

HIGHGATE WOOD CONSULTATIVE GROUP
Wednesday, 3 April 2019

Minutes of the meeting of the Highgate Wood Consultative Group held at Highgate Wood Offices, Highgate Wood, Muswell Hill Road, N10 3JN on Wednesday, 3 April 2019 at 4.00 pm

Present

Members:

Anne Fairweather (Deputy Chairman)
Deputy John Tomlinson
Stephanie Beer (Muswell Hill & Fortis Green Association)
Peter Corley (Tree Trust for Haringey)
Michael Hammerson (Highgate Society)
Councillor Bob Hare (London Borough of Haringey)
Alison Watson (Friends of Queen's Wood)

Officers:

Colin Buttery	- Director of Open Spaces & Heritage
Jonathan Meares	- Highgate Wood, Conservation & Trees Manager
Leanne Murphy	- Town Clerk's Department

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Karina Dostalova, Bob Warnock, Jan Brooker and Councillor Julia Ogiehor.

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

There were no declarations.

3. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the meeting held on 17 October 2018 be approved subject to two typos.

Matters Arising

Walking Guides

The Highgate Wood, Conservation & Trees Manager agreed to follow-up with the City of London Corporation regarding updating the now out of date walking guides.

Ecology

With regards to a query regarding a student prepared leaflet to go to Lanchester Road residents regarding hedgehogs, the Highgate Wood, Conservation & Trees Manager advised that the local ecologist had made progress in this area and there was Team interest in pursuing this.

Members discussed the old railway line that ran between Finsbury Park and Alexandra Palace which attracted periodical anti-social behaviour and rough sleepers in the area running through Highgate Wood. It was noted that this land, which historically belonged to the Wood, offered good buffer land with the potential for conservation but management issues had so far prevented this. The Highgate Wood, Conservation & Trees Manager agreed to approach TfL to discuss concerns and future management of this land.

4. **ACTIONS SHEET**

The Committee noted the various outstanding actions and the updates provided thereon.

With regards to Action 1, the Director of Open Spaces advised that the Open Spaces Department was working closely with the Corporation's web team to refresh all Open Spaces web content ahead of the launch of the new City of London website in 2020/21.

A Member stated that members of the public and new Members may wish to view old versions of plans or find out about the history of the wood and would not have access to this information. It was noted that the website was not set up to be a document archive and background documents were best accessed by contacting the local office. Members were advised that brochures, leaflets, etc, were also available electronically on the website and could be printed off.

Regarding Action 2, Members were advised that the Highgate School had been approached and the Headmaster had agreed to represent the school and would hopefully attend the next meeting. The Town Clerk agreed to check that there were no implications for a school representative officially joining the group.

All other actions were completed or already covered on the agenda.

5. **SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

Members considered an update report of the Superintendent and the following points were made:

Roman Kiln Project

- Members were advised that the Friends of Highgate Roman Kiln (FOHRK) were planning to submit a Heritage Grant to fund the 'Rekindling our Roman Heritage: Highgate Roman Kiln' project and Officers had a meeting with FOHRK the following day to discuss the bid.

Sustainability

- A new City-wide waste collection contract commenced with Veolia in April.
- The need for an improved recycling system was highlighted. The Divisional Waste and Recycling Review is currently under way investigating potential improvements to the current service.

Woodland Conservation and Tree Management

- Members were advised that recent storms had caused tree damage and led to necessary closures of Highgate Wood during March to ensure public safety.

Pavilion Café update

- The Highgate Wood, Conservation & Trees Manager explained that the Highgate Wood Café tendering for a new licensee was progressing and it was hoped that a recommendation would be brought to the HHHWQP Committee in September for a decision. Officers agreed to engage with the Group during the tendering process for feedback and Members would receive a report at the next meeting.

RESOLVED – That the views of the Highgate Wood Consultative Group be conveyed to the Hampstead Heath Highgate Wood & Queen's Park Committee at their meeting on 5 June 2019.

6. APPENDIX 1- DIVISIONAL PLAN 2019-2022

Members noted the revised Divisional Plan 2019–2022.

RECEIVED

7. APPENDIX 2 - HIGHGATE WOOD CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN 2013-2023

Members noted the Highgate Wood Conservation Management Plan 2013-2023 and the following comments were made:

- The Highgate Wood, Conservation & Trees Manager noted that the recommendations made by Members at the last meeting had been integrated into the revised version.
- Members were advised that the green text identified that a priority had been completed within the agreed timescale and the black text reflected ongoing priorities. The majority of natural environmental work had been completed and archaeological components would next be explored which would be advanced by the FOHRK project. All short and medium term policies had been achieved and the Team were currently working on the long term policies.
- A Member felt that the wording “mark out” under 1(b) should be changed to the word “identify”.
- It was noted that the Plan would end in 2023 after which the document would be condensed and rewritten to fall in line with the Hampstead Heath Management document.
- In response to a query regarding the mapping of streams and beds, Members were advised that these could be marked. A Member noted

that there was a project in its early infancy working on opening up two springs but was on hold until a drains survey was completed.

- A Member queried if the future Plan would include scientific data. The Highgate Wood, Conservation & Trees Manager confirmed that this data would be included in the Divisional Plan, which ran across all three sites, and backed up by guidance in the Woodland Management Plan.

RECEIVED.

8. **APPENDIX 3 - LICENSED ACTIVITY TABLES**

Members noted the tables listing licenced activity income for Highgate Wood for the periods 2017/18 and 2018/19. The following comments were made:

- The Highgate Wood, Conservation & Trees Manager noted that there had been a slight increase in income for the period 2018/19 from the previous year.
- In response to a query regarding the ground rules for birthday parties, Members were advised that birthday parties had a limited area of activity and encouraged to stay on the paths. It was noted that rules were needed on the old railway land regarding parties.
- A Member felt that clarity was needed in the Events Policy regarding the rules and charges for birthday parties and Forest School birthday parties. Members agreed it was important to allow schools access to the Wood, especially those with no open land.
- Members discussed the charges for commercial activity and how they were selected; the Highgate Wood, Conservation & Trees Manager noted that they did not wish to increase the numbers and that organisations were already being turned away. Members were happy with the current organisations that worked with the Wood but agreed there needed to be some thought regarding new opportunities, the numbers and how organisations are dealt with.
- A Member noted that the Alexandra Palace charged much higher fees for filming and photo shoots than Highgate and questioned whether the fees charged was too low. It was noted that it was often students who used the Woods.
- A Member queried what progress had been made regarding City of London Corporation dog licences. The Director of Open Spaces advised that Local Authorities across London were reviewing dog walking for a consistent approach across all London boroughs with most agreeing to a four-dog maximum policy and licenses for professional dog walkers. Dog licenses will first be piloted at Hampstead Heath and rolled out across all of the Corporation's Open Spaces.

RECEIVED.

9. **APPENDIX 4 - INCOME 2017-18 & 2018-19**

Members noted the information relating to Highgate Wood income and expenditure for 2017/18 and 2018/19.

RECEIVED.

10. **TREE PESTS AND DISEASES: OAK PROCESSIONARY MOTH URGENT UPDATE**

Members noted a report of the Director of Open Spaces regarding tree pests and diseases providing an urgent update on Oak Processionary Moth (OPM). The following comments were made:

- The Director of Open Spaces stated that the report went to Open Spaces & City Gardens in December to approve the submission of a bid for additional resources to the Resource Allocation Sub Committee for future financial years from 2019/20, highlighting OPM as a new and significant resource demand in the medium-term financial planning process which was approved.
- The report has gone as an update to all Open Spaces Committees as the spread of OPM now reaches all of the Corporation's Open Spaces and is recorded in all 32 London Boroughs and the City of London.
- Members were advised that the disease was a significant public health risk and the focus for controlling the pest was to protect public car parks, children's parks, paths and sports areas where members of the public were most at risk. An education programme is also in development to educate the public on OPM and what to do should they encounter it.
- Members were advised that Hampstead Heath was the longest affected space with OPM first identified in 2015. Based on the experience at Hampstead Heath, it was predicted that the number of nests in the other Open Spaces (including Highgate Wood) was likely to increase dramatically in 2019 but would hopefully plateau in the coming years.
- Treatment includes zoning targeted high-risk areas, the spraying of trees and nest removal, along with significant forest research in conjunction with the Forestry Commission.
- The Corporation continues to work closely with the Forestry Commission and Hampstead Heath will be used as a pilot site to tackle OPM. This pilot scheme would assist with the development of a national programme of best practice to control OPM.
- The Highgate Wood, Conservation & Trees Manager drew Member's attention to a diagram that reflected the current OPM nests in the Wood noting that currently a quarter of all moth species at Highgate associated with oak trees and could be impacted during tree spraying.

- Members were advised that the plan was to only spray the oak trees around the Children's Play Area with nest removal taking place in lower risk areas.
- In response to a query regarding schools, Members were advised that all Forest Schools had been educated on the risks from OPM.
- With regards to biological natural controls, a parasitic fly that feeds on the caterpillars has begun colonising in the UK since OPM has developed which would hopefully have an impact on the number of nests. It was also noted that birds had tried feeding on the caterpillars, but they were unpalatable.
- Members were advised that electronic versions of leaflets and information regarding OPM was available on the Forestry Commission's website and could be printed off. The Director of Open Spaces was also happy for the contents of his report to be circulated and agreed to keep the Group updated on OPM matters over the season.

RECEIVED.

11. QUESTIONS

There were no questions.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There were no urgent items.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Members noted that the date of their next meeting would be on 9 October 2019.

The meeting ended at 5.09 pm

Chairman

Contact Officer: Leanne Murphy
leanne.murphy@cityoflondon.gov.uk