined the park as a volunteer and is working with our Wild Schools officer and the Friends of West Ham Park to develop a proposal for the extension of the garden and to assist with the pond renovation works. They have visited Camley Street Wildlife Garden and Woodbury wetlands to see how other sites manage ponds and wildlife education gardens. *A future report will be brought to committee regarding the extension of the garden as this would increase the area of land that is enclosed and therefore would have restricted public use.*

### **Operational activities**

6. The London in Bloom awards were held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> September. The park was awarded a Gold Award and increased its score from 166 to 177. The judge 'applauded' the increasing use of herbaceous perennials and highlighted the new 'noteworthy planting schemes' in the rose garden and South Africa border as well as the innovative outdoor learning scheme, Wild Schools. The Park was also successful in retaining its Green Flag and Green Heritage awards in 2017. The park was 'mystery shopped' this year and will receive a report from the judges by the end of the year.
7. Summer holiday sports camps:
  - a. Tennis: Summer holidays camps were held in the park for children, in total 42 participants attended the 5-8 year old sessions and 48 attended the 9-12 year old sessions. In total 910 hours of coaching have been carried out on the courts between the 1<sup>st</sup> July and the 31<sup>st</sup> August. In addition to this there has been 1,423 hours of general play.
  - b. Cricket: Capital Kids Cricket also held summer holiday camps in the park. Numbers were up on those seen last year with around 10 children attending daily.
8. Football: The football season has begun, this year the park is playing on Football Pitch Number 1, with Number 2 pitch being renovated and rested. A Saturday and Sunday league team have booked to use the pitches for the season along with the children's training team Heroes 2020, which trains



children from 5 to 15 years old, with on average 40 children attending weekly since it started in the park in 2014.

9. Football Fair: We have been approached by Upton Park Football Club who have requested to use the parks two football pitches on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> November to commemorate the first game played in the FA cup and the fact that the first goal scored in the competition was at West Ham Park in 1871. Details are still being agreed, but the event would see Upton Park Football Club and Clapham Rovers playing a match on Pitch 1 and Pitch 2 being used for skills competitions with local children.
10. Antisocial issues: The stronger heavier gauge chains that were installed on the gates have been successful in deterring unauthorised access of the park at night time. There have been antisocial issues in the area surrounding the park over the summer months

### **Property Matters**

11. Nursery update: Tenders have been received for the appointment of a consultant to progress the nursery project. These are currently being reviewed by the Park Manager, City Surveyor and Project Manager.
12. Upton Lane Lodges: 240 and 242 Upton Lane properties came to the end of the first year of being externally leased in September. Both of the original tenants are still resident in the properties. Strutt and Parker have completed an inspection of the properties to ensure that expected standards are being maintained and both properties are being well looked after.
13. Park Cottage: the completion of the refurbishment works at Park Cottage has been delayed due to a problem with one of the windows, but it is anticipated that this should be completed by early October.
14. Mobile food concessions: The wet August weather resulted in low numbers of park visitors and consequentially sales at the 'Snack Shack' were not as high as anticipated, however, a very warm bank holiday weekend helped to compensate for this. Snack Shack are continuing to trade on site at weekends until the end of September and then will remove their trailer.

### **Appendices**

- None

### **Lucy Murphy**

West Ham Park Manager

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<b>Committee:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
West Ham Park Committee	11 October 2017
<b>Subject:</b> Bringing Communities Together: Evaluation of 2017 event and proposal for 2018	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of</b> Superintendent of Parks and Gardens	<b>For Decision</b>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Summary</b></p> <p>West Ham Park hosted a 'Bringing Communities Together' event featuring funfair rides, community and faith stalls, food and concessions on the 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> July 2017. Around 2,500 people attended the event, which was well received by local people. Minimal damage was caused to the park's grassland area which has also undergone reparation works to relieve compaction. The organisers would like to repeat the event in 2018 as detailed in the report.</p> <p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Approve the proposal to repeat the event in 2018</li><li>• Delegate authority to the Superintendent to finalise details of the 2018 event, event fee (including deposit and reinstatement), cancellation policy and pricing structure for fairground rides, food and other items to be sold by stall holders.</li></ul>	

## **Main Report**

### **Background**

1. West Ham Park Committee approved a proposal from HAFS academy, the outreach department of a local Islamic faith school to hold an event in the park on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> July 2017 entitled 'Bringing Communities Together'. The event aimed to create and strengthen positive relationships within local communities by bringing people together to enjoy fairground rides, cultural foods, arts and craft exhibitions.

### **Current Position**

2. The event took place on the 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> July as approved by this Committee and saw 10 Community groups, 4 food stalls, 6 concessions and 16 fairground rides set up in the south west corner of the park. Inclement weather on the Saturday resulted in around 500 people attending the event, however fair weather on the Sunday saw attendance peak at around 700 people at any

one time, with an additional 2,000 recorded in the park on the day (See Appendix 1: Photographs of the event).

3. A survey was carried out on site during the event and an on-line link distributed through the Friends of West Ham Park Facebook page. 36 people responded in total. The majority of respondees visited the park due to the event or to meet with family and friends. 75% lived locally and had visited the park before. 52% said that the event was the thing that they enjoyed most about their visit to the park. Overall feedback was good with 86% scoring it 4 or more out of 5. When asked what improvement visitors would make to the event 40% said more stalls/rides, or hold the event for more days, 16% said that they felt some of the rides were too expensive, and 8% that it could have been better advertised. 95% said that they would come back to the park after the event (the other 5% preferred not to say). Whilst not captured in the survey feedback, the photographs (in appendix 1) demonstrate the large proportion of Muslim faith people who attended the event. Park staff who engaged with attendees found that many had not visited the park before.
4. Following the event the Park Manager met with organisers to discuss successes and issues that had arisen. Improvements and additional actions have been identified, which the organisers would put into place if this Committee approved the event being repeated in 2018.
  - a. Planning and organisation: In total 20 stall holders (community groups, food stalls and concessions) attended the event rather than the anticipated 35. A number of other events had been held in the Borough on the weekends preceding 'Bringing Communities Together' such as The Mayor of Newham's Show, Gay Pride and Forest Gate Festival. The organisers did not attract as many community groups and voluntary sector organisations as they had hoped due to their presence at these other weekend events. If the event was repeated in 2018, it is suggested that it is moved to an earlier weekend in July and that the application procedure for stall holders is formalised to gain a greater commitment to attend the event.
  - b. Marketing: The organisers had issues with their print companies and did not circulate leaflets or put up banners and posters until two weeks before the event took place. This was reflected in some of the feedback that was received (8% felt that the event should have been better advertised). Organisers wrote to all houses facing the park to inform them that the event was taking place and provided contact numbers for queries. This was well received and no complaints regarding the event were received. Marketing would be finalised and material ready for distribution a minimum of a month in advance in future.
  - c. Fairground rides: 16 different fairground rides were set up in the park, these ranged from inflatable slides, dodgem cars, a Ferris wheel and water zorbs to 'Extreme', a ride for people 150cm and taller which also catered for adults. Tokens for the rides were £1.20 for 1 or 10 for £10. The majority of rides charged 1 or 2 tokens, but 3 rides required

multiple tokens due to the longer running time. Feedback from users suggests some felt this was too expensive (16% of people questioned). Ensuring that the majority of rides are more affordable and limiting the number of more expensive rides (to a maximum of 2) is proposed in the future to ensure that the fair is felt to be 'reasonably priced'.

- d. Operational management: Volunteer litter pickers worked throughout the event days to manage waste on site. Minimal litter was seen in the park. Park keepers also conducted a further litter pick on the Monday morning to extract rubbish that had blown into the long grass areas. The security team were required to respond to an incident with 4-6 male youths trying to steal ride tokens and money, but this was handled quickly and carefully. Park staff also provided support until the Met police arrived to speak with the individuals. During the setup and break down of the rides, large boards were used to protect the grass from vehicles driving over it and help to spread the weight thus reducing compaction issues. Minimal damage to the turf was caused. There were some notable depressions in the grass immediately following the event, however the park team aerated and scarified the field and will do so again this autumn. These methods were successful in minimising damage to the event area and would be repeated again for future events.
- e. Financial implications: A fee of £3000 was charged to Hafs Academy, with an additional 25% deposit against expected reparation costs. £500 of this was returned as damage caused to site was minimal. Staff costs were higher than expected due to additional support required by the organisers. Net profit was £752.46

Expenditure		Income	
<u>Staff costs during event</u>			
Park Manager	£ 717.78	Event fee	£3,000.00
Team Leader	£ 750.00	Deposit	£ 750.00
Keepers	£ 292.32		
Support officer	£ 237.44		
Reparation works			
Equipment hire	£ 250.00	Deposit returned	- £ 500.00
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<b>£2,247.54</b>	<b>Net profit</b>	<b>£ 752.46</b>

## Proposals

5. HAFS Academy would like to hold the event again in 2018. The proposal is to repeat the event over a Saturday and Sunday in July, but to hold it earlier in the month in order to secure a greater number of community organisations. The event organisers propose to set up the event on Friday and remove many of the smaller stalls on Sunday with the larger stalls and fairground rides moved off site on Monday.

6. Working with other external partners they propose to erect:
  - a. A maximum of 16 fairground rides provided by Irvin Leisure, with a maximum of 2 rides that charge more than 2 tokens.
  - b. 3-5 food stalls offering a selection of international menus,
  - c. A maximum of 35 stalls: including local community and faith groups, free health checks, no smoking & healthy eating advisory stalls and commodity stalls including henna artists, arts and craft stalls, face painting etc
7. The aim of the event will again be to celebrate, share and enjoy a fun day with the community regardless of faith or nationality. It is expected that the event will attract more people if continued in 2018. It is hoped that around 500 people will attend the event (at any one time). This will be managed with the support of paid staff, volunteers, security staff and trained first aiders. Additional facilities in the form of portable toilets will also be arranged by the event organisers.
8. It is proposed to hold the event in the south west corner of the park again as this worked well in 2017. The eastern side was unaffected by the event and ensured that there was still a quiet area in the park where people could relax and play sports etc. The stalls and fairground rides would border the main path that leads from South Gate north towards the picnic area. The location of the other food stalls and fairground rides would be in the approximate locations shown on the map (see Appendix 2), however exact details would be agreed with the Park Manager on site to ensure that the root protection areas of the trees are maintained (as defined in BS5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction recommendations).
9. The fairground rides will be placed on the mown grassland area avoiding the sports pitches, running track, wildflower meadows and bulb areas. An indemnity form will be signed by the organisers who will be responsible for paying for any reparation works required following the event. With careful planning it is thought that this should be restricted to re-seeding or turfing of damaged or worn grassland areas. A cancellation policy will be agreed with the organisers in case the weather on the event day gives cause for concern, e.g. high winds. The cancellation policy will also include a clause allowing the park to cancel the event should ground conditions be too soft to allow for the setup of the large fairground rides.
- 10.

## **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

11. This event would support the City's Core Values of
  - a. CV1 The best of the old with the new – celebrating the traditional London fairground and linking to the Victorian heritage of the park while celebrating and supporting the rich cultural mix of the current population demographic.

- b. CV3 Working in partnership – through working with HAFS academy the park would be able to facilitate an event which current staffing resources and budgets would not permit us to do otherwise.
- 12. The cultural and leisure aspects of the event would also support SA3, KPP2, KPP4, KPP5 of the City's Corporate Plan.
- 13. From an Open Spaces perspective the event will support the objectives of the new business plan by;
  - a. Enriching experiences by providing high quality, welcoming and engaging, visitor, educational and volunteering opportunities.
  - b. Improving the health and wellbeing of the community through access to green space and recreation

## Implications

- 14. **Financial implications:** For the 2018 event HAFS academy will again supply all equipment, portable facilities etc at their own cost. A one off fee will be charged to HAFS academy for use of the park. Charges for staff time have been updated to reflect the support provided during the 2017 event. It is anticipated that the overall total fee will be in the region of £3,500 with an additional 25% deposit for expected reparation costs. A breakdown of these costs is shown in the table 1.

Table 1: Breakdown of event fees

Role	Hours	Fee	Comment
Park Manager	14	£ 717.78	Meeting prior to event and presence during set up and break down of fair.
Support Officer	6	£ 203.52	Technical support
Team Leader	36	£1,084.32	Overseeing event days, set up and break down of fair
Keeper	12	£ 292.32	Supporting community stall holders' vehicles entering and exiting site at the start and end of festival days
Parkland hire fee		£1,200.00	
<b>Total</b>		<b>£3,497.86</b>	
Deposit - 25%		£ 882.97	

- 15. Events provide a welcome source of income in the face of ongoing budget reductions, however charges have been kept low to reflect the community benefit that this event brings. The event will be free to attend by local people; however there would be charges for food and fairground rides etc. These would be agreed by the Superintendent prior to the event to ensure that they are accessible to local people.

16. **Key risks:** In order to manage the risks associated with the event, HAFS academy would meet with the Park Manager to review and update the events application form and operational plan from 2017 detailing how they will mitigate the risk involved in organising an event of this scale. This would include
- a. Security: Providing adequate SIA Cleared Security staff during the day time and 2 security personnel overnight.
  - b. Informing London Borough of Newham and emergency services
  - c. First Aid: Ensuring that adequate first aid certificated staff will be present during the event
  - d. Food Hygiene: All food stalls will be required to have Public Liability Insurance and have passed a minimum of Food Hygiene Certificate Level 2
  - e. Health and Safety: Risk Assessments, Safe Systems of Work and an Emergency Action Plan Procedure will be reviewed by the Park Manager prior to the event taking place.

## Conclusion

17. The 2017 Hafs event brought 2,500 people to West Ham Park. The mixture of fairground rides and stalls was well received by local people and created a summer fate feeling in the park on the day. A high proportion of attendees were from the Muslim faith community, a group that are traditionally not seen in large numbers in the park. Minimal ground damage was caused, reparation works were swiftly carried out by park staff and the field left to rest throughout August. A number of improvements have been identified and would be put into place if the request to repeat the event is approved by this committee.
18. Repeating the event provides an opportunity to build on the success of 2017 and further strengthen links with the different communities that surround the park. The events duration would remain the same, however it is hoped that by moving it to earlier in July additional community groups would take up the opportunity to join the event. Working in partnership with Haf's academy allows the park to host an event that it would otherwise not have the budget or staff resource to arrange itself, whilst increasing the parks profile with different user groups in the area and achieving additional income for the park.

## Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Photographs from Bringing Communities Together 2017
- Appendix 2 – Map showing the 2017 set up of the 'Bringing Communities Together' event

**Lucy Murphy**

West Ham Park Manager

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## Appendix 1:

Photographs from 'Bringing Communities Together' Event held in West Ham Park, (July 2017)





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Appendix 2:

Map showing the proposed set up of the 'Brining Communities Together' event in 2017



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<b>Committees:</b>		<b>Dates:</b>
Corporate Projects Board		15 August 2017
Projects Sub-Committee		7 September 2017
West Ham Park Committee (For information)		11 October 2017
<b>Subject:</b> West Ham Park Playground refurbishment	<b>Gateway 1&amp;2 Project Proposal</b> Regular	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Director of Open Spaces <b>Report Author:</b> Lucy Murphy, West Ham Park Manager		<b>For Decision</b>

## Recommendations

1. Approval track and next Gateway	Approval track: 2. Regular Next Gateway: Gateway 3/4 - Options Appraisal (Regular)			
2. Resource requirements to reach next Gateway	Item	Reason	Funds/ Source of Funding	Cost (£)
	Staff costs	Manage Project		£5,000
		Master plan to RIBA stage 3 including		£20,000
		Design/ consultant fees	Met from Local Risk Budget (City's Cash)	£10,000
	Procurement of consultant services	Quantity surveyor Engineer (water play)		£20,000
3. Next steps	1. Internal design team to redesign the existing playground and paddling pool facility and surrounding environs 2. Produce initial sketch designs (2013 RIBA stage 2) based on the available information and produce a preferred option for the playground plus three options for the paddling pool area and associated buildings 3. Undertake public consultation on options 4. Finalise detailed design to 2013 RIBA stage 3			

## **Project Summary**

<b>4. Context</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. West Ham Park is a 77 acre award winning park in East London owned and managed by the City of London Corporation. It receives 1.3 million visitors per year and is the largest green space in the London Borough of Newham. The playground and paddling pool are popular facilities with 383,000 visitors being recorded in 2016.</li> <li>2. A playground has been provided in West Ham Park since 1937. The last refurbishment took place in 1986 when all equipment was replaced and safety surface added. A master plan was created in 2010 and 10 items of equipment were replaced with external funding. The remaining 15 items of equipment are now over 20 years old and require urgent replacement. The 2010 master plan does not reflect the changes in play design and safety standards that have taken place in the intervening years. Therefore a complete strategy refresh is required in order to meet those changes and provide a facility that is fit for purpose.</li> <li>3. The playground contains a supervised paddling pool which has been provided since 1966 and is currently open daily in the summer. The cost of supervising the paddling pool with a first aid qualified member of staff and the maintenance costs associated with its upkeep mean that its future is being considered and alternative methods of water play sought.</li> </ol>
<b>5. Brief description of project</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The overall aim of the project is to redesign the playground at West Ham Park creating a new master plan, with alternative options for water play provision.</li> <li>2. The master plan should deliver safe, stimulating play opportunities for children of varying ages (aged from 3 – 13) and of different abilities. This will include replacing the existing surfacing and entrance gates. The new design should meet current safety legislation, but also enhance the setting of the playground and its interaction with the rest of the park.</li> <li>3. A safety inspection conducted in May 2017 highlighted that over half of the playground equipment is over 20 years old, no longer meets safety requirements and should be replaced. Surfacing throughout is also highlighted as a risk, as is the entrance gate (see summary report Appendix 1)</li> <li>4. The playground contains a built structure containing children's and adults toilets and a redundant park office. Refurbishment of these to meet current safeguarding standards and better utilise the office space would also be beneficial.</li> </ol>



<b>6. Consequences if project not approved</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Faults and defects are identified through regular inspections and repairs will be facilitated where budget allows. However it is becoming increasingly difficult to repair aging equipment. If it is not possible to repair equipment it will be removed. No budget is available to replace it therefore fewer play opportunities will exist. This could lead to reputational damage to the City.</li> <li>2. The current play provision does not facilitate the Open Spaces Departments learning impacts. As a result, the play facilities are not currently contributing to the strategic direction of the Department.</li> </ol>
<b>7. SMART Objectives</b>	<p>Work with other internal departments, meeting stated project programme and key dates in order to deliver a redesigned playground and water play facility (including its surrounding environs) meeting the following criteria by Summer 2019:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create a new plan for the playground to include a quieter play area (for children under 5) with sensory play equipment and a more challenging play zone for children 10+ years.</li> <li>2. Adequate swing provision (min provision should match the quantity of swings currently provided) for all ages.</li> <li>3. Picnic area with benches as well as adequate benches and bins around playground perimeter.</li> <li>4. Introduce safety surfacing that is aesthetically pleasing, but low maintenance and accessible for all. Maintain the fence line, but soften the boundary with planting and/or trees. Create a new entrance into the playground.</li> </ol>
<b>8. Success criteria</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Deliver a new playground at West Ham Park to provide play and water play provision, meeting the SMART objectives as described above by Summer 2019 within budgets agreed at Gateway 5</li> <li>2. The facility should be safe but also provide the appropriate level of risk and challenge required in the development of a child, meeting local, national and regional policies as well as guidance for outdoor learning and play</li> <li>3. The playground should be of high quality reflecting the City's commitment to quality services but also seek to minimise on-going maintenance costs.</li> </ol>
<b>9. Key Benefits</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Access to play opportunities is defined as a right by the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child. Active learning through play supports young people's social, emotional, creative and physical development. Young people are able to gain confidence, build their connection with the park, and mix with people of a range of ages and backgrounds.</li> <li>2. A third of Newham's population is 19 or under - the highest proportion anywhere in the country. Play opportunities at West Ham Park represent a key first step in engaging a wide variety of young people with green spaces and contribute heavily to the health and wellbeing agenda.</li> </ol>
<b>10. Notable</b>	<p>None</p>

<b>exclusions</b>	
<b>11. Governance arrangements</b>	<b>Spending Committee:</b> West Ham Park Committee <b>Senior Responsible Officer:</b> Martin Rodman <b>Project Board:</b> No

### **Prioritisation**

<b>12. Link to Strategic Aims</b>	3. To provide valued services, such as education, employment, culture and leisure, to London and the nation.
<b>13. Links to existing strategies, programmes and projects</b>	1. The Conservation Management Plan (CMP) for West Ham Park highlights the issues and opportunities with the existing playground and recommends changes to the equipment, introduction of natural play, realignment of fences and the addition of more planting. 2. A broad aim of the Corporate Plan 2015-19 is to provide valued services, such as education, employment, culture and leisure, to London and the nation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This project is identified as a capital project in the Open Spaces Departmental Business Plan 2016-19. It links to the following departmental objectives:</li> <li>Departmental Objective 3: Enrich The Lives of Londoners by Providing High Quality and Engaging, Educational and Volunteering Opportunities - Action J – Embed the new Learning Programme across the Department (SA3, KPP4, KPP5).</li> </ul>
<b>14. Project category</b>	7a. Asset enhancement/improvement (capital)
<b>15. Project priority</b>	A. Essential

### **Options Appraisal**

<b>16. Overview of options</b>	1. Replace play equipment on a like for like basis and carry out required works to existing entrance way to meet current safety standards. This would minimise cost but it would not deliver the opportunities outlined in the CMP. 2. Re-design the playground and water play provision replacing the existing surfacing and entrance gates in order to enhance the setting of the playground and its interaction with the rest of the park. This would result in a safe, stimulating play environment for children of varying ages and of different abilities, demonstrating good practice in learning through play and thus help to deliver the aims of the CMP and Corporate Plan. 3. As option 2 but also include the refurbishment of the toilets
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	and office area
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## **Project Planning**

<b>17. Programme and key dates</b>	<p><b>Overall programme: July 2017 – Summer 2019</b></p> <p><b>Key dates:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• July – October 2017 – present to West Ham Park Committee and Project Sub-Committee</li> <li>• October – Internal design team to begin work on redesign, including appointment of specialist consultants where required</li> <li>• January 2018 - Produce initial sketch designs (2013 RIBA stage 2)</li> <li>• February - Consult public on preferred option</li> <li>• May - Gateway 3/4 Options Appraisal report to West Ham Park Committee and Project Sub Committee</li> <li>• July - Finalise detailed design (2013 RIBA stage 3) and produce construction package (including planning permission)</li> <li>• September - Commence procurement for contractor to deliver the design</li> <li>• December – Gateway 5 report to West Ham Park Committee and Project Sub Committee</li> <li>• Spring 2019 – Implementation/build on site</li> </ul> <p><b>Other works dates to coordinate:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• West Ham Park Nursery Project site – avoid holding public consultation during same periods</li> </ul>
<b>18. Risk implications</b>	<p><b>Overall project risk:</b> Amber</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Not approved by London Borough of Newham Planning Department – seek pre-planning advice and ensure design is compatible.</li> <li>2. Reduced potential for engagement and learning through play if the project is not completed on time (commencement of summer season 2019).</li> <li>3. Inability to secure funding through CoL or external funding</li> </ol>
<b>19. Stakeholders and consultees</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City Surveyor's Department</li> <li>• OSD Learning Team</li> <li>• Friends of West Ham Park</li> <li>• London Borough of Newham – planning authority</li> <li>• Local schools, community groups and other users</li> </ul>

## **Resource Implications**

20. Total estimated cost	Likely cost range: 2. £250k to £5m																			
21. Funding strategy	Choose 1: No funding confirmed	Choose 1: Mixture - some internal and some external funding																		
	<table><tr><th>Funds/Sources of Funding</th><th>Cost (£)</th></tr><tr><td>Local Risk (City's Cash)</td><td>£50k</td></tr><tr><td>City's Cash – central resource*</td><td>£500- 700k</td></tr><tr><td>Funding: London Marathon Trust**</td><td>Up to £150,000</td></tr><tr><td>Funding: AVIVA Community Fund**</td><td>£10 - 25K</td></tr><tr><td>Funding: Biffa: Community Buildings, Recreation and Cultural Facilities**</td><td>£75K</td></tr><tr><td>Other sources of funding to be explored***</td><td>tba</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Total</td><td>£700-£1m</td></tr></table>		Funds/Sources of Funding	Cost (£)	Local Risk (City's Cash)	£50k	City's Cash – central resource*	£500- 700k	Funding: London Marathon Trust**	Up to £150,000	Funding: AVIVA Community Fund**	£10 - 25K	Funding: Biffa: Community Buildings, Recreation and Cultural Facilities**	£75K	Other sources of funding to be explored***	tba			Total	£700-£1m
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Total	£700-£1m																			
<p>* Bid for an allocation from the City Cash 2018/19 provision for new schemes, which is subject to the approval of the Resource Allocation Sub and Policy and Resources Committee</p> <p>** Details of potential external funding opportunities given however these would have to be applied for separately and would be partly dependent on the extent/cost of the scheme.</p> <p>*** Other sources of funding will also be explored, including use of any income received from West Ham Park Nursery Project. This would be a retrospective offset as the Nursery Project will not be realised for at least 2 years (subject to approvals).</p>																				
22. On-going revenue implications	Design will aim to reduce ongoing maintenance implications of paddling pool and be cost neutral or better going forward for the next 10 years as minimal maintenance should be required																			
23. Investment appraisal	N/A payback not possible however project will result in on-going saving to maintenance costs.																			
24. Procurement strategy/Route to Market	Open Spaces in conjunction with City Procurement will lead the procurement process. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Mix of internal and external resources will be required to deliver the redesign. Quotations will be sought for specialist consultant services as required</li><li>Competitive tender process for contractor to deliver the</li></ul>																			

	works and play equipment provider
<b>25. Legal implications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play equipment and associated surface to adhere to health &amp; safety legislation.</li> <li>• The objects of the West Ham Park charity are to “...for ever maintain and preserve [the Park] in a proper and ornamental condition as open public grounds and gardens for the resort and recreation of adults and as a playground for children and youth...”</li> </ul>
<b>26. Corporate property implications</b>	Paddling pool – part of City Surveyor’s asset register; opportunity to review facility and minimise future maintenance implications
<b>27. Traffic implications</b>	None
<b>28. Sustainability and energy implications</b>	Use of sustainable materials in construction where possible. Water play will seek to make efficient use of water and energy resources
<b>29. IS implications</b>	None
<b>30. Equality Impact Assessment</b>	An equality impact assessment will be undertaken

## Appendices

<b>Appendix 1</b>	West Ham Park Playground Inspection Summary Report 2017
<b>Appendix 2</b>	Open Spaces Departmental Learning Framework

## Contact

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# ANNUAL INSPECTION REPORT - 2017



## Active Risk Management Services Ltd.

- Assessing the safety of play and recreation provision through risk assessment, not dogma. -

Client: City of London  
 Site: West Ham Park Play area and Fitness equipment  
 Inspector: Jean Wenger RPII<sub>AM</sub> (Registration Number 1002A)



Inspection date  
09/05/2017

Report date  
18/05/2017

Site departure time  
1204

**This report details the inspection findings at the time of inspection.**

**INSPECTION SUMMARY** - Refer to the following report for more detail. The final page of this report provides information on the methodology; inspection procedures; risk assessment process.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>ISSUES FOUND</b> - Totals of: Number of issues found where remedial action could be delayed (Safe To Use) / Number of problems found where Immediate action or further Checks are needed.</li> <li><b>I = IMMEDIATE ACTION NECESSARY</b> The risk is not acceptable, action needs to be taken straight away, to fully secure the element/item from use, undertaking rectification later. Removal or surrounding with 'Herras' fencing may be necessary. Ensure any actions, however short-term, meet BSEN1176.</li> <li><b>T = TEMPORARY</b> Risk Assessment has been provided as further checks need to be undertaken by the client to complete the inspection and to update the temporary risk assessment</li> <li><b>The Risk Assessment incorporates a Risk Benefit Assessment.</b></li> <li><b>RISK</b>- Number of problems with that risk level (with guidance on maximum time delay before remedial action is undertaken).</li> <li><b>MAINTENANCE</b> - Action is advised for safe operation, worn or broken parts, extension of service life, appearance etc. Maintenance is not related to upgrading to meet the current safety level advised by Standards etc.</li> </ul>	TOTALS of PROBLEMS or ISSUES FOUND	RISK I = Immediate action is necessary  T = Temporary until further checks undertaken	RISK High/Action Necessary	RISK Medium / Tolerable	RISK Low / Acceptable	Maintenance
	Safe To Use? 0 / 0 = No issues found & safe to use  2 / 0 = 2 issues found & safe to use  0 / 1 = 1 Immediate issue & not safe to use	Action - Refer to the first column.	Action - analyse ASAP review and implement rectification. Ensure any temporary actions meet EN1176 Monitor and if repair period > 3 months removal is advised	Action - can wait until funds become available (then priority action should be to rectify or replace with a new item)	No action necessary unless desired	Maintenance is advised
1-Carousel ability whirl	2/0			1	1	2
2-Spatial net climber	5/0	T	1	4		5
3-Carousel - Revolve	2/0			2		2
4-Carousel - supanova	1/1	I		1		2
5-Social play and 2 slides A B Wendy house corner	2/0		2			2
6-Rocker springers x 4	1/0		1	1		1
7-Agility balance course - Zig Zag Bridge	3/0	T	1	2		3
8-Agility traverse - stilts	2/0	T	1	1		2
9-Social play steel drum seats	1/0				1	1
10-Agility traverse - Dance activity circuit	2/0	T		1	1	2
11-Multi play component with towers and slides	5/0			5		5
12-Swing 1 bay 2 cradle seat	4/0	TT	3	1		4



13-Swing 1 bay 2 flat seat	3/0	T	1	1	1	3
14-Swing 1 bay birds nest seat	2/0			2		2
15-Swing 1 bay 2 cradle seat 'gorilla' units	4/0		3	1		1
16-Swing for Wheelchair	1/0				1	1
17-Slide helter skelter	3/0		1	2		2
18-Rocker springer - Jeep	1/0					1
19-Social play - train	4/0		1	3		2
20-Educational play panel	0/0					
21-Social play house	2/0			1	1	2
22-Fencing and gates	4/0			3	1	2
23-Agility multi structure	6/0	T	3	3		6
24-Agility unit - Stompa	3/0		2	1		3
25-Slide log cabin	5/0			4	1	3
26-Slide embankment style	4/0			3	1	3
27-Paddling pool	1/0		1			1
<b>ADULT FITNESS EQUIPMENT</b>						
28-Parallel bars	5/0		2	3		2
29-Back Bars	3/0		1	2		2
30-Monkey bars	4/0		2	2		1
31-Ground beam	3/0		1	2		
32-Chest press	2/0		1	1		
33-Recumbent bike	1/0		1			
34-Hand bike	1/0		1			
35-Cross Trainer	1/0		1			
36-Lat pull down & shoulder press	1/0		1			
37-Pull up & assisted pull up	1/0		1			
39-Double Nordic skier	1/0		1			
40-Site sign	1/0			1		
Totals	96/1	Tx8 lx1	34	55	7	68

## THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PLAYGROUND OPERATOR AND OF THE INSPECTOR

### SUMMARY

- The playground **operator** is solely responsible for managing risks in play areas and of playground equipment and is required by law to carry out a '*suitable and sufficient assessment*' of the risks associated with a site or activity.
- BS EN 1176 (2008) is the relevant National Standard from which such assessments of safety are made and it includes provision that the **operator** carries out an Annual Main Inspection of the playground equipment.
- The **inspector** will contribute to the Annual Main Inspection by carrying out an Annual RPII Inspection for the **operator** within the limits of his training and competence and will provide specialist advice to the **operator** concerning risk levels in order to assist the **operator** in the undertaking of their risk assessments.
- The National Standard additionally includes for the Annual Main Inspection to be carried out to the manufacturer's instructions and the **operator** should provide relevant inspection information to the **inspector** in advance of the Annual Inspection so that any additional checks can be considered.

### STATUS OF THE INSPECTION AND REPORT

This Inspection report provides the operator (the Client) with the inspector's findings at the time of inspection. Issues from the company's previous year inspection report are re-inspected and if still present the original finding with any photograph is reissued, adjusted with additional guidance as necessary. If the previously reported issue has been resolved then no finding is recorded.

The various British and European equipment standards covering children's play, youth sport and adult fitness provide recommendations and guidance, based on BS EN 1176-7:2008, that **operators** carry out an Annual Main Inspection to establish ongoing safety: Playground equipment and surfacing BS EN 1176:2008; Sports and recreational equipment – Parkour equipment – Safety requirements and test methods BS EN 16899:2016; Free access multi-sports BS EN 15313:2007; Facilities for users of roller sports BS EN 14974:2010; Permanently installed outdoor fitness BS EN 16630:2015. These and specifically the Annual Main Playground Inspection BS EN 1176-7:2008 focus on:

- The overall level of safety of equipment, foundations and surfaces
- Compliance with the relevant parts of the relevant standard
- The effectiveness of all safety measures and any changes made to safety measures
- Effects of weather, presence of rotting or corrosion
- Any change in the level of safety of the equipment as a result of repairs made, or of added or replaced components

In order to achieve this BS EN 1176-7:2008 advises playground **operators** that

1. Inspections of equipment should be undertaken by competent persons
2. Inspections may involve excavation or dismantling of certain parts
3. The manufacturer's inspection and maintenance instructions should be followed, and
4. Additional measures may be necessary to detect other possible deterioration.

The Annual RPII Inspection should be considered as solely contributing to the **operator's** discharge of this responsibility as set out in 1 above.

The **inspector** is a qualified outdoor annual inspector by the Register of Play Inspectors International RPII, Registration Number 102A by written and practical examination and to maintain his qualification is required to attend RPII continuous professional courses every four months. His level of competence as determined and assessed by RPII is limited within the RPII inspection competence framework to: vandalism, minor and major wear, long-term structural problems, changes in the Standards compliance and design practices, risk assessments etc.

In order to undertake the annual inspection within this competence framework the **inspector** uses visual and manual inspection and manipulation of equipment and components, and applies his knowledge of the relevant BS EN standards.

He is not qualified or competent to carry out any inspections which require the use of tools including those for calibration, tolerance and torque, intrusive examination of materials, structural measurements or excavation or dismantling of components. Where the operator has need for these in order to complete the Annual Main Inspection requirements a suitably competent person is required.

### RISK ASSESSMENT

The **operator** is responsible, for managing risks and Regulation 3 of The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 impose a legal duty on providers to carry out a '*suitable and sufficient assessment*' of the risks associated with a site or activity. The risk assessments provided by the **inspector** should therefore be considered as specialist advice as defined within the Health and Safety Executive Management of Health And Safety At Work Code of Practice information and guidance (1992) paragraph 16, to assist the operator in the undertaking of their risk assessments.

### MANUFACTURER'S INSPECTION INSTRUCTIONS

The Annual Main Inspection requires that the manufacturer's inspection and maintenance requirements are followed (see 3 above). The **operator** therefore needs to provide relevant information to the **inspector** in advance of the Annual RPII Inspection so that any additional checks can be considered otherwise the **inspector's** advice is strictly limited to the equipment as found and inspected on site and the inspection cannot be considered as fully standard compliant and the risk assessments given can only be considered as provisional.

## INSPECTOR'S ADVICE

The inspection practices undertaken by the **inspector** and described above are capable of identifying most circumstances which could result in an injury. However some elements of play equipment cannot be sufficiently checked using these procedures, for example because they are: concealed from view such as below the playing surface; at a height not able to be seen from the ground or item's platform; and/or are not responsive to manual inspection or manipulation or are sealed-for-life. In the event of this occurrence a temporary risk assessment will be given in this report with advice on what further actions should be undertaken by the **operator** in order to complete the risk assessment.

To assist the **operator** in their onward decisions it is advised that records of the equipment and any impact attenuating (absorbing) surfacing are held, including: certification of compliance and test to the relevant standards; the item's installation date; any changes or repairs undertaken; the manufacturer's warrantee and operating lifespan of the item.

### Equipment operating lifespan

This varies. An operational life may have been stated by the manufacturer. For BS EN 1176:2008 compliant equipment, unless otherwise advised, with regular maintenance, repair and no vandalism: timber approximately 10 years, metal/plastics approximately 20 years, after which replacement is advised; this lifespan may however need to be reduced due to intensity of use, degradation (ground conditions, weather, rot, corrosion etc.). Items where the structural strength is reliant solely on a single, twin or line of posts should be regularly monitored at operational inspections (every 3 months) for degradation and if necessary considered for removal before the end of their operating life (BS EN 1176-1 (2008), 4.2.14).

### Timber in playgrounds

Timber performs well within playgrounds providing that its structural strength is not affected by rot (fungal growth), often this occurs through water penetration. Rot or indicators of rot may be noticeable, however rot hidden within the timber is unable to be observed and reported. Rot is not solely an issue where water has entered from the surrounding ground; water may also enter further up a post, for example at a connection, or along a diagonal or horizontal beam, collecting at a high position in the timber, or at or below the playing surface or at the post's foundation.

Timber meeting the preservative and design requirements of the Playground equipment standard BS EN 1176-1:2008 is considered to have suitable rot protection. Due to increasing concerns with timber rot at and below the 'playing surface' (ground rot) it is advised that any structural timber post that is not installed into a 'post shoe' or other construction method (BS EN 1176-1, 4.1.3 b):2008) that keeps the timber above the 'playing surface' requires a more detailed consideration by the operator. Unless advised otherwise by the manufacturer's Inspection Instructions (these should be checked) an annual investigation by the operator for timber rot below the playing surface down to the top of the posts foundation is advised. It may be appropriate to consider the items remaining lifespan, the replacement of any IAS (particularly synthetic) surrounding the post, the provision of metal 'shoes' and equipment stability issues.

The presence of the manufacturer's identification label (BS EN 1176:2008, 7.1.) recording that it meets EN 1176-1:2008, the equipment reference and date of manufacturer will confirm this. However, timber being a natural product is subject to vagaries which can adversely affect its resistance to rot and its structural strength. It is therefore advised that any operational life stated by the manufacturer should not be exceeded and unless otherwise advised that the **lifespan** timber equipment is approximately 10 years.

The manufacturer's information, which should have been provided by the supplier for the equipment's inspection and maintenance (BS EN 1176-1:2008, 6.1.4) should be reviewed by the **operator** for any necessary actions. In addition, it is advised that timber equipment is checked at the '**Operator's** operational inspection' (at least every 3 months) for rot and indications of possible rot. Rot can result in structural failure in less than one year.

Indicators of rot include: significant movement of an in-ground post or timber at a connection; colour change; fungal growth. Plus, the following which can allow water and fungi to penetrate and cause rot: softening of the outside of the timber; significant water saturation of the timber; openings such as cracks, splits or shakes occurring or expanding within the timber's surface; missing caps to post tops or unused connection holes; vandalism such as initial carving; arson; strimmer damage.

- removing grass from the base of items by allowing grass cutting line trimmers to touch the timber is not advised as structural damage occurs by progressively removing the outer surface. A portable barrier used when cutting grass, such as a flat or curved 'trenching spade', may be a solution. The use of herbicides to address the issue will require a person qualified to carry out a COSHH assessment. Regular use of systemic herbicides is not advised as this can, on killing the plant roots, reduce the structural stability of foundations of play equipment, gates and fencing.

If any of these indicators are found further actions need to be undertaken by the operator or where appropriate competences are not held, the manufacturer or a playground maintenance company, to determine whether rot is present and if it is to carry out remedial action. The careful light prodding with a blunt instrument to investigate for any timber softening or the presence of rot may assist such determinations. Actions include:

- regularly, at least every 3 months, monitor the indicators for rot
- checking the exterior of the timber relative to the position where indicators of rot are present; if these are near the playing surface level and the timber is installed into the ground, checks beneath the playing surface down to the timber post's foundation are advised.
- where hidden rot is suspected, for instance where an adjacent post has rot, the use of using specialist investigative equipment such as internal examination by needle drilling electronic 'resistograph' systems may assist the operator in their decisions. Such investigations are common in the telecommunications industry on single upright telephone poles. It is



advised however that the use of such specialist investigations are not widely understood within the playground industry, that commonly uses different constructions involving multiple components, or structures involving dynamic movement, rather than single pole items; it is additionally advised that their use can be financially costly and not necessarily conclusive. A decision may therefore be need to be taken to remove the element or equipment.

Where rot is detected, or a cracking sound is heard when manipulating an in-ground post or timber element, or the outer surface of the timber is penetrated by the prodding instrument this shows that its structural security is affected and the element needs to be replaced or the equipment removed. It is advised that other timber equipment installed at the same time be checked. Decisions on necessary actions may be assisted by determining: remaining lifespan; other affected elements or equipment; financial costs.

Where the posts are installed into a concrete foundation there is an increased risk of rot. The structural stability of the unit is particularly of concern where there is a dynamic loading such as in the case of swinging, or a sideways leaning movement on a crossing chain unit or traverse wall. BS EN 1176-1:2008, 4.2.14 advises of dynamic stability risks on equipment dependant on a single, twin or rows of single cross section posts and the operator is reminded of the recommendation in BS EN 1176-7:2008, 6.3.2, that if necessary such items should be considered for decommissioning before the end of their operating life.

**The final page of this report provides further information.**

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## Appendix 2: Open Spaces Departmental Learning Framework

### Learning in Green Spaces

23 million people visit our spaces in and beyond the City of London each year. Along with managing the conservation of these incredible spaces, we concentrate on making a positive and meaningful impact on the communities who use them. We create engaging opportunities to connect people, particularly from deprived and urban communities, more powerfully to their local green space.

We are concerned that London's children are becoming disconnected from the natural world, and we know that children in deprived areas of London face more barriers than most to accessing nature. Our green spaces are often located near areas of high deprivation which makes us uniquely placed to tackle this challenge head on. Our goal is to get people outdoors to experience the good feelings and health benefits that we all know come from spending time in green spaces.

In order to tackle this challenge, we design projects and services that deliver impact in our local communities, connecting them more powerfully to their local green spaces. We focus our work on five impact areas we feel are the stepping stones to increasing connection to nature and green spaces. We are committed to being inclusive but we focus our limited resources on the communities who need us the most.

#### What we are trying to do

Make a positive impact on communities who use or border our green spaces through learning activities

#### By positive impact we mean...

##### Understanding

People understand the value and importance of green space

##### Confidence

People are confident to use green spaces, as part of our activities or independently

##### Involvement

People take positive action for, and get involved with, green spaces

##### Wellbeing

People have restorative and meaningful experiences in green spaces

##### Connection

People develop a sense of place with green spaces, and pass this down through generations

The City of London provides 14 green spaces in and around London for the benefit of local communities. Most are registered charities operating at little cost to the general public.

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<b>Committees</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Open Spaces Committee – For Information Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queen's Park - For information Epping Forest and Commons Committee – For information West Ham Park Committee – For Information Education Board – For Information	
<b>Subject:</b> Year 1 review of Learning in Open Spaces	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Director of Open Spaces	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Grace Rawnsley – Head of Learning (Open Spaces)	

## Summary

'Green Spaces, Learning Places', the Open Spaces Department's new innovative learning programme, was launched in April 2016 and has reached over 45,000 children, young people and adults in the first year of delivery. This programme represents a key method for the City of London to contribute to the health and wellbeing of residents of some of London's most deprived communities through connecting them more powerfully to their local green spaces.

The programme has achieved overwhelming success as highlighted in the first year evaluation report (Appendix A). However, the future of the project remains at risk due to uncertainty over the long term funding arrangements for the core areas of the work.

## Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that:-

1. Members note the success of the learning programme in the first year of delivery and support its continued delivery into years 2 and 3 of the current funding.
2. Members note the issue of not achieving funding from external sources and the risk this presents to the programme.

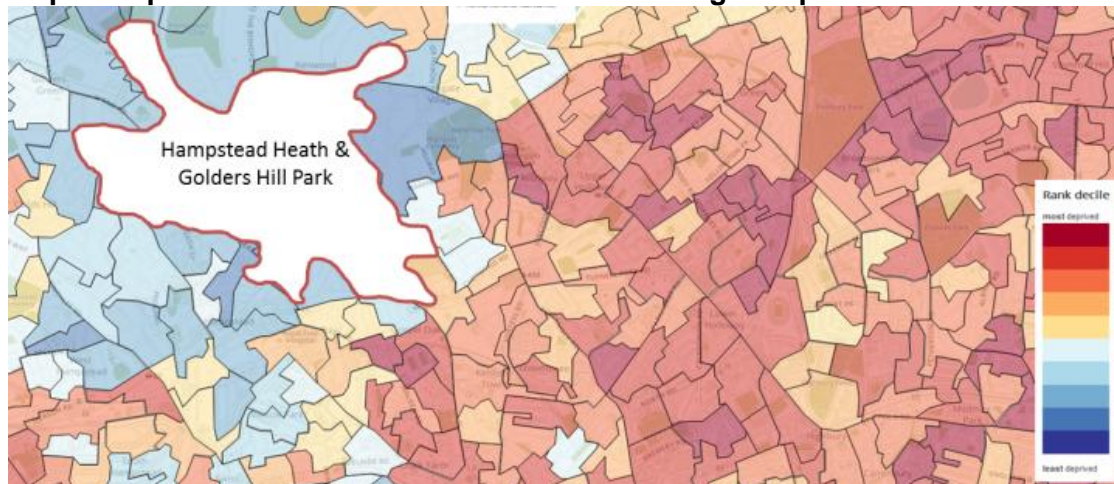
## Main Report

## Background

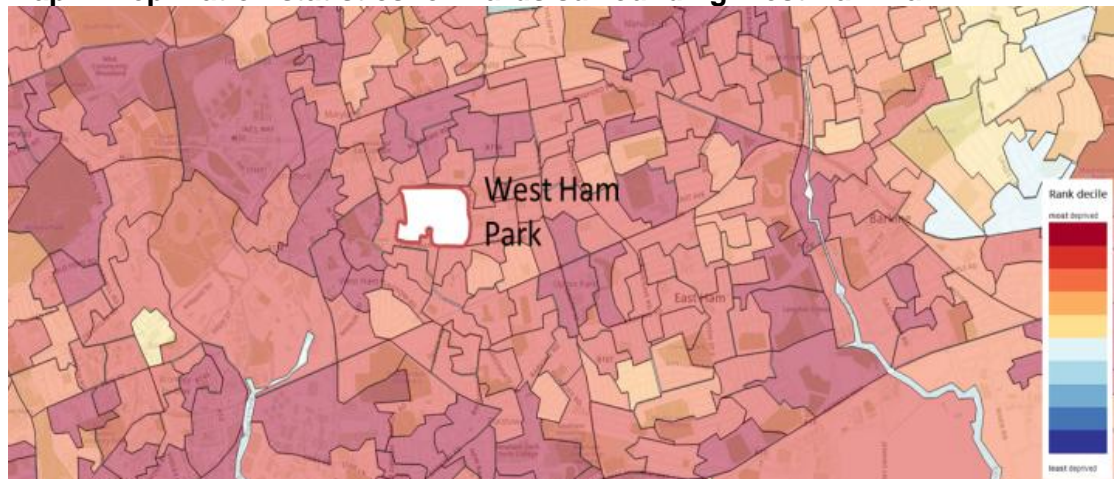
1. Children in deprived areas of London face more barriers than most to accessing nature. City of London green spaces are often located near areas of high deprivation (maps 1-3 below) which makes us uniquely placed to

tackle this challenge. Our goal is to get people outdoors to experience the good feelings and health benefits that we all know come from spending time in green spaces.

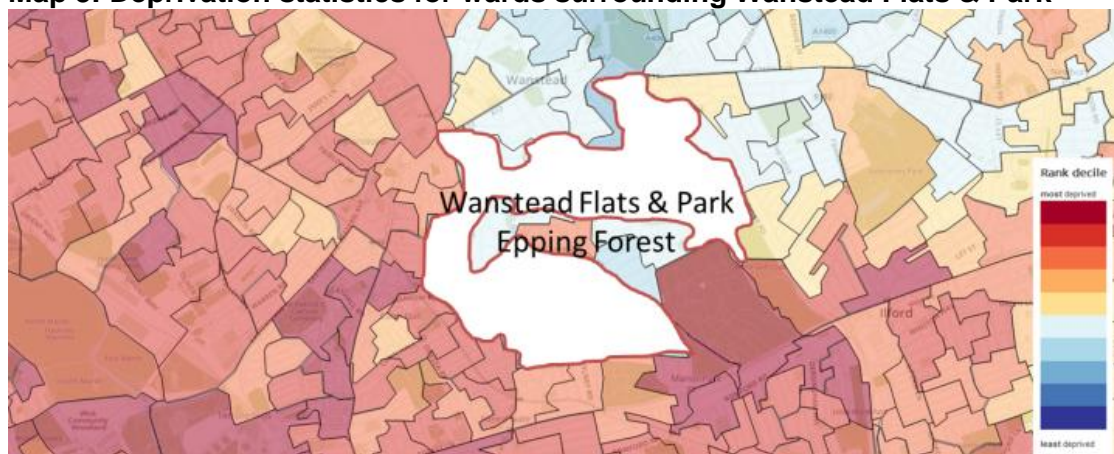
**Map 1: Deprivation statistics for wards surrounding Hampstead Heath**



**Map 2: Deprivation statistics for wards surrounding West Ham Park**



**Map 3: Deprivation statistics for wards surrounding Wanstead Flats & Park**



2. A number of government white papers and prominent studies have highlighted the barriers that young Londoners face to engaging with nature which range from geographical and cultural, to emotional and social. Studies

have shown the results of these barriers on children and young people in London:

- a. Only 1 in 10 children play outside regularly
  - b. People in deprived areas of London are 10 times less likely to have access to green space
  - c. 30% of schools in London have no natural features in their school grounds
  - d. Young people in deprived areas of London face the most barriers to accessing nature in the UK
3. In order to tackle this challenge, we developed a new centrally coordinated outcomes-based approach to delivering learning, focusing on delivering to deprived communities close to our open spaces. This approach was centred around 5 impact areas which make up our strategic learning framework; understanding, confidence, involvement, wellbeing, and connection. Using this approach we designed learning projects and services that deliver impact in our local communities.
4. In April 2016, the new programme entitled 'Green Spaces, Learning Places' was launched and included 5 innovative community based projects and 2 reinvigorated community services. Part of this programme was funded through a generous grant from the City Bridge Trust of £400,000 over three years.
5. The remaining funding is to be accomplished through carry-forwards of local risk savings, grants from other external funders, and hypothecated property income from lodges.
6. The programme was designed to have a number of core roles and services that are ongoing and support future development, as well as a number of fixed term projects. This structure allows the programme to be responsive, resilient and adaptable in the face of changing needs and priorities.
7. Each project was developed to work with communities or audiences who traditionally face barriers to accessing green spaces. The projects are short term but high impact and focus on quality over quantity. The services are designed to reach a wide and inclusive audience to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to learn and connect with nature. The projects are detailed below:
  - a. **Green Talent:** we provide opportunities for unemployed young people or those at risk of becoming NEET near Hampstead Heath to explore careers in the environmental and green spaces sector. However, we have a hidden agenda - we want them to love our green spaces as much as we do, and realise their role in the future of green spaces in London.

- b. **Wild Schools Project:** we work closely with our local schools near West Ham Park to get them using our green spaces to teach their lessons, so that all young Londoners grow up experiencing nature.
- c. **Wild East Project:** often people use green spaces but don't know the stories behind them. Through the Wild East Project we want to tell these incredible stories using mobile interpretation tricycles at West Ham Park and Wanstead Flats.
- d. **Playing Wild:** from experience we know that it doesn't take much for a child to want to play outdoors – they love it. We also know that many children under 5 don't have the opportunity to play outside regularly. We work with parents and community groups to take children outdoors on Hampstead Heath.
- e. **Hampstead Heath Ponds Education Project:** using this real life example of science and engineering in action, we work with secondary school students to bring their learning into context, raise their aspirations and role model STEM careers.

The services are detailed below:

- a. **Wild Schools Service:** what better way to learn about science, geography and history than seeing, hearing, smelling and feeling it first-hand. Our school sessions on Hampstead Heath and Epping Forest are the perfect introduction to green spaces, while hitting some learning objectives at the same time.
- b. **Play Service:** Our popular staffed play areas on Hampstead Heath are the first stepping stone to getting outdoors for many local young people and their parents. We provide family-friendly, nature-focused activities that inspire our visitors to take that next step into nature and green spaces.

## Current Position

- 8. In 2016-17, 'Green Spaces, Learning Places' engaged over 45,000 children, young people and adults in learning activities across our green spaces, bringing them closer to the natural world.
- 9. The report 'Year 1 evaluation of Green Spaces Learning Places' (appendix A) specifically highlights the success of the CBT funded projects and services that make up part of our wider learning offer. In summary these successes include:
  - a. **12,225 school students** were inspired through hands-on learning sessions designed to promote discovery, connection and deeper understanding of the natural world
  - b. **33 new dedicated volunteers** from our local communities increased their wellbeing and confidence by giving their time, energy and skills to helping their communities discover more about green spaces
  - c. **2 interpretation bikes and 4 new interpretation kits** have brought nature closer to families in our Wild East Project



- d. **1 vision for volunteering** has allowed the department to continue to create a positive culture of volunteering and 34 staff have received volunteer management training to support this
  - e. **15 new school sessions** have been developed to find new ways to connect students to the natural world and green spaces
  - f. **66 young people** have increased their confidence and employability skills through our Green Talent project
10. Highlights from other areas of our work which are not funded through our CBT grant include:
- g. **Over 3000 secondary school** students experienced a real-life example of maths and engineering in action through our Ponds Education Project
  - h. **Almost 30,000 young people, unders-5s and their parents** got their creative juices flowing, developed new skills and confidence and increased their wellbeing in our nature-focused play activities
  - i. **1 set of school engagement principles** has focused our work with schools to ensure that each student has the opportunity to discover, learn, build confidence and put their learning into context
  - j. **1 set of play principles** has given us guidance on developing the most engaging, child-led, and fun play opportunities
11. Over the first year, we have also been collecting stories, quotes and feedback from our participants about the impact of our work. A representation of this qualitative data can be found throughout the Year 1 Evaluation Report in Appendix A.
12. In order to fully understand our impact we are working in partnership with the University of Derby's Nature Connection Lab to continue to collect robust data and analyse the impact of the programme more definitively and with academic rigour.

## Corporate & Strategic Implications

- 13. The Learning programme supports the City's vision for "high quality, accessible and responsive services benefiting its communities, neighbours, London and the nation", and specifically supports KPP5 "Increasing the impact of the City's cultural and heritage offer on the life of London and the nation".
- 14. The programme supports the aspirations of the City of London Education Strategy 2016-2019, particularly in respect of strategic aim 1) Ensuring that the City Corporation's outstanding cultural and historical resources enrich the creative experience of all London's learners; specifically by the Prioritised Action to Promote the national STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) education agenda through working in partnership across our venues;

and strategic aim 3) Develop excellent employment opportunities and pathways and specifically by the Prioritised Action of Work-related learning and work interactions.

15. Finally, the learning programme is a key mechanism for achieving the Corporate Plan People outcomes specifically; people live enriched lives and reach their potential, people enjoy good health and well-being, and people are safe and feel safe.

## **Financial Implications**

16. The programme is part funded by the City Bridge Trust on a tapered 3 year grant of £400,000 (£220k in year 1, £130k in year 2, £50k in year 3). Currently the City of London funds £200,000 per year made up of central funds and carry forwards where possible. However, the tapered grant requires continued fundraising from external sources to make up the deficit in funding each year (£30k in year 2 and £90k in year 3). Fundraising continues to be difficult for a variety of reasons. Many funders do not fund projects which are currently running, preferring to fund new initiatives instead, making our current funding arrangements problematic. Also, the reputation of the City of London as being a wealthy organisation leads many funders to favour organisations with significantly less turnover.
17. The current programme is funded until the end of the CBT funded period in 2019. However, the programme was designed to continue past this date to continue to build, develop new projects, and make an impact in the community. The future of the programme remains at risk if a suitable funding arrangement is not identified by the end of the third year of the current funding. Given the significant success of the project within the first year and the strong alignment with corporate goals, the department are very keen to continue to programme; the department are considering a bid for a permanent budget uplift to support this.

## **Conclusion**

18. The learning programme has reached an astounding 45,000 people in the first year of delivery, helping to connect these individuals more powerfully to their local green spaces. Through these programmes we have engaged with previously under-represented audiences, and contributed to improving access and connection to green spaces for some of London's most deprived communities. However, the programme faces challenges in achieving further funding both within and after the first 3 years of the programme.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Year 1 review of Green Spaces, Learning Spaces

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# Open Spaces


Registered Charities

## Green Spaces Learning Places

### Year 1 Evaluation Report

The City of London owns and manages green spaces in and around London for public recreation and health including Epping Forest, Hampstead Heath, Burnham Beeches, City Commons, City Gardens, City of London Cemetery and Crematorium and West Ham Park. Our green spaces, most of which are charitable trusts, are provided at little cost to the communities that they serve and are funded by the City of London.



A young man with short dark hair, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and dark tie, is shown in profile from the chest up. He is holding binoculars to his eyes with his right hand. A red clipboard is visible in the foreground, held by another person whose hand is partially visible. The background is a dense, out-of-focus green forest or park setting. The lighting is natural, suggesting daytime.

*'The beauty of nature, plants, trees and birds can't be left to chance discovery. Akin to the stars in the sky, they can go largely amiss. We have to actively introduce, engage and connect the child to these wonders - so we need facilitators to actively connect our children to nature so as they can enjoy and appreciate the beauty within our parks. Many a family cannot afford summer holidays abroad - missing out on refreshing and enriching experiences. For these families parks are vital, and we need to unlock these spaces so as we enjoy their full potential.'*

- Wild East participant

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# Green Spaces Learning Places

## Introduction

The Open Spaces Department manages 4,500 hectares of natural open space for public recreation and health. Our green spaces, most of which are charitable trusts, are run at little cost to the communities that they serve.

23 million people visit our spaces in and beyond the City of London each year. Along with managing the conservation of these incredible spaces, we concentrate on making a positive and meaningful impact on the communities who use them. We create engaging opportunities to connect people, particularly from deprived and urban communities, more powerfully to their local green space.

### Key Highlights in Year 1

- **13,657 people** have been engaged through our work
- **33 new volunteers** have been recruited from local communities
- **2 interpretation bikes and 4 new kits** have been developed
- **1 vision for volunteering** has been adopted by the department and 34 staff have received volunteer management training
- **15 new school sessions** have been developed and delivered to local schools
- **66 young people** have increased their confidence and employability skills

*'I think this is great for the kids, helping them learn about nature in the park, and just learning outdoors itself is so good for them'.* Wild East Participant

We are concerned that Londoners are becoming disconnected from the natural world, and we know that people in deprived areas of London face more barriers than most to accessing nature. Our green spaces are often located near areas of high deprivation which makes us uniquely placed to tackle this challenge head on. Our goal is to get people outdoors to experience the good feelings and health benefits that we all know come from spending time in green spaces.

Green Spaces, Learning Places is our innovative new programme of projects and community services aiming to deliver this impact in our local communities. A generous grant from the City Bridge Trust has enabled us to deliver our first year of the programme and will continue to support a further 2 years of our programme.



# Green Spaces Learning Places

## Learning in green spaces

In order to tackle this challenge, we design projects and services that deliver impact in our local communities, connecting them more powerfully to their local green spaces. We focus our work on five impact areas we feel are the stepping stones to increasing connection to nature and green spaces. We are committed to being inclusive but we focus our resources on the communities who need us the most.

### What we are trying to do

Make a positive impact on communities who use or border our green spaces through learning activities

By positive impact we mean...

Understanding	Confidence	Involvement	Wellbeing	Connection
People understand the value and importance of green space	People are confident to use green spaces, as part of our activities or independently	People take positive action for, and get involved with, green spaces	People have restorative and meaningful experiences in green spaces	People develop a sense of place with green spaces, and pass this down through generations

*‘I love science because it lets me discover the world around me’.*

Wild Schools Participant

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# Green Spaces Learning Places

## Projects

Our programme is delivered across 4 community projects aiming to engage a wide range of audiences with our green spaces.

*'I love hearing 'I haven't seen one of those in years' when adults are reconnecting with wildlife they used to know as a child'.*

Wild East Volunteer

### Green Talent

Green Talent aims to work with young people furthest from the job market to support them to achieve positive and productive futures. Working with our partners London Youth's 'Talent Match London' project, we provide opportunities for long term unemployed young people to explore careers in the environmental and green spaces sector.

### Wild Schools

Wild Schools delivers impactful education to school children through 2 streams. Firstly, we deliver innovative pre-booked school sessions to a wide range of schools. We also take a full-school approach with a small number of London's inner city schools, aiming to embed outdoor learning in a school's ethos and curriculum through assemblies, school sessions, teacher training and senior leadership support.

### The Wild East Project

Wild East aims to connect London's families to nature and the environment through 'bringing nature to families', using bespoke interpretation tricycles. Teams of volunteers from the local community will provide exciting mobile events for family to learn more about the natural environment and build confidence to use their green spaces.

### Playing Wild

Playing Wild aims to address barriers to connection with nature through targeting families with under-5s through natural play activities. In particular, we will work with and develop relationships with local community centres, play groups and family centres to promote natural play opportunities to their beneficiaries.



# Green Talent

## Year 1 Progress

- **43 young people** took part in 1 day taster sessions
- **13 young people** participated in week long work experience placements
- **10 young people** participated in longer term work placements

Green Talent offers young people who are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET opportunities to gain skills in the green sector while improving their confidence and wellbeing at the same time. Working with our partners London Youth and London Ambitions, we offer a range of opportunities to explore green space management careers from conservation to leisure to education.

Young people who participated in the programme have reported gaining confidence, environmental understanding, and a deeper connection to green spaces as well as employability skills.

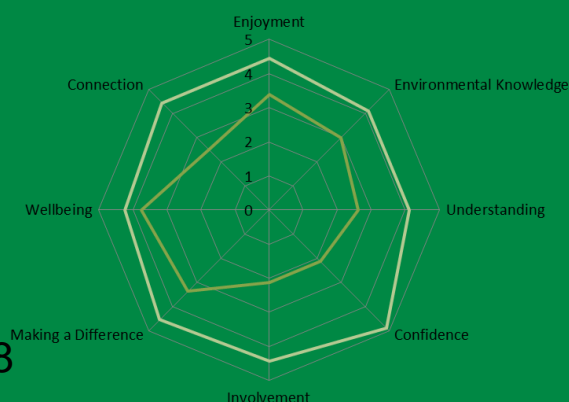
*‘I don’t usually go outside much, but I have found out that I enjoy making a difference to the local park’* Green Talent Participant

### Case Study – Woodfield School

Our partners, London Ambitions, teamed us up with a special educational needs school for young adults to deliver a longer term programme of work experience placements for 10 young people (picture above). Over 26 weeks, students were given the opportunity to learn about careers in the green sector as well as horticulture skills and hands-on conservation work.

The impact of these sessions was high with all the students learning new skills and gaining confidence (as illustrated in the outcomes star below). In fact, the programme has been widely recognised as successful within the youth work and careers sector. As a result, London Ambitions have teamed us up with 3 Pupil Referral Units to deliver the programme in year 2.

#### Woodfield School Outcomes







# Wild East Project

## Year 1 Progress

- **939 participants** at 32 wild east interpretation events
- **4 interpretation kits** developed
- **15 volunteers** recruited
- **1030 additional participants** at RSPB sessions

Working at West Ham Park and Wanstead Flats we want to create a sense of place and ownership of green spaces in the community. Inspiring communities to be involved, engaged and active in championing and shaping green spaces is our aim – after all, the green spaces belong to them.

Often people use green spaces but don't know the stories behind them or how important they are to communities and wildlife. Through the project we bring communities and families using green spaces closer to those stories to inspire a deeper connection. You can learn more about the project by watching this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2NhGxBnsuII&feature=youtu.be>

*'To be honest, I just thought it was football pitches. I had no idea all this [nature] was here'.*  
Wild East Participant

The project has been particularly successful in engaging diverse participants and volunteers and connecting with faith and community groups.

A major aim of Green Spaces, Learning Places is to reach new and diverse audiences, and connect them to their local green spaces. The Wild East Project has done just that with families and volunteers coming from a wide range of backgrounds. 58% of participants and volunteers are BAME while 60% volunteers are under the age of 40.





# Wild Schools

## Year 1 Progress

- **2451 students** learning in West Ham Park in bespoke sessions
- **2 INSET sessions** delivered in partner schools
- **8 volunteers** recruited
- **10 schools** involved in bespoke sessions

A review of environmental education projects highlighted that many barriers exist to schools using their local green spaces regularly for learning including teacher confidence, lack of resources, health and safety concerns, and lack of understanding of how the natural world can be linked to various curriculum subjects. This project aims to break down these barriers in two different ways.

Firstly, we work with a small number of schools in Newham to embed outdoor learning in their school ethos. Working directly with teachers, senior leadership and students across the entire school to build confidence in outdoor settings.

Secondly, we deliver high quality inspiring booked sessions to a wide range of schools across 12 London boroughs at our Epping Forest and Hampstead Heath education centres.

### Bespoke sessions

We have been working closely with 3 schools on learning outside across the curriculum.

A particular success this year has been our 'Maths Trail' sessions developed in conjunction with Elmhurst Primary and rolled out to our other partner schools. 700 students from years 1-6 learned about maths in West Ham Park.

Feedback from teachers before the development of the sessions highlighted that they struggle to connect their maths lesson planning to outdoor, real-life situations. After the sessions, teachers felt energised and excited about the ways in which they could use the natural environment to teach maths. Teachers also reported that students were able to make good progress with their understanding of complex mathematical concepts through learning outdoors and using concrete examples.

*"As a teacher, a highlight was seeing the children in my class in a different environment. After experiencing the session first-hand, all of the children felt confident to speak and share their ideas. The learning session allowed for some brilliant follow up work at school"*





# Wild Schools

## Year 1 Progress

- **9804 students** learning at Hampstead Heath and Epping Forest
- **15 new sessions** developed
- **99% of teachers** reported that we met their learning objectives

### Booked sessions

Schools across 12 London boroughs have engaged with the natural world and our shared heritage through our booked school sessions at Hampstead Heath and Epping Forest.

Our sessions facilitate learning through active engagement with our unique spaces. We are learner-centred in our approach, and provide fun and inspiring activities which support and enrich the National Curriculum.

A highlight of this year has been the development of brand new programmes at both Hampstead Heath and Epping Forest. Using our principles for school engagement which promote discovery and exploration, the team have developed fantastic sessions which augment the national curriculum.

New sessions at Epping Forest include 'Orienteering through history' and 'Stone Age Survivors' which connect the social and natural history of the forest and highlight the ongoing relationship between humans and nature.

Our new 'Heath beneath our feet' session at Hampstead Heath focuses on connecting learning done on site to the wider world through promoting scientific thinking and enquiry skills.

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*'It was terrific. It was well organised, all the children were engaged and all learnt something.'*  
Wild Schools participant



# Playing Wild

## Year 1 Progress

- **441 participants** at 33 playing wild events
- **3 community group events** engaging with 130 participants
- **11 volunteers** recruited and supporting the project delivery

It's the right of every child to experience playing outside and we know so many children are not experiencing this regularly.

On top of this, playing outside has many positive health and wellbeing benefits for young children and builds a lasting relationship with the natural world in adulthood. The societal health benefits include lower rates of obesity, increased physical activity and fitness, and reduction in learning disorders such as ADHD.

Playing Wild has worked with families and community groups to break down the barriers of playing outside through building confidence in both parents and children. The project has been particularly successful in two areas. Firstly, our drop-in sessions at Queen's Park are popular and reaching a wide range of the community.

Secondly, in conjunction with a local community centre near Hampstead Heath, we have developed a 6 week playing wild course which works with both parents and children to play outdoors with confidence. Participants are provided with playing wild kits to ensure that they can continue to play wild after the course has finished. We have plans to roll this course out more widely in year 2 of the project.

*'We've really enjoyed exploring the Heath and seeing all the plants and bugs.'* Playing Wild participant

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# Volunteering

## Year 1 Progress

- **1 vision for volunteering developed** with associated framework and training
- **33 volunteers recruited**
- **100% volunteer satisfaction** with recruitment process and welcome

Our volunteering development work positions volunteers as a key beneficiary of the programmes we run in green spaces.

A new departmental vision guides our approach to recruiting and managing volunteers, insuring that policies and procedures are relevant and up-to-date.

Staff are supported to deliver the aims of the vision by a new programme of training and regular support and guidance on issues ranging from duty of care to DBS checks.

The results of this development work are already being felt by volunteers, with 100% strongly agreeing or agreeing that they felt welcome by the Open Spaces team.

At a volunteer impact event in March, volunteers said that they enjoy the social aspect of volunteering, doing something worthwhile and being energised by the physical outdoor experience at the same time.

They also recognised the valuable advocacy role they play. One volunteer wrote that it was: 'A real joy to engage with a diverse range of the community, especially when that enthusiasm is reciprocated.'

Our learning team volunteers relish the feeling of helping young people and families to explore and learn about the natural world. In the words of Mahfuz, a Wild Schools volunteer: "I look forward to taking part each week and helping children explore the park. You can see the extra benefits they gain from being outside. It's very rewarding."

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*'There are so many reasons to volunteer, from making new friends to learning about myself in different situations. Everyone is very welcoming which makes me want to keep coming back again and again.'* Wild East volunteer



# Our learning so far

## Year 1 Progress

Through the first year of our project, we have learnt so many valuable things about our projects and our communities. Some of these lessons have been small, such as under-5s struggle with glitter glue. And some of these lessons have been big like the importance of putting the time in to really understand your community at the beginning of a project.

As a team, we are committed to reflecting on our work at all times to ensure we are making the most impact in our communities. We capture this learning on a monthly basis to chronicle the growth of our programme. We have highlighted 4 of the themes that regularly recur when we reflect on the challenges and successes of our projects.

We are particularly excited to have developed a partnership with the University of Derby for the second year of our project to help us learn more about the impact we are making.

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- **Having time to think:** At the beginning of the programme it was tempting to start delivering straight away as we were all keen to make an impact. However, we took the time to think, in depth, about our projects and the impact we wanted to achieve before we jumped into delivering. As a result, our projects are stronger and making a deeper impact.
- **Integrating a new team and new approach:** It's always hard to be the new kids on the block. On top of that, we were delivering an entirely new approach to learning. Naturally we faced resistance and scepticism. We found that strong internal communication, being passionate about what we do and demonstrating our value was key to embedding ourselves.
- **Understanding our communities:** It sounds like a no-brainer but in order to work with a community, you need to understand that community. We spent the time (and it takes time) at the beginning of each project getting to know our communities. This has led to a sense of ownership over our projects in the communities we are working with.
- **Evaluating our impact robustly:** We still feel we have a lot to learn about evaluating our impact. We struggled to get an evaluation consultant who we felt would be able to take our evaluation to the next level. So this year, we focused on qualitative data in the form of stories and will be working closely with the University of Derby over the next 2 years.



*'We can connect to nature in many different ways including feeling emotionally connected to nature, feeling a part of a green space, seeing ourselves as intertwined and mutually dependent on nature, and taking positive action for green spaces. In our programmes, we see this as a culmination of what we do - the end point we are ultimately trying to achieve. All our other impacts help us to connect people more powerfully to their local green spaces.'* - Head of Learning



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