



## Epping Forest & Commons Committee

**Date:** MONDAY, 14 MAY 2012

**Time:** 11.30 am

**Venue:** COMMITTEE ROOM - 2ND FLOOR WEST WING, GUILDHALL

**Members:** George Abrahams  
Deputy John Barker  
Deputy Stella Currie  
Alderman John Garbutt  
Deputy Stanley Ginsburg  
Alderman Gordon Haines  
Gregory Lawrence  
Deputy Catherine McGuinness  
Barbara Newman  
Virginia Rounding  
Dr Peter Hardwick (Ex-Officio Member)  
Alderman Robert Hall (Ex-Officio Member)

*For consideration of Business Relating to Epping Forest Only*

Verderer Peter Adams  
Verderer Michael Chapman  
Verderer Richard Morris  
Verderer Dr. Joanna Thomas

**Enquiries:** Edward Foale  
tel. no.: 020 7332 1426  
0207 332 1426

**Lunch will be served in the Guildhall Club at 1pm**

**Chris Duffield  
Town Clerk and Chief Executive**

# AGENDA

## Part 1 - Public Agenda

1. **APOLOGIES**
2. **DECLARATIONS BY MEMBERS OF ANY PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA**
3. **ORDERS OF THE COURT OF COMMON COUNCIL**  
Orders of the Court of Common Council, 19 April 2012 (copy attached):
  - (i) appointing the Committee;
  - (ii) approving the Committee's Terms of Reference

**For Information**  
(Pages 1 - 2)

4. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**  
To elect a Chairman pursuant to Standing Order 29.

5. **ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIRMAN**  
To elect a Deputy Chairman pursuant to Standing Order 30.

6. **MINUTES**  
To agree the public minutes and summary of the meeting held on 5 March 2012 (copy attached).

**For Decision**  
(Pages 3 - 12)

7. **2012/13 COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS**  
Report of the Town Clerk (copy attached).

**For Decision**  
(Pages 13 - 18)

8. **CITY CORPORATION RISK MANAGEMENT HANDBOOK**  
Report of the Chamberlain (copy attached).

**For Information**  
(Pages 19 - 22)

### Epping Forest

9. **SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**  
The Superintendent of Epping Forest to be heard.

**For Information**

10. **ELECTION OF VERDERERS 2013**  
Report of the Town Clerk (copy attached).

**For Decision**  
(Pages 23 - 30)

11. **EPPING FOREST CENTRE JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES**  
To receive the public minutes of the meeting held on 20 April 2012 (copy attached).  
**For Information**  
(Pages 31 - 36)
12. **EPPING FOREST ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME FOR ACCESS & HABITATS 2012-13**  
Report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest (copy attached).  
**For Decision**  
(Pages 37 - 58)
13. **EPPING FOREST SPORT CHARGES 2012/13**  
Report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest (copy attached).  
**For Decision**  
(Pages 59 - 68)
14. **ENFORCEMENT OF EPPING FOREST BYELAWS: 31 SEPTEMBER 2011 TO 29 FEBRUARY 2012**  
Report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest (copy attached).  
**For Information**  
(Pages 69 - 76)
15. **UPDATE ON VOLUNTEERING IN EPPING FOREST 2011**  
Report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest (copy attached).  
**For Information**  
(Pages 77 - 82)
16. **EPPING FOREST VISITOR SERVICES ACTIVITY PROGRAMME 2012/13**  
Report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest (copy attached).  
**For Information**  
(Pages 83 - 92)
17. **EPPING FOREST - BRANCHING OUT PROJECT (HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND) - PROGRESS UPDATE REPORT - NUMBER 7**  
Report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest (copy attached).  
**For Information**  
(Pages 93 - 104)
18. **KNIGHTON WOOD - CONSIDERATION FOR FURTHER CONSERVATION DESIGNATION.**  
Report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest (copy attached).  
**For Information**  
(Pages 105 - 116)

**19. SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

The Superintendent of Burnham Beeches & Stoke Common to be heard.

**For Information**

**20. EXPANSION OF THE CONSERVATION GRAZING SCHEME AT BURNHAM BEECHES**

Report of the Superintendent of Burnham Beeches & Stoke Common (copy attached).

**For Decision**  
(Pages 117 - 132)

**21. VISITOR NUMBERS AT BURNHAM BEECHES**

Report of the Superintendent of Burnham Beeches & Stoke Common (copy attached).

**For Information**  
(Pages 133 - 138)

**City Commons**

**22. SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

The Superintendent of City Commons to be heard.

**23. CITY COMMONS CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES**

To receive the minutes of the City Commons Consultative Committee meeting held on 29 February 2012 (copy attached).

**For Information**  
(Pages 139 - 146)

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

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

**26. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

MOTION: 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 as follows:-

<u>Item No.</u>	<u>Paragraphs in Schedule 12A</u>
27	1,3 & 5
28-29	3
30-31	-

**Part 2 - Non-Public Agenda**

**27. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

To agree the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 5 March 2012 (copy attached).

**For Decision**

(Pages 147 - 150)

- 28. WARLIES PARK - UPSHIRE MILLENNIUM FIELD**  
Report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest (copy attached).

**For Information**  
(Pages 151 - 156)

- 29. CONTINUATION OF EPPING FOREST SHUTTLE BUS SERVICE**  
Report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest (copy attached).

**For Decision**  
(Pages 157 - 166)

- 30. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

- 31. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

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# Agenda Item 3

WOOTTON, Mayor

**RESOLVED:** That the Court of Common Council holden in the Guildhall of the City of London on Thursday 19th April 2012, doth hereby appoint the following Committee until the first meeting of the Court in April, 2013.

## EPPING FOREST & COMMONS COMMITTEE

1. **Constitution**

A Non-Ward Committee consisting of,

- two Aldermen nominated by the Court of Aldermen
- 8 Members elected by the Court of Common Council at least one of whom shall have fewer than five years' service on the Court at the time of their appointment
- the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Open Spaces, City Gardens & West Ham Park Committee (ex-officio)
- plus, for the consideration of business relating to Epping Forest only, four Verderers elected or appointed pursuant to the Epping Forest Act 1878.

2. **Quorum**

The quorum consists of any five Members.

3. **Membership 2012/13**

**ALDERMEN**

- 5 Gordon Warwick Haines
- 2 John Garbutt

**COMMONERS**

- 4 (4) Stanley Ginsburg J.P., Deputy
- 8 (4) Catherine McGuinness, M.A., Deputy
- 3 (3) Gregory Alfred Lawrence
- 15 (3) Barbara Patricia Newman, C.B.E.
- 16 (2) Stephanie Ella Maureen Currie, M.B.E., Deputy
- 2 (2) Virginia Rounding
- 2 (1) George Christopher Abrahams
- 9 (1) John Alfred Barker, O.B.E., Deputy

together with the ex-officio Members referred to in paragraph 1 above and:-

Verderers pursuant to the provisions of the Epping Forest Act, 1878:-

- Mr. P. Adams
- Mr. M. Chapman
- Mr. R. Morris, O.B.E.
- Dr. J. Thomas

4. **Terms of Reference**

To be responsible, having regard to the overall policy laid down by the Open Spaces, City Gardens & West Ham Park Committee, for:-

- (a) exercising of the powers and duties of the Court of Common Council as Conservators of Epping Forest (registered charity no. 232990) and the various additional lands which have been acquired to protect the Forest in accordance, where appropriate, with the Epping Forest Acts 1878 and 1880 (as amended) and all other relevant legislation.
- (b) the ownership and management of the following open spaces in accordance with the provisions of the Corporation of London Open Spaces Act 1878:-
  - Coulsdon and other Commons (registered charity no. 232989), the other Commons being Kenley Common, Farthing Downs and Riddlesdown
  - West Wickham Common and Spring Park (registered charity no. 232988)
  - Ashtead Common (registered charity no. 1051510)
  - Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common (registered charity no. 232987)
- (c) appointing such Consultative Committees as are considered necessary for the better performance of its duties including an,
  - Ashtead Common Consultative Committee
  - Burnham Beeches Consultative Committee
  - City Commons Consultative Committee
  - Epping Forest Centre Joint Consultative Committee

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- Staples Road Flood Alleviation Scheme – At the request of the Superintendent, the Environment Agency had used cleft oak fencing instead of metal fencing in order to protect the silt trap in Staples Road.
- Speed Restrictions – 40mph speed restrictions had been scheduled to be introduced on the following roads on 2 March: A104 Epping New Road; A121 Goldings Hill & Woodriven Hill; B172 Coppice Row; Crown Hill; Theydon Road and Daws Hill. A 30mph speed restriction had also been introduced on Earl's Path. In response to a Member's question the Superintendent advised that a speed monitoring exercise would take place in due course, which would then inform the necessity for any further enforcement action.
- Cattle Grids Public Inquiry – A decision from the Secretary of State was expected in March.
- Knighton Woods – English Heritage had given formal notice that they were considering a request to place Knighton Woods on the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic interest. In response to a Member's query, the Superintendent undertook to submit a report to a future meeting of the Committee in order to aid discussion on the matter and attain a Committee resolution either in favour of or against Knighton Woods' registration.
- Grazier – Wildlife and Countryside Services had signed a three-year contract.
- Australian Stonecrop Survey – 146 ponds had been surveyed, 14% of which were found to have been colonised by the invasive weed.
- Annual Sudden Oak Death Phytophthora Ramorum Survey – Both Rhododendron and Larch, which act as a host plant for the Phytophthora Ramorum parasitic fungus, were surveyed. No infections had been revealed.
- Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme (VAQAS) Awards – All three Visitor Centres had qualified for the England Tourist Board VAQAS Award this year.
- Discovering Epping Forest (DEF) – 25 schools were midway through the six DEF modules.
- Family Learning Events – There had recently been over 400 participants in a series of World War II themed events.
- Woodford Green – The London Borough of Redbridge had recently approached the Superintendent regarding the use of land at Woodford Green for a Children's Play Area. In response to a Member's question the Superintendent confirmed that he would meet with the London Borough of Redbridge Councillors in the near future and would seek the approval of the Committee for any proposed installation.







- Thames Valley Police were currently trialling a new tracking device within the parks.

**RECEIVED.**

**11. BURNHAM BEECHES AND STOKE COMMON – ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME**

Consideration was given to a report of the Superintendent of Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common regarding the Annual Work Programme for both Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common for the period April 2012 to March 2013 inclusive. The work detailed in the report was extracted from the management plans for Stoke Common and Burnham Beeches approved by the Committee in 2008 and 2012 respectively.

Members noted the following amendment to paragraph o of the report:

*Work towards the implementation of virtual fencing and grids to enable the grazing of the majority of Burnham Beeches by summer **2013**.*

**RECEIVED.**

**CITY COMMONS**

**12. SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

The Superintendent of City Commons provided a verbal update regarding the following: -

- Habitat Management work across the Commons had been completed relative to the first year of the Environmental Stewardship Agreement.
- Weed wiping scrub regrowth would take place in April 2012. In the past, this had usually taken place in August.
- Minor fence repairs on Riddlesdown & Coulsdon Common would be moved to the 2012-13 work programme.
- The number of volunteers was still expanding considerably. The Superintendent planned to train a further group of volunteers with leadership skills to work alongside the Rangers in order to supervise tasks and activities.
- The Kenley Airfield Friends Group had submitted a pre-application form to the Heritage Lottery . The Project was entitled "Kenley Revival Project" and aimed to record and conserve the physical heritage of the airfield, to conserve the archive of documents, memories and experiences of those who remember Kenley and to increase awareness and understanding of the role of the airfield during the Battle of Britain.

**RECEIVED.**





**19. NON PUBLIC MINUTES**

The non-public minutes and summary of the meeting held on 9 January 2012 were considered.

**20. RESTRICTIVE COVENANT POLICY**

Consideration was given to a report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest.

**21. LICENSING AND ADMINISTRATION OF PLEASURE FAIRS AT CHINGFORD PLAIN AND WANSTEAD FLATS FOR 2012**

Consideration was given to a report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest.

**EXTENSION OF THE MEETING**

At this point, the time limit for Committee meetings as set out in Standing Order No 40 had been reached, but there being more than a two-thirds majority of the Committee present who voted in favour of an extension, the Committee agreed to continue the meeting.

**22. EPPING FOREST BUFFER LANDS: ANNUAL AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS REVIEW**

Consideration was given to a report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest.

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

There were no questions.

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

There was no other business.

**MEMBERS ONLY**

**25. MEMBERS ONLY MINUTES**

The Members only minutes from 9 January 2012 were considered.

**The Meeting closed at 1:05pm.**

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**CHAIRMAN**

**Contact Officer: Edward Foale**

**tel. no. 020 7332 1426**

**e-mail: [edward.foale@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:edward.foale@cityoflondon.gov.uk)**

<b>Committee(s):</b> Epping Forest and Commons Committee	<b>Date(s):</b> Monday 14 May 2012	<b>Item no.</b>
<b>Subject:</b> 2012/13 Committee Appointments		
<b>Report of:</b> Town Clerk	<b>Public For Decision</b>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Summary</u></b></p> <p>The Committee is asked to consider its appointments for the next twelve months. Membership of the various Sub Committees, Consultative Committees, Steering Groups and Management Project is explained in the attached appendix. Provision for appointing an observer from amongst the Verderers, to serve as an observer on the Open Spaces, City Gardens and West Ham Park Committee is also referred to. It is expected that this appointment would encompass the strategic open spaces capacity of that Committee.</p> <p><b><u>Recommendations</u></b></p> <p>I recommend that:-</p> <p>a) consideration be given to the appointment and composition of the following Sub Committees, Consultative Committees, Steering Groups, and Management Projects etc :-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) <b>Reference Sub Committee</b></li> <li>ii) <b>Ashtead Common Consultative Committee</b></li> <li>iii) <b>Burnham Beeches Consultative Group</b></li> <li>iv) <b>West Wickham and Coulsdon Commons Consultative Committee</b></li> <li>v) <b>Epping Forest Centre Joint Consultative Committee</b></li> <li>vi) <b>Epping Forest Management Plan Steering Group</b></li> <li>vii) <b>Wanstead Flats Playing Fields Committee;</b></li> <li>viii) <b>Downlands Countryside Management Project</b></li> <li>ix) <b>Lower Mole Countryside Management Project ;</b> and</li> </ul> <p>b) consideration be given to the appointment of a representative to the Open Spaces, City Gardens and West Ham Park Committee for 2012/2013 as a local observer for this Committee.</p> <p>c) consideration be given to undertaking a full review of all the Committee's appointments in the next twelve months.</p>		

## Background

1. The Committee makes a number of appointments to Sub Committees, Consultative Committees, Steering Groups and Management Projects that fall within its remit. These are reviewed annually.
2. There are a number of outstanding vacancies, which the Committee has struggled to fill in recent years. It should be noted that the current practice of inviting Common Councilmen who are not members of this Committee to help fill some of the vacancies has continued. Similarly, former Common Councilmen have continued to serve on some of these groups as the Committee's representatives. Members may wish to think of ways to re-establishing the link between this Committee and the various groups and sub Committees to which it makes appointments.
3. The report also advises on the attendance of the Senior Verderer of the Epping Forest & Commons Committee to the City's Open Spaces, City Gardens and West Ham Park Committee.

## Options

4. That consideration be given to making the various appointments detailed in the report, from amongst the Committee membership. Consideration would then be given to filling any subsequent vacancies from existing or former Common Councilmen.
5. *The Committee is also invited to review their various Sub Committees and Working Parties to determine whether they are fit for purpose. The current roster of Working Parties, Sub and Consultative Committees has evolved over a number of years. For example, appointments are routinely made to the Reference Sub Committee and Management Plan Steering Group, which have not met for some years. The Superintendent of Epping Forest has indicated that a review of the Management Plan will start imminently. Therefore there will be a need to reactivate this group. Therefore no radical changes are suggested at this stage, but the Committee might be minded to request a more searching review in twelve months' time. This could provide the opportunity to devise a more structured way for the Committee's appointees to report back on their work.*

6. In 2011-12 Robin Eve represented the Committee on both the Lower Mole and Downlands Countryside Management Projects.

### **Implications**

7. There are no financial, legal and risk implications.

### **Strategic Implications**

8. By recommending a partnership and engagement approach, this report supports the City Together Theme: A World Class City, which supports our communities and the associated departmental strategic and improvement aims to work in partnership with communities and local authorities.

### **Conclusion**

9. That consideration be made to making appointments to the various Sub Committees, Consultative Committees, Steering Groups and Management Projects detailed in the report.

### **Contact:**

*Edward Foale*

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**EPPING FOREST AND COMMONS COMMITTEE- COMMITTEE  
APPOINTMENTS 2012/2013**

**EXISTING 2011/2012 MEMBERSHIP**

**(i) Reference Sub Committee**

Chairman for the time being  
Deputy Chairman for the time being  
Deputy Stella Currie  
Dr Peter Hardwick  
John Bird  
Deputy Catherine McGuinness  
Deputy Greg Lawrence  
Two verderers – *which two to depend on the subject under consideration.*

**(ii) Ashtead Common Consultative Committee**

Chairman for the time being  
Deputy Chairman for the time being  
Mr Douglas Mobsby  
Mr Joseph Byllam-Barnes  
*\*Vacancy*

*\* unfilled since 2008*

**(iii) Burnham Beeches Consultative Group**

Chairman for the time being  
Deputy Chairman for the time being  
Christopher Mitchell (**not on Common Council**)  
Deputy Michael Welbank (**not a Member of this Committee**)

**(iv) West Wickham and Coulsdon Commons Consultative Committee**

Chairman for the time being  
Deputy Chairman for the time being  
Deputy Robin Eve (**not a Member of this Committee**)  
John Brewster (**not on Common Council**)  
Sylvia Moys (**not a Member of this Committee**)

**(v) Epping Forest Centre Joint Consultative Committee**

Chairman for the time being

Deputy Chairman for the time being

Verderer Richard Morris

Verderer Peter Adams

**(vi) Epping Forest Management Plan Steering Group**

Chairman for the time being

Deputy Chairman for the time being

Deputy Stella Currie

Deputy Catherine McGuinness

The Four Verderers

Mr Gordon Wyatt (or other Natural England nominated representative)

The Superintendent of Epping Forest

**vii) Wanstead Flats Playing Fields Committee**

Verderer Peter Adams

Verderer Joanna Thomas

**(viii) Downlands Countryside Management Project**

Deputy Robin Eve (**not a Member of this Committee**)

John Brewster (**not a Member of this Committee**)

**(ix) Lower Mole Countryside Management Project**

Michael Bramwell (**not on Common Council**)

Wendy Mead (**not a Member of this Committee**)



# Agenda Item 8

Committee(s):	Date(s):	Item no.
Epping Forest and Commons Committee	14 <sup>th</sup> May 2012	
Subject: City Corporation Risk Management Handbook	Public	
Report of: Chamberlain	For Information	
<b><u>Summary</u></b>		
<p>This report provides Members with a summary of the key elements of the Risk Management Handbook and the City's risk management framework as approved by the Audit and Risk Management Committee in October 2011.</p> <p>The Risk Management Handbook introduces a systematic approach to management, reporting and escalation of risk, defining:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ A common risk language</li><li>▪ Regularity of reporting</li><li>▪ Accountability for risk</li><li>▪ Risk tolerance</li></ul> <p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Members are asked to note this report and the key requirements of the Risk Management Handbook.</li></ul>		

## **Main Report**

### **Background**

1. In October 2011, the Audit and Risk Management Committee agreed a revised risk management framework, contained within the Risk Management Handbook. The Handbook has been developed to provide a guide to assist Officers and Members in improving the way in which the City manages risk. A primary objective of the new framework is to create a risk management culture which supports the effective and consistent management, reporting and escalation of risk.

### **Current Position**

2. This report sets out the key requirements of the Risk Management Handbook, particularly those in relation to the role and purpose of Service Committees or their designated Sub-Committees. A full copy of the Risk Management Handbook may be downloaded from the Risk Management pages of the City's intranet site or alternatively, a copy can be requested from Matt Lock, Risk and Assurance Manager.

3. To assist in driving consistency in approach across the organisation, the Handbook defines a common risk language, including the range of descriptors used to denote the impact and likelihood of risks, a corporate assessment matrix and also a standard risk register template.

### **Escalation, Accountability and Assurance**

4. Departments are required to undertake regular systematic review of their key operational risks, updating their Departmental Risk Register accordingly. The risk assessment process combines an evaluation of impact and likelihood to generate a risk status of Red (high), Amber (medium) or Green (low). It is vital that those charged with governance (Members, Chief Officers and Senior Management), know of and understand the organisation's exposure to significant risks. As such, the following broad expectations will apply:
  - **Red** risks have been signed off at Chief Officer level and have been reported to the Strategic Risk Management Group (SRMG) Core Team, Chief Officers' Group and Audit and Risk Management Committee as part of the regular risk management update.
  - **Amber** risks have been signed off at Director level and reported to the relevant Chief Officer or Departmental Management Team and the Risk and Assurance Manager as part of the on-going reporting and review framework.
  - **Green** risks have been signed off by operational management at either Section Head or Assistant Director level and reported to the relevant Director as part of the on-going reporting and review framework.
5. Risk owners (officers responsible for the management of specific risks and key tasks associated with the mitigation of these) may be asked to provide assurance to Chief Officers' Group or Audit and Risk Management Committee as to how significant risks are being managed. Similarly, risk owners are responsible for escalating risks to the appropriate scrutiny level and will be accountable should this not occur.
6. Updated risk registers should be reported to the Departmental Management Team and the relevant Committee on a quarterly basis, with the exception of Red graded risks which should be escalated as soon as they are identified. The City's risk management framework has been developed in accordance with recognised best practice, including, and of particular relevance to Epping Forest, City Commons and Burnham Beeches & Stoke Common, Charity Commission guidance; the role and responsibilities of Trustees in relation to Risk Management align with those of Members.

## **Risk Tolerance**

7. Further to the above expectations, the Risk Management Handbook provides a platform to determine whether a stated risk is acceptable to Members and Senior Management. This tolerance will, in all likelihood, vary across individual risks and operations, although the following principles apply:
- **Red** risks are unlikely to be acceptable, requiring constant monitoring and further mitigation.
  - **Amber** risks require monitoring at least quarterly; consideration should be given to further mitigation.
  - **Green** risks require less frequent monitoring, opportunities to improve efficiency through less stringent mitigating actions may be considered.

## **Review and Reporting of Significant Risks**

8. In accordance with the Risk Management Handbook, the Open Spaces Department considers significant risks identified across all open spaces, routine review and monitoring of departmental risk has been aligned with the business performance review and, as such, will now form part of the quarterly business planning update to Open Spaces, City Gardens and West Ham Park Committee.
9. While this Committee will not routinely receive the overall Departmental Risk Register, the Director of Open Spaces is, as described in this report, accountable for ensuring that significant risks in relation to operational responsibilities of the Committee are escalated to Members on a timely basis. It is therefore proposed that, starting in autumn 2012, this Committee will receive an annual report on the main risks that affect Epping Forest, City Commons and Burnham Beeches & Stoke Common. During the year any further risk management updates from the Superintendents will be included in their regular verbal update reports to this Committee.

## **Conclusion**

10. This report outlines the key expectations of the Risk Management Handbook and the City Corporation's risk management framework. In accordance with this framework, Service Committees should be updated regularly about the key risks faced by their respective departments and should be assured that appropriate actions are being taken to manage and mitigate effectively those risks in a timely manner.

### **Contact:**

*Matt Lock* | [matt.lock@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:matt.lock@cityoflondon.gov.uk) | 020 7332 1276

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Committee(s):	Date(s):	Item no.
Epping Forest and Commons Committee	14 May 2012	
Subject: Election of Verderers 2013	Public	
Report of: Town Clerk	For Decision	

## Summary

The Epping Forest Act 1878 provides that four Verderers be elected to serve on your Committee, and that these elections should take place every seventh year.

To enable the election to take place the Register of Commoners must be revised and formally settled. Nomination meetings then take place, followed if necessary by a Poll. This report lays out the timeline for this process.

A further report will be brought to your next Committee on the dates for the special meetings to settle the register, nomination meetings and polls. That report will also consider the issue of Corporation proxy voting.

### **Recommendations**

#### **It is recommended that:-**

- as in the last election in 2006, the number of polling stations be kept at 4 in the northern parishes and one in the southern parishes, it being left to the discretion of the Town Clerk as to the precise location
- approval be given to a fee of £125 to be paid to each of the 10 poll clerks should their services be required (such a fee reflecting the hours of poll and current rates for such work)
- Members note that the cost of the election (anticipated to be £10,000 - £15,000), will be met from the Town Clerk's Elections budget

## Main Report

### **Background**

1. The Epping Forest Act 1878 requires that elections are held every seven years to return four Verderers to serve on your Committee. Two Verderers are elected for the northern Forest parishes and two for the southern Forest parishes. Elections have been held every seventh year since 1880, no later than the twentieth day of March in each election year. The Verderers take office on the twenty-fifth day of March in the year of election.

2. The next election of Verderers must be held no later than 20 March 2013, and to enable this election to take place the Register of Commoners (those eligible to vote) must be revised.
3. This history of the Verderers dates from 1130 when their function was to act as Forest Magistrates enforcing the Forest Laws and looking after interests of the Crown. The 1878 Epping Forest Act perpetuated the position of Verderer, but modified the role to represent the interests of commoners as full members of your Committee. With the change in the character of the Forest, and the decline in grazing land, the Verderers have for many years now considered their role more widely representing both commoners and the public living around the Forest.

## **Proposals**

### Timetable

4. The following timetable is proposed:

Town Clerk to write to those on the existing register inviting claims	By end of July 2012
Notice of intention to revise register to be published in local newspapers and placed on Epping Forest notice boards	By end of July 2012
Town Clerk to write to Local Authorities requesting them to check the Register against their electoral rolls	By end of July 2012
Draft Revised Register printed and placed on deposit	By the end of December 2012
Notice of deposited Register and Special Meetings to be published in local newspapers and placed on Epping Forest notice boards	December 2012
Meeting to settle the Register (Guildhall)	January / February 2013
Meeting to settle the Register (Epping Forest)	January / February 2013
Settled Register printed and put on deposit	January / February 2013
Town Clerk to write to all those on Register notifying them of the details of the Nomination meetings and poll	February 2013

dates	
Notice of settled Register, Nomination meetings and dates & places of polls to be published in local newspapers and placed on Epping Forest notice boards	February 2013
Arrange with all persons with more than one registration to choose a polling station	February 2013
Nomination meetings	March 2013
Write to all on Register advising a poll has been demanded	March 2013
Polling days	By 20 <sup>th</sup> March 2013 (north) By 20 <sup>th</sup> March 2013 (south) (Polls for the north and south must be held on separate days)
Announce result	March 2013

5. It is proposed that dates for the special meetings of this Committee to settle the Register of Commoners, the dates for the nomination meetings and for the polls be presented to the next meeting of your Committee following consultation with the Recorder of the City of London, the Chairman and Deputy Chairman.

#### Register of Commoners

6. The Register of Commoners is a register of those persons entitled to vote in the election of Verderers. The register is made in two parts: the northern Forest parishes of Epping, Theydon Bois, Loughton, Waltham Holy Cross, Buckhurst Hill (formally part of Chingford) and Chigwell; and the southern Forest parishes of Woodford, Walthamstow, Leyton, Wanstead, East Ham (formerly Little Ilford) and West Ham.
7. Commoners are those owners and occupiers of land and tenements lying within the ancient boundary of Epping Forest. This is however restricted to owners and occupiers of land comprising at least half an acre of old enclosure and not covered by buildings. An “occupier” is someone with a legal interest in land, at least a tenancy. Both the owner of a qualifying piece of land and an occupier are entitled to be entered on the Register but where several persons are joint tenants they are considered as one,

and only one may be entered on the Register. If they fail to select one name, the Conservators will make the selection.

8. All new claims for inclusion on the register of Commoners are referred to the office of the Superintendent of Epping Forest which has all the relevant plans showing the ancient boundaries of the Forest.
9. The procedure for the revision of the Register of Commoners is as follows:
  - a. Notice of the intention of the Conservators to revise the Register is published in local newspapers and notices are displayed on the various notice boards in the Forest. In 2006, notice was published in the local papers of the Guardian and Gazette Group, and City AM.
  - b. After the receipt and investigation of the claims the Town Clerk prepares a draft Register and this is deposited by the end of December 2012 at Guildhall and various places in the Forest parishes for inspection. Notice of the deposit of the draft Register is again published in local newspaper. This notice also confirms the dates of the two meetings at which your Committee will settle the Register in its final form and at which any interested persons may attend and apply to the Conservators to correct the Register by inserting or deleting any names
  - c. Your Committee settles the Register
  - d. The Register is re-printed in final form
  - e. Notice is published in a similar manner to the former notices giving the date and place of the nomination meetings and, in the event of a poll or polls being demanded, the date of the poll or polls and addresses of the polling stations.
10. In 1993 your Committee agreed that for future elections two days be set aside for settling the Register: one day for a meeting in Guildhall and a different day for a meeting in the Forest. On this basis, the Register would be considered settled at the conclusion of the second meeting. It is recommended that authority be delegated to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman to approve the dates of the special meetings of this Committee to settle the Register of Commoners; and this be reported to the next meeting of your Committee

#### Returning Officer

11. The Epping Forest Act 1878 provides that the Returning Officer for the elections shall be the Recorder of the City of London, or in his absence or inability, the Common Sergeant of the City of London, or in the absence



or inability of both, a person appointed by the Lord Mayor of the City of London shall be the returning officer.

12. In establishing the dates for the Nomination meeting and Polls, officers will liaise with the Returning Officer, in addition to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman to ensure his availability.

### Nominations

13. A candidate for election as Verderer must be resident of one of the various parishes within the area of the Forest, and must not be a Member of Court of Common Council.
14. Nominations are received at Nomination meetings. Separate meetings are held for the northern and southern parishes. Unless otherwise determined by the Returning Officer, these meetings shall be for the duration of one hour.
15. Any qualified person if he consents may be nominated by any elector and seconder. If at the expiration of the hour (or otherwise defined period), there are no more candidates than vacancies, the candidates shall be deemed to be elected. If there are more candidates than vacancies, candidates may be elected by a show of hands. However, if there are more candidates than vacancies, and a poll is demanded the Returning Officer will adjourn the meeting and arrange for a poll to be held not less than twenty four hours and within three clear days after the meeting, and give appropriate notice of the places, date and time of polling.

### Polling Stations

16. At the election in 1993 there were nine polling stations, six for the northern parishes and three for the southern parishes. In 1998 your Committee agreed to reduce the number of polling station for the southern parishes to two since the number of electors in these parishes is very small. It was further agreed in 2005 to reduce the number of polling stations in the northern parishes to four and one in the southern parishes. This reflected the fact that the electorate is very small, totalling no more than 150 in the northern parishes and 50 in the southern parishes.
17. As in the last election in 2006, it is recommended that the number of polling stations be kept at 4 in the northern parishes and one in the southern parishes, it being left to the discretion of the Town Clerk as to the precise location. At least one of the polling stations will be located in the parish of Epping as required by clause 21 of Schedule 4 of the Epping Forest Act 1878.

### Additional publicity

18. In addition to the formal press notices, discussions have started with the Public Relations Office as to how the election can be promoted and local

knowledge and engagement with the election process and the Verderers be increased. Additional press releases, use of local radio and the City's website are being considered.

#### Corporation of London proxy voting

19. In the past the Chairman of this Committee has exercised a proxy vote on behalf of the City as landowner in the northern parishes and the Chairman of the Port Health Committee as owner of the cemetery in the southern parishes. If this were to continue it would require a recommendation from this Committee and the Port Health Committee to the Court of Common Council (as it is necessary for the proxies to be sealed by the Court of Common Council).
20. Officers are currently further exploring the legal position in this respect and will come back to the July meeting. Careful thought would need to be given to whether it was appropriate for Members to be voting at local level for those who would join the Committee and you may choose not to take up that option even if it is there Corporate & Strategic Implications
21. The Epping Forest Act 1878 provides for the election of Verderers. Accordingly, the election process has taken place every seven years since 1880.

#### **Implications**

22. It is anticipated that the election will cost between £10,000 and £15,000. This cost will be met from a Town Clerk's Elections budget.

#### **Conclusion**

23. This report outlines the timescale and process for the Election of Verderers. Legislation provides that the elections be held every seventh year, no later than the twentieth day of March, and that the Verderers take office on the twenty-fifth day of May in the year of the election. In order to start this process notice will be given by the end of July this year of the intention to revise the register.

#### **Background Papers:**

*Epping Forest Act 1878 (Fourth Schedule)*

#### **Appendices:**

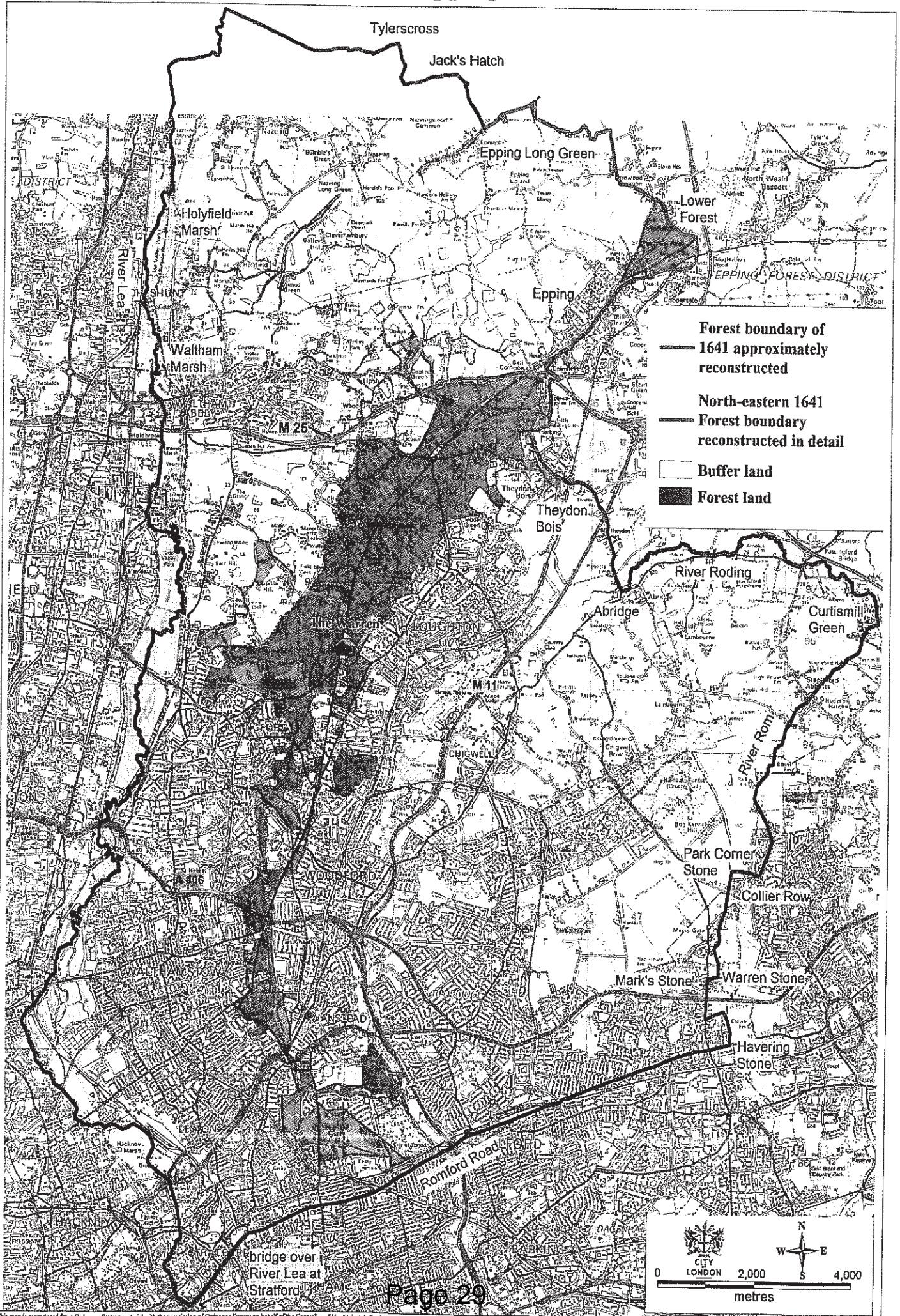
*The Forest boundary is illustrated at Appendix 1.*

#### **Contact:**

*Esther Sumner | [esther.sumner@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:esther.sumner@cityoflondon.gov.uk) | 1481*



# Map of Epping Forest



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## EPPING FOREST CENTRE JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

FRIDAY 20 APRIL 2012

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

### **Present**

#### **Members:**

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

#### **Officers:**

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

### **1. APOLOGIES**

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

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

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

There were none.

### **3. MINUTES**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**RECEIVED.**

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

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

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

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

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

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

**RECEIVED.**

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

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

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

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

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

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

**RECEIVED.**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**RECEIVED.**

## **8. EPPING FOREST VISITOR SERVICES ACTIVITIES**

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

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

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

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

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



**9. QUESTIONS**

There were no questions.

**10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There were no items of further business.

**11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

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

**The meeting closed at 1:05pm.**

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**CHAIRMAN**

**Contact Officer: Edward Foale**

**tel. no. 020 7332 1426**

**e-mail: [edward.foale@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:edward.foale@cityoflondon.gov.uk)**

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<b>Committee(s):</b>	<b>Date(s):</b>	<b>Item no.</b>
Epping Forest & Commons	14 May 2012	
<b>Subject:</b> EPPING FOREST ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME for Access & Habitats 2012-13		<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Superintendent of Epping Forest SEF 12/12		<b>For Decision</b>
<b><u>Summary</u></b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This Annual Work programme for Epping Forest is drawn from the Epping Forest Management Plan, which was approved by your Committee in 2004 and covers the period April 2012 to March 2013 inclusive;</li> <li>• this work programme is drawn from the Epping Forest Management Plan and subsequent strategy documents and covers both access and habitats management,;</li> <li>• the projects are listed under the 4 key objectives in the Plan – <i>Access, Trees, Open Land and Wetlands</i>, that cover the access, tree safety and habitat conservation operations;</li> <li>• the work on the individual veteran pollards identified as <i>Keystone Trees</i> is supported with a 74% grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund as part of the <i>Branching Out</i> Project and with additional match funding from The Tubney Charitable Trust;</li> <li>• this year the <i>Keystone Tree</i> work, by agreement with HLF and Natural England, will be limited and reviewed dependent on tree responses to the winter drought conditions;</li> <li>• the remainder of the habitats work programme continues to be supported by an Environmental Stewardship grant from Natural England across both the Forest and its Buffer Lands. This grant will provide in excess of £162,000 this coming year, with additional capital grants available to cover specific works.;</li> <li>• as in previous years the predominant conservation operations are wood-pasture restoration and grassland management.</li> </ul>		
<b>Recommendations</b>		
It is recommended that:		

- |   |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• you approve the Annual Work Programme as summarised in the main report and set out in detail in Appendix 1.</li></ul> |
|---|

## **Main Report**

### **Background**

1. This report and its Appendix 1 provide details of projects where significant operations are proposed for access and the conservation of specific habitats in the Forest for the year 2012 – 13.
2. The programme is drawn from the Epping Forest Management Plan 2010, approved in 2004. Background details of the proposed projects can be found in the Management Plan 2010, updated with the additional projects in 2007. Further details can be found in other planning documents and strategies listed below under '*Background Papers*'.

### **Current Position**

3. This year the habitats work programme is again supported financially by Natural England through its Stewardship Scheme with an annual combined grant of over £162,000, not including additional payments for capital works that are also available and that amounted to over £20,000 in 2011 - 2012.
4. The management of most of the grasslands in the Forest and on the Buffer Lands is now covered by payments under the Entry Level Scheme (ELS). Other habitats work in the Forest, especially within the scrub and wooded areas, is supported by specific Higher Level Scheme (HLS) payments at higher rates of payment and this includes cattle grazing, wood-pasture restoration and scrub coppicing (Project Nightingale).
5. The "*Keystone trees*" arboricultural conservation work, along with proposed works to support the re-establishment of grazing, are supported with a 74% grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, with further matched-funding from The Tubney Charitable Trust, as a significant part of the on-going *Branching Out* Project. This project is currently in Year 3 of 5 and is exactly on target with 53% of trees managed in 53% of the time, The work will enter Year 4 of the grant support in November 2012.

6. **Additional conservation team:** The HLF and Tubney Charitable Trust support, by providing 3 apprentices and a Team Supervisor, enables an extra arborist team (4 staff) to be deployed in the Forest.
7. **Staff and volunteers:** This report includes work to be carried out by your own staff, the principal projects of the Epping Forest Conservation Volunteers (EFCV), Epping Forest Centenary Trust (EFCT) and other volunteers (organised by the Volunteer Development Officer) as well as projects identified for external contractors.
8. **Scout Project:** this year the Scout Project will be carrying out 3 habitat conservation tasks. The sites involved are i) Woodchip Ride, near Loughton Camp – restoring ride-side flora including Heather; ii) Bury Wood along the Jubilee Ride opening up by removing small Holly around veteran pollards; iii) Bulrush Pond – removing alien pond plants as in the previous 2 years.
9. **Apprenticeships:** During this year the third group of 3 apprentice arborists are expected to complete their NVQ2 qualification and further 3 new apprentices will be appointed during August/September 2012 in partnership with **Capel Manor College**. By the end of this year, therefore, the apprenticeship scheme should have provided training and mentoring for **12 apprentices** and given them important qualifications and the widest possible range of arboricultural work experiences. The feedback from all 3 groups of apprentices trained so far has been very positive and this year's group have already achieved their chainsaw qualifications (NPTC CS30 and 31).

## Proposals

10. The proposals for this financial and operational year have been grouped by Objectives and the details of the work are included in **Appendix 1**. The Compartment numbers are given as Comp 1 etc. in this Appendix along with the place-name. The location of the compartments can be found by reference to the Forest Compartments map at **Appendix 2**.
11. In the *Access* work programme one of the key projects is the ride management work, which is an annual commitment at Epping Forest to ensure that the extensive ride network of over 32 km (20 miles) is maintained to provide a regionally-significant recreational asset for all Forest visitors. This year over 2kms (1¼ miles) or 6%

of the network will be completely re-surfaced (see para 13 of Appendix 2).

12. In addition, preparations will be made for erection of the wooden fencing and the extension of the *Invisible Fencing* project (para 40 of Appendix 2) to complement the 4 cattle grids that have been approved by the Secretary of State for Transport.
13. Further access improvements will be made with improved maintenance of the smaller car parks to complement the recent upgrading of the 4 major car parks at Bury Road, the Hunting Lodge, Connaught Water, and High Beach (see paras 1 – 5 of Appendix 1).
14. The *Keystone Trees* work (paras 18 – 21 of Appendix 1), part of the Branching Out Project, may be postponed for this year because of the impact of the previous two dry winters and dry spring 2011. This postponement has been agreed with the Heritage Lottery Fund and Natural England. The work planned will be reviewed and will be dependent upon the assessments of individual tree vitality by the Conservation team.
15. The wood-pasture restoration work (paras 22 – 31 of Appendix 1) will concentrate on two different types of this habitat which Epping Forest supports. Firstly, the densely pollarded areas of Hornbeam in Bury Wood and Walthamstow Forest will see the pollarding of the Hornbeams both consolidated and expanded (para 24 of Appendix 1). Re-pollarding of Hornbeams last pollarded in the 1980s and 1990s will be carried out along with some new areas nearby being restored to the pollarding cycle.
16. Secondly, in the more heathy areas of wood-pasture such as at Rushey and Deershelter Plains, and in the more Oak-dominated Lords Bushes and Barn Hoppitt, haloing work (para 26 of Appendix 1) around the ancient pollards will predominate alongside the opening up of glades for the recovery of the heathland and grassland sward.
17. The tree safety work (para 37 of Appendix 1) reaches a new milestone with the full survey of the surfaced rides having been completed. Work on trees identified for hazard removal or felling will make up a very significant proportion of the spring and summer programmes for the arboricultural teams.

18. In the meantime the survey work (para 35 – 36 of Appendix 1) turns its attention to the entire network of over 64kms (40 miles) of unsurfaced tracks and paths, as well as repeating the annual surveys of the highest priority areas (itself covering more than 400 hectares (over 1,000 acres) of Forest) alongside roads and other key sites.
19. Finally, the grassland work programme (paras 43 – 48 of Appendix 1) is as extensive as ever outside the main grazing areas and continues the careful rotational mowing of large sites like Wanstead and Leyton Flats as well as many of the smaller greens around the periphery of the Forest from Leytonstone to Upshire.

### **Financial Implications**

20. The work outlined in the proposed work programme is covered by the local risk budget of the Epping Forest Division supplemented by the Single Payment Scheme (SPS). This is further enhanced with targeted grant-aid payments from The Heritage Lottery Fund, The Tubney Charitable Trust and from the government statutory conservation agency Natural England (NE), under the Environmental Stewardship Scheme. In addition to the annual grant from NE there are further capital works grants available to cover work such as Bracken spraying.

### **Legal Implications**

21. The habitats work programme is carried out under the Conservators' powers provided by the Epping Forest Act 1878. Within the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC) the programmed work has received the statutory written consent from Natural England under Section 28 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the Countryside & Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000).

### **Strategic Implications**

#### ***City Together***

22. The work, proposals and options outlined above meet the *City Together* vision of a *World Class City* and, specifically, 2 of its 5 themes: “A world class City that supports our communities” and “A World Class City which protects, promotes and enhances our environment”.

### ***Open Spaces Department Business Plan***

23. The proposals and options above follow from 3 of the Open Spaces Department's Strategic Aims of: "providing high quality accessible Open Spaces and services in accordance with nationally recognised standards for the benefit of London and the Nation"; "involving communities in the management of our sites" and "adopting sustainable working practices, promoting the variety of life (biodiversity) and protecting the Open Spaces for the enjoyment of future generations".

### ***Epping Forest Management Plan***

24. This report also matches the Epping Forest Vision for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, in particular:

- "Epping Forest's position as a unique and ancient landscape for people and wildlife will be strengthened;
- "The Forest will retain its natural aspect with the diversity of wildlife habitats enhanced and the features of international importance, including its veteran pollards, protected;
- "Epping Forest will be highly valued as part of a larger and fully accessible protected landscape area".

### **Consultees and formal SSSI consent for operations**

25. Natural England officers have been consulted about this work programme in relation to both the Stewardship Scheme and the *Favourable Condition* of the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) as required by the UK Government. Natural England has issued its formal consent to this work programme under Section 28E(3)(a) of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by Section 75 and Schedule 9 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000).

26. HLF Officers have been consulted and approved the postponement of *Keystone Tree* work should it be considered appropriate.

### **Conclusions**

27. The work outlined above is drawn from the 2004-2010 Epping Forest Management Plan and further documents developed from that Plan (see below). Most of the work is a continuation of projects started in previous years. The work is supported by Natural England, with an annual grant in excess of £162,000 this year plus additional capital works grants, and other significant additional elements are supported by The Heritage Lottery Fund and The Tubney Charitable Trust..



28. In addition to the in-house teams the work programme detailed in this report will involve many hours of volunteer time from volunteers organised by the Volunteer Development Officer (including for the *Branching Out* Project), the Epping Forest Conservation Volunteers (EFCV), Epping Forest Centenary Trust (EFCT), the Scout Association, The Wren Group and other local volunteering initiatives.

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**Background Papers:**

*The Epping Forest Management Plan 2004 – 2010*

*The Barn Hoppitt Wood-pasture Restoration Plan 2006 – 2011*

*The Lords Bushes & Knighton Woods Integrated Site Plan 2004 – 2010*

*The Wanstead Flats Integrated Site Plan 2006 – 2011*

*Branching Out Stage II Project Plan (Nov 2008) (Chapters 15 Keystone Trees Strategy and 16 Grazing Strategy)*

*Environmental Stewardship guidelines (Natural England)*

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## **APPENDIX 1 – ACCESS & HABITATS WORK PROGRAMME**

**2012 -2013**

(Note: the document page numbers given below provide references to the updated Management Plan (2007 update))

### **OBJECTIVE: – ACCESS**

The *Access* work programme below includes a wide range of cyclical works, carried out by both contractors and the in-house Maintenance Team, with the former taking on particular projects requiring specialist machinery, such as ride surfacing.

#### **CAR PARKS**

1. Between April – July pot-holes will be repaired across all car parks apart from those in which there is ongoing work by City Surveyors'. This repair and maintenance work will be carried out by the in-house.
2. **Sight-lines** from the car park entrances will be cut back and strimmed early in the spring as vegetation growth begins and repeated as required on a cyclical programme across the summer.
3. **Car Park bunds and ditches** will also be cut and maintained on the same cyclical work programme.
4. **Signs**: cattle signage and other signs on roadside verges and at car parks on Forest Land will have vegetation cut back from them from May onwards to ensure they remain visible. These signs will also be cleaned.
5. **Litter bins**: these will be replaced or repainted on a gradual improvement programme.

#### **BARRIER GATES**

6. A cyclical programme of repainting all the barrier gates across the Forest will begin in the early summer and carry on throughout the year in suitable weather conditions to ensure all barriers are repainted on a regular basis.

## ROAD CROSSING POINTS

7. As part of the ongoing Forest Transport Strategy and also the *Branching Out* Project various key road crossing points for visitors to the Forest will be reviewed with the highways authorities for enhancement and improvement:

- Rangers Road by QEHL and Butler's Retreat;
- Bury Road – by Jubilee Retreat;
- A121 crossing at Forest Side/ Wood Green Road
- Other crossing points highlighted in the Forest Transport Strategy

## FENCE & HEDGE MAINTENANCE

8. With the approval of the 4 cattle grids by the Secretary of State for Transport.

9. There is a large amount of fencing work planned across the Buffer Lands as part of the cyclical management of the estates. Most of the maintenance and repair work is carried out by an in-house team.

10. **The Warren:** Fencing repairs and hedge cutting will take place around The Warren as part of ongoing maintenance and also as part of Ladies' Day preparations.

11. **Trueloves and Sheppard's Meadows:** fencing for these two sites to allow future grazing will be planned and costed in preparation for future works. Trueloves will be the priority site for this year and grant-aid will be sought from Natural England to support the work.

12. Work on fence and hedge maintenance will also be carried out at:

- North Farm;
- Fernhills;
- Deer Sanctuary;
- Swaines Green;
- Great Gregories – old fencing will be removed and pathways cut;
- Warlies Park – fence lines will be repaired around the tree plantings and new gates checked to ensure they are working efficiently;
- Copped Hall Park – and this work will include ditching

## SURFACED RIDES NETWORK

13. The annual maintenance and upgrading of the surfaced ride network continues following several major stretches improved over the last 5 years. This year the two major ride re-surfacing works, covering 6% of the network, proposed are:

- **Wormleyton Pits Ride** – a 1,000m section between Genesis Slade car park and Theydon Bois will be completely re-surfaced, where the surface has deteriorated over recent years;
- **Rifle Butts** – a 1,250 section will be re-surfaced following the ditching and vegetation clearance along the ride edge last year which has opened up the ride and should prevent water erosion of the surface.

14. In addition works will be planned and costed, in consultation with Essex County Council (Highways) safety audit, to improve the ride access along Wood Green Road leading towards the crossing point at the A121 Honey Lane/Forest Side and along Wood Green Road (see above – crossing points)

- **Wood Green Road Ride**

15. In addition to the surfacing work there will be extensive tree safety work carried out early in the year alongside the surfaced rides as identified by the tree hazard survey last winter (see *Trees* Objective below).

## UNSURFACED ACCESS TRACKS & PATHS

16. In addition to the surfacing works above, the unsurfaced ride and track network through the Forest, covering over 64 kms (40 miles) will be maintained along key sections. The main work this year includes a tree hazard survey (see under *Trees* Objective below) which will cover the entire network. In addition there will be the cyclical management of low branches and the replacement, repainting or removal of the marker posts along these rides.

17. **Copped Hall Green** – 2-3 days work on the access track through this Green in Upshire will be carried out to repair the surface.

## **OBJECTIVE: – TREES**

### **KEYSTONE TREES STRATEGY – BRANCHING OUT PROJECT**

18. As in the last two years, the programme under the *Branching Out* Project for this year would be to carry out crown reductions on a further 240 veteran pollards (Beech and Oak only) as part of the continuing HLF-funded *Keystone Trees* project. The responses of the trees to the crown reduction work so far has been very encouraging.
19. However, following two dry winters in 2010-11 and 2011-12 the Beech trees in particular, showed signs of water stress in autumn 2011. This situation will need to be carefully reviewed during the year to balance the urgent need to reduce the canopy sizes of some of the ancient trees with the uncertainty of the responses from them given the drought situation combined with the impact of the recent April rainfall.
20. At the moment the proposal is to curtail the programme this year and postpone the work until towards the end of the project. The Heritage Lottery Fund and Natural England have been consulted about this postponement and they are fully supportive of the approach, recognising the need for caution. Currently the *Keystone Tree* work is exactly on target with crown work carried out on 53% of the trees.
21. For any work this year the trees will be chosen from amongst the remaining mapped *Keystone Trees* across the Forest. Following a concentration on Oaks in 2011, this year's work will return to a mix of Beech and Oak in compartments including Monks Wood & Deershelter Plain (Compartment 11) and Goldings Hill (Compartment 16).

### **WOOD-PASTURE RESTORATION – ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP**

22. The majority of the habitat conservation work in the Forest carried out by the Conservators' arboricultural teams is concentrated on wood-pasture restoration. The work is varied and depends on the location as to how it is enacted, determined as it is by the pattern and density of the ancient and veteran pollarded trees.

23. **Habitat of Principal Importance:** as well as being fundamental to Epping Forest SSSI's favourable condition, wood-pasture is recognised as a *Habitat of Principal Importance* under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Communities Act 2006 (NERC Act 2006). Epping Forest is one of the most important wood-pasture sites in the UK.
24. **Pollarding:** in addition to the re-establishment of extensive grazing, which is covered under the *Open Land* Objective below, an essential element of the wood-pasture restoration work is the re-establishment of pollarding in the areas of the densest Hornbeam pollards. This pollarding work has now been taking place each year in Epping Forest for the last 30 years since Hornbeams were pollarded again on Rushey Plain, High Beach.
25. **New pollards – successor generations:** In addition to the pollarding of the older Hornbeams the work involves the creation of many new pollards each year where suitable young Hornbeams are present.
26. **Haloing:** another key element of the restoration project is to ensure that the veteran pollards are released from adverse shade and root competition that would ultimately overwhelm and kill them. This haloing work removes over-shading Holly and young trees from immediately around the old pollards.
27. The wood-pasture restoration, and associated haloing and pollarding work, is targeted on selected areas across the Forest, many of which have been worked in since the early 1990s. These areas are detailed in the Management Plan.
28. This year the work in these areas will be carried out on about 150 pollards in pollard coupes (or blocks) in the main sites of Bury Wood, Walthamstow Forest, Rushey Plain, Pole Hill and North Long Hills. This work will include a return to several sites first logged in the 1980s and early 1990s.
29. 'Halo' clearance around veteran pollards to release them from over-shading and adverse competition, as part of the wood-pasture restoration work, will take place across several Forest compartments again this year. At Lords Bushes the halo work will see the completion of the opening up of this magnificent population of Oak pollards begun in 2003. Further work will be carried out at

Barn Hoppitt, Rushey Plain, Deershelter Plain, Bury Wood and North Long Hills.

30. New pollards will be created in all these wood-pasture restoration and keystone tree areas to ensure successor trees of comparable wildlife value.

31. The wood-pasture restoration work is detailed below in compartments from north to south in the Forest:

- Comp 7 **Long Running** – volunteers will clear Birch from along parts of the anti-tank bank and ditch to restore heathland habitats including bare ground areas for the rare invertebrates of this habitat;
- Comp 9 **Honey Lane Qtrs** – in 3 areas immediately east of the Rifle Butts Ride Hornbeams pollarding and creation of new pollards will take place and the path through to Big View will be opened up where it has become very narrow;
- Comp 10 **Rushey Plain** – the restoration work here will continue from then recent areas of work and the glades created in the 1990s towards the Wake Valley, opening up around the veteran Oak pollards and the removing areas of Birch to restore the heathy wood-pasture of this area;
- Comp 11 – **Deershelter Plain** and Monk Wood – the volunteers will continue their work thinning birch areas to the south-west of the main gravel pits on the Plain and there will be further Birch removal on the S.E. end of the Plain around the ancient Oak pollards that fringe this ancient site;
- Comp 12 – **Copley Plain** - Willow coppicing will take place on Copley Plain where the willows' strong regrowth from previous coppicing is beginning to over-shade the heathy wood-pasture here;
- Comp 19 **Debden Slade** – here the volunteers working with the Conservation arborist teams will create further new pollards and continue work to restore this open glade around the distribution of ancient Oaks along the stream;
- Comp 20 **Woodbury Hollow** – volunteer work will continue to clear back advancing scrub areas along the boundaries and a contractor will be employed to weed-wipe the Bramble areas to restore the grassland in the long-term;
- Comp 21 **Suntrap Stream in Hill Wood** – the maiden pollards created over ten years ago will be thinned and opened up alongside Whitehouse Plain and the stream with some haloing around the larger ancient trees, This work would be planned for late summer to try to take advantage of any dry period of weather;



- Comp 22 **Fairmead and North Long Hills** area – further creation of new pollards and opening up south of the Fleabane Ride will take place to expand this natural bracken glade;
- Comp 24 **Bury Wood incl. Ludgate Plain** – new pollards will be created in parts of the recently opened up Ludgate Plain and some further haloing around the veteran Oak pollard here will consolidate the previous work. In addition the pollarding work in Bury Wood will take place north of Three Planks Ride as well as consolidating the pollard coupes between this ride and Jubilee Ride;
- Comp 25 **Pole Hill** – further Hornbeam pollarding will take place adjacent to the recent work of the last two years and to restore the Hornbeams pollarded in the 1980s around the golf course boundary;
- Comp 29 **Barn Hoppitt** – volunteers and staff will be involved in the continuing restoration of old ant-hill grassland glades and the creation of new pollards and haloing of the ancient trees in parts of this compartment based on the programme of work detailed in the wood-pasture restoration Plan;
- Comp 32 **Lords Bushes** – as stated above the 10<sup>th</sup> year of work in this superb site will concentrate on the final haloing work around the ancient Oaks there.
- Comps 34 & 35 – **Walthamstow Forest** - further Hornbeam pollarding will be carried out in Walthamstow Forest and Gilbert's Slade targeting the glades and edges of the open areas where work to clear back Bramble and Bracken and restore a grassy sward will continue with both volunteers and staff.

## **OTHER TREE & WOODLAND MANAGEMENT**

### **Project: Control Sycamore/Turkey Oak/Norway Maple (p. 197)**

32. Removal of Turkey Oak will continue in Barn Hoppitt (Comp 29)
33. Removal of Sycamore and Norway Maple will continue at Warren Hill (Comp 28) as part of general woodland management in the compartment.

### **Project: Thinning of Secondary Woodland High Forest (p. 193)**

34. Warren Plantation (Comp 15). Thinning to promote specimen trees and broadleaves. This project is also used to provide valuable training and experience for the *Branching Out* apprentices in tree felling. .

**Project: Tree Risk Management Surveys & Database Maintenance (p.198)**

35. As in previous years, a competitive tendering exercise will be undertaken to award the annual tree safety survey contracts for the Forest beginning in August 2012.
36. Survey work is targeted at “zones” within the Forest, with the top priority RED zone checked every year, which includes all the main roads. Having completed survey work along the surfaced rides last year, this year’s survey work will concentrate on the unsurfaced rides and grassy paths.

**Project: Tree Hazard Management Work (p. 199)**

37. The survey work from winter 2011 -2012 has identified many trees requiring tree safety work. In addition to the roadside areas this year’s work will include the surfaced ride network. Some trees may need to be felled but for the majority the work involves removal of hazardous limbs or crown reduction.

**OBJECTIVE – OPEN LAND**

**GRAZING**

**Project: Extensive Grazing (p. 212)**

38. **Cattle:** the new Grazing Contract approved by your Committee in January began in April 2012. The main task this year is to restore the herd numbers towards 50-head and for a business plan to be produced for approval later in the year.
39. **Grids and fencing:** the successful outcome of the Public Inquiry into the cattle grids means that the infrastructure for grazing, including wooden fencing and associated gates, will now need to be planned for erection alongside the 4 cattle grids which will be installed by Essex County Council (Highways).
40. **Invisible Fencing:** In addition, further work will be done to extend the network of invisible fencing in areas around Chingford Plain and Whitehall Plain and Barn Hoppitt. The *Boviguard* “invisible fencing” is being modified by the manufacturers with a modified version of the system being developed by late summer using feedback provided by the Epping Forest and Burnham Beeches trials. Following a site meeting with the manufacturer and supplier

they have both undertaken to supply new collar designs and other improvements to the project during the summer.

41. **Herbage Agreements:** Ravener's Farm, North Farm and Temple Field in Warlies Park will be grazed under annual herbage agreements as in previous years. Other areas of Buffer Lands will be grazed by the Forest herd of Longhorns whilst across the main area of parkland in Warlies Park the contract grazier will provide cattle grazing directed specifically at sward management enabling extensive Ragwort control by spraying once the cattle are removed.
42. **Copped Hall Deer Park:** As in the last 3 years, sheep-grazing is to be continued at the Copped Hall Estate (south – Comp 55) during the winter months under an existing contract.

## **MOWING & CUTTING**

### **Project: Flail Collector cuts and mini-system cuts (p. 215)**

43. The mowing programme will be carried out as usual and as outlined in the Management Plan (see page 215). In addition this year some extra work will be carried out on grasslands, such as Monkams Field and Coopersale on 5-year cutting rotations covered only by the Single Payment Scheme (SPS) grant.
44. All the other conservation grassland work is supported by the Entry Level Payments under Natural England's Stewardship Scheme across both the Forest and Buffer Lands grasslands.
45. An external contractor will continue to cut and harvest the larger hay meadows where specialist hay-making equipment is required.
46. At Great Gregories a hay-lage crop will be taken from the fields here as in previous years to provide winter fodder for the Longhorn herd.

### **Project: Amenity Cuts (p. 217)**

47. The revised amenity cutting regime established last year will be continued at Buckhurst Hill, Woodford Green and St Peter's Green. In addition, work around the newly opened visitor centre at the Coach Houses will be enhanced.
48. Greens covered by care-and maintenance agreements by other authorities (e.g. George Green) are not included.

## SCRUB MANAGEMENT & CONTROL

### Project: Heathland Restoration & Maintenance (p. 219)

49. Restoration work on overgrown heaths will continue to be carried out as in previous years. This will include the chemical control of Bracken in several of the heaths including Deershelter Plain and Sunshine Plain this year.

50. In addition specific vegetation management by staff and volunteers will include:

- Comp 7 **Long Running** - Oak and Birch clearance on Long Running (east) by the Conservation Teams and clearance and scalloping of Bramble by volunteers;
- Comp 11 **Deershelter Plain** – removal of Birch regrowth from amongst the regenerating Heather and timber extraction of the Birch logs;
- Comp 12 **Furze Ground** – volunteers to be involved in the cutting back of encroaching trees along the edge of this site;

### Project: Grasslands, Glades & Green Lanes Restoration (p.220)

51. Grassland and glade restoration work will continue for the sites worked on during 2011, including:

- **Sewardstone Green;**
- **Pole Hill;**
- **Yardley Hill;**
- **Woodbury Hollow** (see above under wood-pasture restoration);
- **Gilbert's Slade** - the volunteers of EFCV will continue their excellent restoration work at this site);
- **Sheppard's Meadows** (Comp 5) – scrub clearance of the western meadow and removal of scrub oaks will continue the grassland conservation work here;
- **Fernhills & Trueloves** (Comp 17) – scrub removal where it has encroached along the fence line that now needs repair or replacement and opening up of pathways through the scrub. Tree removal from the grassland of Trueloves to prevent the scrubbing over of this habitat that supports scarce species such as feeding Barn Owl and breeding Grasshopper Warbler.

52. The work above varies in scope and includes many small sites around the edges of larger plains (e.g. **Chingford Plain**) which are ideal sites for volunteer tasks and are included in.

**Special Restoration Project: Re-seeding of MBDC site at Wanstead Flats**

53. Following last year's seed harvest the MBDC site will be re-seeded in September/October 2012 when it is vacated after the Olympics as part of an agreed restoration plan for the site.

**Special Restoration Project: High Beach Pillow Mounds (Comp 14)**

54. The scope and details of the restoration will be determined by the report already commissioned from specialist soil and hydrological consultants. Natural England will be consulted and its formal consent for any works will be sought, as required by Section 28 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the CRow Act 2000).

**Project: Scrub Coppice Rotation (*Project Nightingale*) (p. 222)**

55. This project will continue as in the previous 14 years with the cycle of coppicing being carried out across the Forest's central area from Gas Ride in the east through the Connaught Water and Warren Wood slope areas to Pole Hill in the west. Many areas coppiced will be small and much of this work will be carried out through volunteer tasks (both EFCV and EFCT) as it was in 2011.

**OBJECTIVE – WETLANDS**

**Project: Pond vegetation clearance (p.238)**

56. As well as the continuing clearance work on Bulrush Pond as part of the Scouts Project, volunteers will carry out important pond work. This year EFCV tasks will include coppicing and marginal habitat management around the important Great Crested Newt site around **Fairmead Pond** and also at **Carrolls Farm Pond** at Sewardstone. At this latter site the Reedmace will also be removed by the in-house Maintenance Team to restore the pond to a better condition as silt has built up and the Reedmace is advancing into the pond.

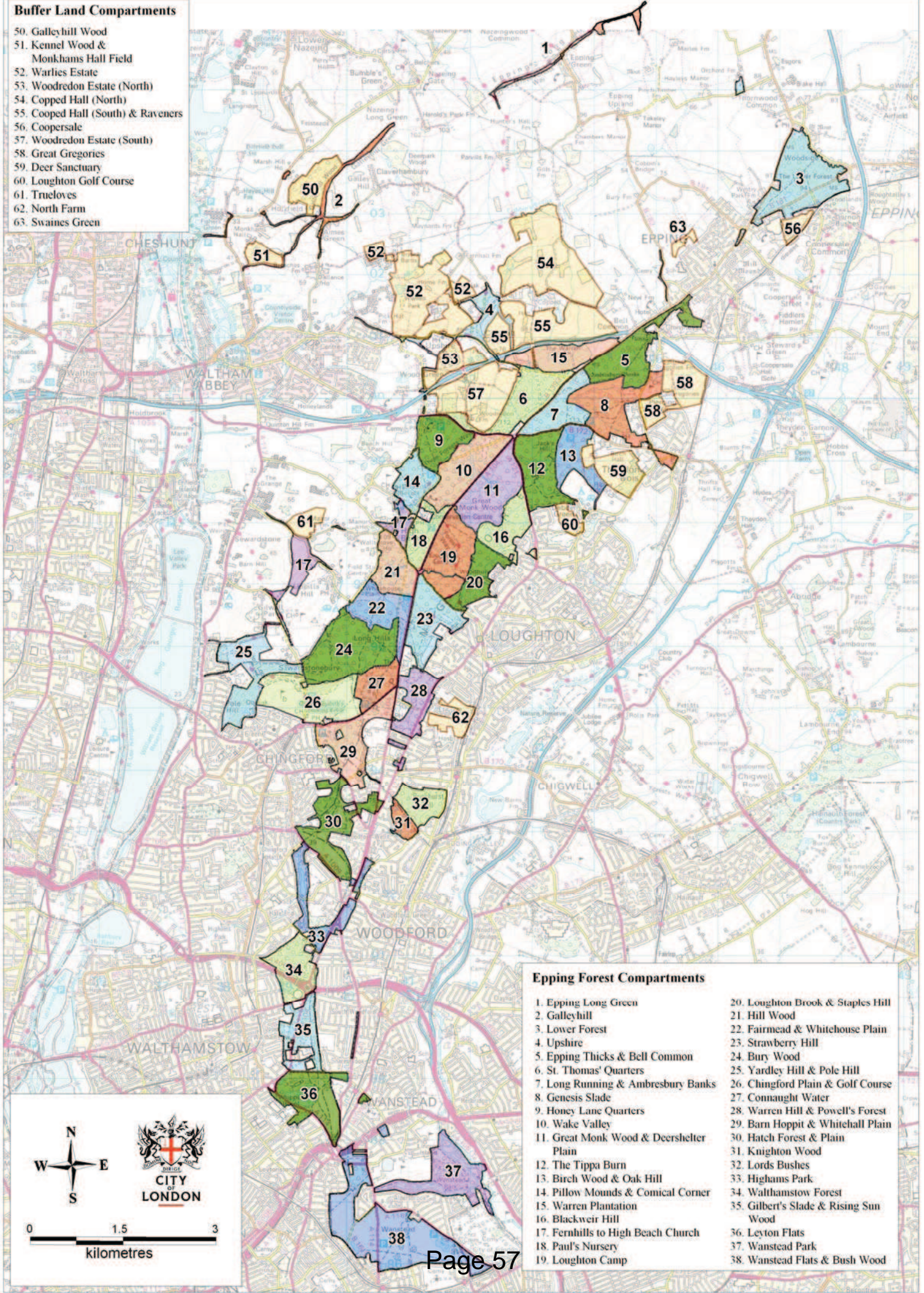
57. Other bankside vegetation cutting may include a limited amount of coppicing of willow at Connaught Water where trees have collapsed or affecting views from the path.

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**Buffer Land Compartments**

- 50. Galleyhill Wood
- 51. Kennel Wood & Monkams Hall Field
- 52. Warlies Estate
- 53. Woodredon Estate (North)
- 54. Copped Hall (North)
- 55. Cooped Hall (South) & Ravensers
- 56. Coopersale
- 57. Woodredon Estate (South)
- 58. Great Gregories
- 59. Deer Sanctuary
- 60. Loughton Golf Course
- 61. Trueloves
- 62. North Farm
- 63. Swaines Green



**Epping Forest Compartments**

- 1. Epping Long Green
- 2. Galleyhill
- 3. Lower Forest
- 4. Uphire
- 5. Epping Thicks & Bell Common
- 6. St. Thomas' Quarters
- 7. Long Running & Ambresbury Banks
- 8. Genesis Slade
- 9. Honey Lane Quarters
- 10. Wake Valley
- 11. Great Monk Wood & Deershelter Plain
- 12. The Tippla Burn
- 13. Birch Wood & Oak Hill
- 14. Pillow Mounds & Conical Corner
- 15. Warren Plantation
- 16. Blackweir Hill
- 17. Fernhills to High Beach Church
- 18. Paul's Nursery
- 19. Loughton Camp
- 20. Loughton Brook & Staptes Hill
- 21. Hill Wood
- 22. Fairmead & Whitehouse Plain
- 23. Strawberry Hill
- 24. Bury Wood
- 25. Yardley Hill & Pole Hill
- 26. Chingford Plain & Golf Course
- 27. Connaught Water
- 28. Warren Hill & Powell's Forest
- 29. Barn Hoppit & Whitehall Plain
- 30. Hatch Forest & Plain
- 31. Knighton Wood
- 32. Lords Bushes
- 33. Highams Park
- 34. Walthamstow Forest
- 35. Gilbert's Slade & Rising Sun Wood
- 36. Leyton Flats
- 37. Wanstead Park
- 38. Wanstead Flats & Bush Wood



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<b>Committee(s):</b>	<b>Date(s):</b>	<b>Item no.</b>
Epping Forest & Commons	14 May 2012	
<b>Subject:</b> Epping Forest Sport Charges 2012/13		<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Superintendent of Epping Forest SEF 10/12		<b>For Decision</b>
<b><u>Summary</u></b>		
<p>This report reviews the charges for the sport facilities that are provided at Epping Forest, and seeks approval for the proposed charges for 2012/13.</p> <p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <p>I RECOMMEND that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) The proposed charges for sports facilities in Epping Forest for 2012/13, as detailed in Appendix A be approved.</li> <li>ii) The Superintendent retains delegated powers to discount or waive charges for trial periods in order to develop both new pitch configurations and off-peak and out-of-season use, and to help target under represented groups identified in the Sports Development Plan.</li> <li>iii) The Superintendent retains delegated powers to revise the current sport charges terms and conditions and retain the new deposit arrangement for clubs ‘block booking’ pitches in advance that was introduced three years ago.</li> </ul>		

## **Main Report**

### **Background**

1. Charges for the wide range of sporting facilities that are provided in the City’s Open Spaces are traditionally reviewed annually. The current charges for 2011/12 were approved by the appropriate service Committees in May 2011.

2. The current charging system had developed from the recommendations from two reviews of sports charging policy which have been undertaken in recent years. In 2002 an internal review recommended that the approach to charges was standardised and better management information was provided. The review attempted to clarify what was meant by a 'consistent' pricing policy in relation to the sports facilities, although it was accepted that it would be unrealistic to have one charge for the same sporting activity irrespective of the area, as this would not take any account of local factors.
3. A further extension review of the charging policy at Hampstead Heath and the other Open Spaces was carried out by consultants in 2005 to investigate whether further income generation could be achieved. The review established that there was still an inconsistent approach to pricing structures and the concessionary policy for some facilities at different sites, and several amendments to the charging policy were adopted.
4. Public Sports Facilities at Epping Forest include 58 Football Pitches at Wanstead Flats, together with a public play 18 Hole Golf Course. A further 3 golf courses and 3 cricket pitches are provided on Forest and Buffer Land by arrangement with private clubs.
5. Charges for Season 2011/12 saw a 10% increase in the Saturday charges whilst the Sunday charges were unchanged. This decision was taken to bring the Saturday prices more in line with the more expensive Sunday prices whilst not seeking punitive rises from the Saturday football players.

### **Charging Policy**

6. While the overall aim is to increase the income received from the sports facilities in the Open Spaces, it has been accepted that charges should aim to recover relevant costs as a minimum. For some activities, charges strive to maximise income but there is a controlled subsidy to promote the activity. Charges should also be related to the market price and local comparators, and the blend of options that has been adopted provides a flexible approach to charging that can be applied to each activity as appropriate.
7. The Sport Development Plan for Wanstead Flats developed in partnership with the Football Foundation and previously adopted by this Committee has set ambitious targets for increasing participation in sport amongst under-represented groups.

8. Where concessionary charges apply, it had been agreed that they should generally be set at 50% of the full price for the facility and apply to young people under 17, students in full time education, older people aged 60 or over, disabled people, unemployed people and schools/youth organisations, on production of the appropriate identification.
9. The Superintendents have previously received delegated authority to carry out trials for limited periods in order to encourage off-peak use, to see whether demand increases as a result of different charging arrangements and to closely monitor such trials, so that they can be halted if a beneficial outcome is not achieved. They have also been allowed to consider not charging for facilities at certain times, if the cost of supervising the facility is much higher than the income received.

### **Charging proposals for 2012/13**

10. The overall charging policy has been taken into account when formulating the proposed sports charges for 2012/13, which are attached as Appendix A to this report.
11. Appendix B is a price comparison from local competitors and these prices have also been taken into consideration. The Superintendents will continue to monitor closely the usage of their sports facilities and the income received and it is proposed that we will introduce a 10% rise for Saturday play with the Sunday rate again frozen.
12. The Superintendents continue to consult with local users and neighbouring boroughs about their local sports strategies to ensure that the objectives for sports provision in our Open Spaces are in line with local needs. The feasibility of extending concessionary charges to include specific local groups, and to offer other discounts, possibly in association with the local Boroughs, will continue to be considered in the future.
13. The Wanstead Flats Playing Fields Committee were consulted on Monday 19th March 2012 at the formal committee meeting and were supportive of the proposed changes.

### **Financial Considerations**

14. The City's Financial Regulations require all departments to recover full costs when setting charges to persons or external organisations, or submit reason to the appropriate service Committee when that objective is not

met. It is, therefore, at the discretion of individual spending Committees to determine the actual level of fees and charges relative to the services that provide, after taking into account local considerations and priorities.

15. The provision of football at Wanstead Flats during 2011/12 season was subsidised by the City of London at a cost of £124,000.
16. The City's budget management policy for 2012-13 assumes income will be at least the same as 2011/12. We have been informed that some sports clubs are either in financial hardship or are closing down due to the loss of members. The 10% increase on Saturdays still ensures Wanstead Flats is cheaper than many local competitors and brings the Saturday charges nearer to the Sunday charges which will address a perceived unfairness cited by Sunday users.
17. Any change to VAT has very little impact on income as over 90% of football played at Wanstead Flats is non-vatable.

### **Legal Implications**

18. Section 33(1) (xiii) of the Epping Forest Act 1878 provides the Conservators with the power to "set apart in each or any of the Forest Parishes, such parts as they think fit, for the use of inhabitants to play at cricket and other sports, and to lay out, form and maintain, cricket grounds and grounds for other sports, and, for the better use and enjoyment of the parts so set apart, to enter into agreements with, and confer special privileges on particular clubs or schools".

### **Community Strategy and other significant implications**

19. The provision of a wide range of sports facilities in the City's Open Spaces supports the following themes in the Community Strategy – A World Class City, A Healthy City, A Vibrant and Culturally Rich City, and An Inclusive and Outward Looking City.
20. The annual review of charges is also in line with the objectives in the departmental Business Plan.

### **Conclusion**

21. The City seeks to maximise the use of the sporting activities in its Open Spaces and encourage active participation from all sections of the community. The benchmarked approach to charging for sporting facilities

in the Open Spaces will therefore continue to be reviewed annually, in the light of market conditions, user requirements and the implementation of local sports strategies.

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## Appendix A

<b>EPPING FOREST</b>				
<b>Wanstead Flats Playing Fields – Football Pitches</b>			Current	Proposed
			2011/12	2012/13
<b>Season (VAT exempt)</b>			£0.00	£0.00
11-a-side	Mon-Fri: 20 games / 40 wks	Adult (18+)	360	360
		Youth (17-18)	275	275
		Child (u16)	170	170
	Sat: 16 games / 32 weeks	Adult (18+)	400	440
		Youth (17-18)	305	330
		Child (u16)	190	210
	Sun: 16 games / 32 weeks	Adult (18+)	740	740
		Youth (17-18)	555	555
		Child (u16)	295	295
Small Sided	Mon-Fri: 20 games	Adult (18+)	272	272
	Sat: 16 games		300	300
	Sun: 16 games		340	340
	Mon-Fri: 20 games	Youth (17-18)	206	206
	Sat: 16 games		225	250
	Sun: 16 games		255	255
	Mon-Fri: 20 games	Child (u16)	150	150
	Sat: 16 games		165	175
	Sun: 16 games		204	204
Mini Soccer	Mon-Fri: 20 games	Child (u16)	160	160
	Sat: 16 games		175	195
	Sun: 16 games		220	220
<b>Casual Play (per game, fee subject to VAT)</b>			£0.00	£0.00
11 a-side	Mon-Fri	Adult (18+)	50	50
		Youth (17-18)	39	39
		Child (u16)	28	28
	Saturday	Adult (18+)	53	60
		Youth (17-18)	46	50
		Child (u16)	34	37
	Sunday	Adult (18+)	73	73
		Youth (17-18)	55	55
		Child (u16)	43	43
Small Sided	Mon-Fri	Adult (18+)	30	30
	Saturday		44	50
	Sunday		50	50
	Mon-Fri	Youth (17-18)	23	23
	Saturday		33	38
	Sunday		38	38
	Mon-Fri	Child (u16)	20	20
	Saturday		28	29
	Sunday		29	29
Mini Soccer	Mon-Fri	Child (u16)	25	25
	Saturday		31	31
	Sunday		31	31

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Bulk Booking Discounts:

<b>Games booked per week for the Season</b>	<b>Discount available on total booking fee</b>
2-4	5%
5-7	7.5%
8-10	10%
11-14	12.5%
15+	15%

Note:

- Retain the Youth (17-18) rate that was trialled last year in response to drop out in youth football from the transition from u16 to adult teams.
- A 10% increase has been introduced for all Saturday football – this is still very competitive in comparison to local competitors.
- Sunday rate (particularly ‘adult’ fee) remains above any local grass football pitch provider and needs to be reasonably and more competitively priced.

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## Wanstead Flats Playing Fields

### 2012/13 Pitch Hire Fee Comparison

Playing Fields	Local Authority Provider	Games/Season	Adult		Adult		Youth		Youth	
			Season Fee		Casual Fee*		Season Fee		Casual Fee*	
			Sat	Sun	Sat	Sun	Sat	Sun	Sat	Sun
Hackney Marshes	London Borough Hackney <i>(Season 11/12 Prices)</i>		£480	£480			£380	£80		
		PGE	£48	£48	£80	£80	£38	£38	£53	£53
Various	London Borough Newham  <i>(1<sup>st</sup> price is residents within Newham / 2<sup>nd</sup> out of Borough)</i>	13	£530 £635	£530 £635			£265 £320	£265 £320		
		PGE	£48.94 £40.76	£48.94 £40.76	£74 £86	£74 £86	£20.38 £24.61	£20.38 £24.61	£37 £44	£37 £44
Various	London Borough Waltham Forest  <i>(25% additional increase on price for all non-residents)</i>	13	£757 (A pitch) £585 (B pitch)	£871 (A pitch) £742 (B pitch)			£429	£455		
		PGE	£58.23 £45	£67 £57.07	£100.20 (A) £63.30 (B)	£129.60 (A) £91.80 (B)	£30	£35	£65	£78.75
Various	London Borough Redbridge	13	£586	£824			£289	£412		
		PGE	£45.07	£63.38	£68	£77.50	£22.23	£31.69	£68	£77.50
	Average (mean) cost per game of the above x4 Boroughs		£47.60	£55.43	£78.30	£91.78	£24.30	£27.92	£53.50	£59.31
West Ham Park	City of London	16	£420	£597.45	£72.45	£72.45	n/a	n/a		
		PGE	£26.25	£37.34			n/a	n/a	£72.45	£72.45
Wanstead Flats	City of London	16	£440	£740			£210	£295		
		PGE	£27.50	£46.25	£60	£73	£13.12	£18.43	£50	£55

#### Key

PGE	Price Game Equivalent (Season Fee/ Games Per Season)
	Longest Season on offer in 2012/13
	Lowest Fee on offer in 2012/13
	Highest Fee on offer in 2012/13
	Where Wanstead Flats fee falls almost £20 below the mean average of fees charged
*	Price quoted for casual game excludes VAT

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<b>Committee(s):</b>	<b>Date(s):</b>	<b>Item no.</b>
Epping Forest and Commons	14 May 2012	
<b>Subject:</b> Enforcement of Epping Forest Byelaws: 31 September 2011 to 29 February 2012		<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Superintendent of Epping Forest SEF 13/12		<b>For Information</b>
<p><b><u>Summary</u></b></p> <p>This report informs your Committee of the byelaw enforcement activity undertaken by Epping Forest Keepers within Epping Forest during the 5 month period between 31 September to 29 February 2012.</p> <p>The report shows a general decrease in the levels of Byelaw enforcement during the period of 2005 to 2011, as a part of a conscious programme of informal education rather than formal prosecution or warning. This is evidenced by the number of “Advisory conversations” carried out by Forest Keepers.</p> <p>There is currently a marked decrease in both enforcement activity and advisory conversations for the reporting period, which reflects significant long term sickness absences and staff turnover in the Forest Keeper Teams.</p> <p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <p>I recommend that the report be received.</p>		

## **Main Report**

### **Background**

1. Epping Forest Keepers possess constabulary powers under section 43 of the Epping Forest Act 1878, for both the Essex and Metropolitan Police Districts. Forest Keepers have the power to enforce both the Epping Forest Byelaws and selected areas of relevant national legislation.

2. This biannual report provides information on the number of prosecutions and warning letters that have been issued by the Superintendent of Epping Forest during the 5 months between October 2011 and February 2012. This report only covers 5 months instead of the usual 6 months. This is necessary as a result of the need to have Committee reports ready for consultation earlier than in the past and will bring this report back in line with a 6 monthly reporting period in the future.
3. On the 1 April 2004, in line with the City of London Police procedure, because of their Constabulary powers, the Forest Keeper Service adopted the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC) system. This makes Forest Keepers subject to the national standard on behaviour. The IPCC standard sets out how complaints should be handled, and if something has gone wrong how lessons should be learnt. The IPCC approach complements the City of London complaints procedure.

### **Current position**

4. There have been 5 prosecutions for byelaw offences during the period under report, 3 for illegal fungi picking, 1 for taking more than the prescribed amount of wood and 1 for driving a vehicle on the Forest. Details of the Prosecutions are shown in Table 1 overleaf
5. There has been 1 warning letter sent for a byelaw offence during the period under report. This was for “Bringing upon the Forest any dog which worries or chases any bird or animal in or upon the Forest”.
6. The level of Byelaw enforcement over the period 2005/2012 is shown in Tables 2&3 overleaf. The tables show a clear fall in both the number of prosecutions and warning letters. This decrease in part reflects the reduction in the number of Forest Keepers from 19 prior to the 2007 Resources Review to a level of 8, and finally 12 under the 2009 Mounted Officer Review. However, much of that steady downward trend is the result of a conscious effort which is being made to educate those people found to be breaking the Byelaws, rather than resorting to a more formal approach.
7. The sharp rise in prosecutions for 2010 was as a result of the withdrawal of the “fungi picking licence scheme”, a decision taken by your Committee in November 2008 and the abundance of fungi in the Forest during the autumn of 2010.
8. The focus on educating Forest users is also part of the strategy of the 12 Forest Keepers who form the new Area teams launched in October 2009.

To reflect this change Forest Keepers now record the number of “Advisory conversations” with Forest users as one of the Epping Forest Key Performance Indicators (KPI) they are responsible for; details are shown on Table 4 overleaf. Enforcement Activity has been restricted during the reporting period with a reduction in both prosecutions and advisory conversations, which reflects reduced staffing levels due to long term sickness absence and staff leaving the Forest Keeper Service.

9. A prosecution will always be sought, where evidence allows, for all environmental crime and for any offences against a member of staff. All other cases are investigated on their own merit using the recommendations of those involved and the impact on the Forest.

### **Financial and Risk Implications**

10. At the meeting of 9th May 2011 your Committee approved a 50% increase in costs requested and the addition of a standard fly tipping disposal charge. Court costs are based on the average number of hours that Forest Keepers and administration staff spend on a case. The standard fly tipping disposal charge is calculated on the running costs, including staff costs, of the compactor lorry used to remove the waste plus the cost per tonne for disposal. The charges are shown in Table 5 overleaf.
11. The cost of taking a case to the local Magistrates’ Court is initially covered by the local risk budget of Epping Forest in the form of staff costs. These monies are then put to the Court as “case costs” and can be recovered at the Magistrates’ discretion using section 18 of the Prosecution of Offences Act 1985. The latest level of costs put to the Court at this time are as shown in Table 5 overleaf and are subject to review on a regular basis. If additional Court appearances are required then the costs are adjusted as necessary. Also shown in Table 5 is the level of costs requested for the disposal of dumped waste as a result of a Byelaw offence.
12. These costs are not always awarded in full, and are often unpaid by the guilty parties. It is the responsibility of the Courts to recover these monies and pass them on to the City of London. Payments to the City of London currently broadly reflect the national average fine collection rate of 63%.
13. The Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004 introduced from 1st April 2007 a “Victims surcharge” of £15.00, which is levied in addition to the fine and is aimed at helping improve services for victims of crime.

## **Legal implications**

14. Prosecutions are brought for breaches of the Epping Forest Byelaws under the Epping Forest Act 1878 (as amended). Prosecutions are also brought under section 33 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and other relevant legislation where appropriate.
15. The common law jurisdiction law of costs states that in general ‘costs follow the event’ so the successful party in litigation is able to recover their costs.

## **Strategic Implications**

16. The City Together Strategy is directly supported by the enforcement of Byelaws within the City of London Open Spaces. In particular this strategy matches the *City Together* theme of “a World Class City which – protects, promotes and enhances our environment:
  - To promote and enhance safe access to the City Of London Open Spaces
  - To improve people’s health, safety and welfare within the City Of London Open Spaces environment through proactive and reactive advice and enforcement activities.
  - To protect and enhance the City of London Open Spaces environment and public realm
  - To conserve and enhance biodiversity within the City of London Open Spaces
  - To continue to ensure the City of London Open Spaces are a safe place in which to do business, work, visit and live.

## **Conclusion**

17. The enforcement of the Epping Forest Byelaws promotes the protection and enhancement of the Forest and assists with the safety and education of those who choose to use it. Byelaw enforcement is one of many tools available to manage the Forest, but is only used where appropriate and necessary, and increasingly as a last resort.

## **Background Papers**

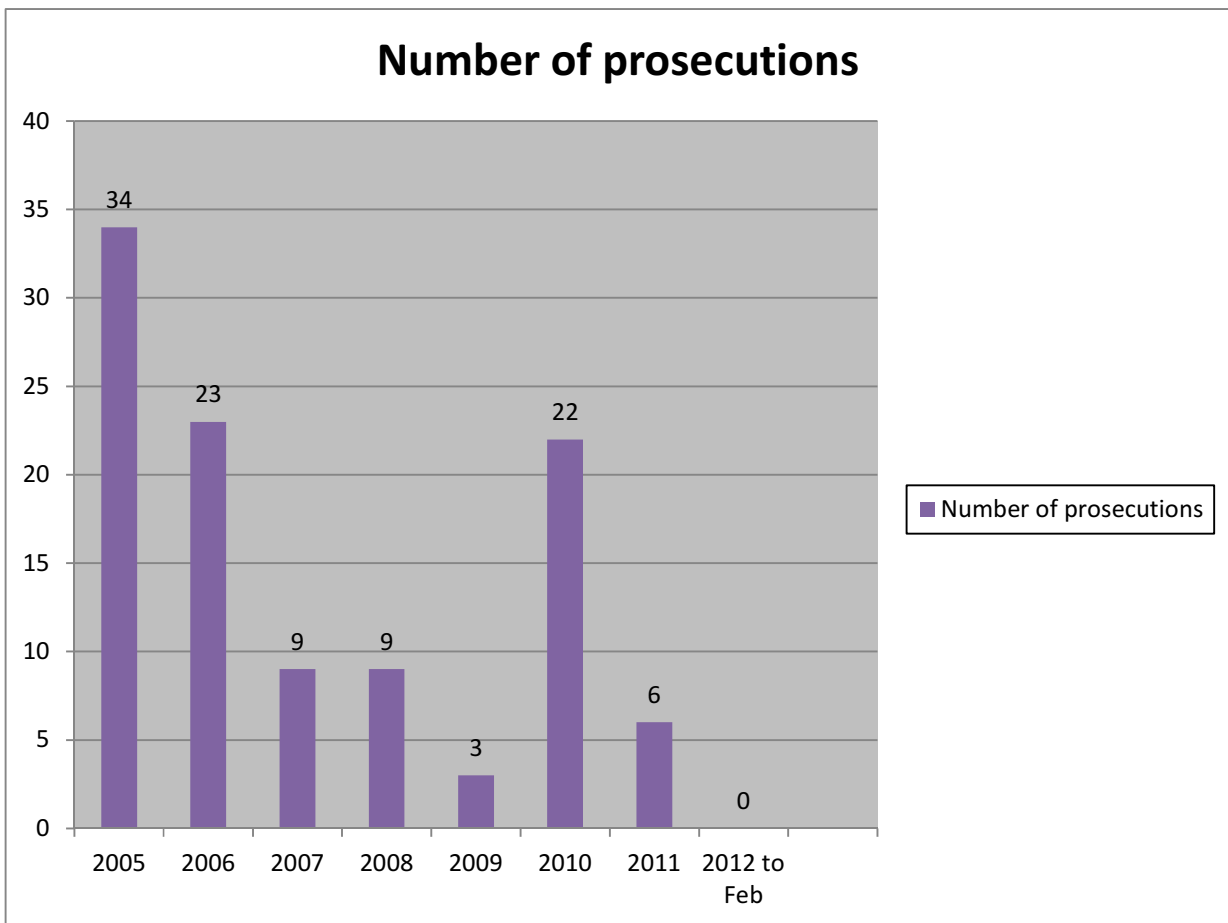
***Department for Constitutional Affairs ‘Fines Collections’ HMSO HC1049  
25.05.06***

**Table 1: Epping Forest Byelaw Prosecutions:**

**October 2011 to February 2012**

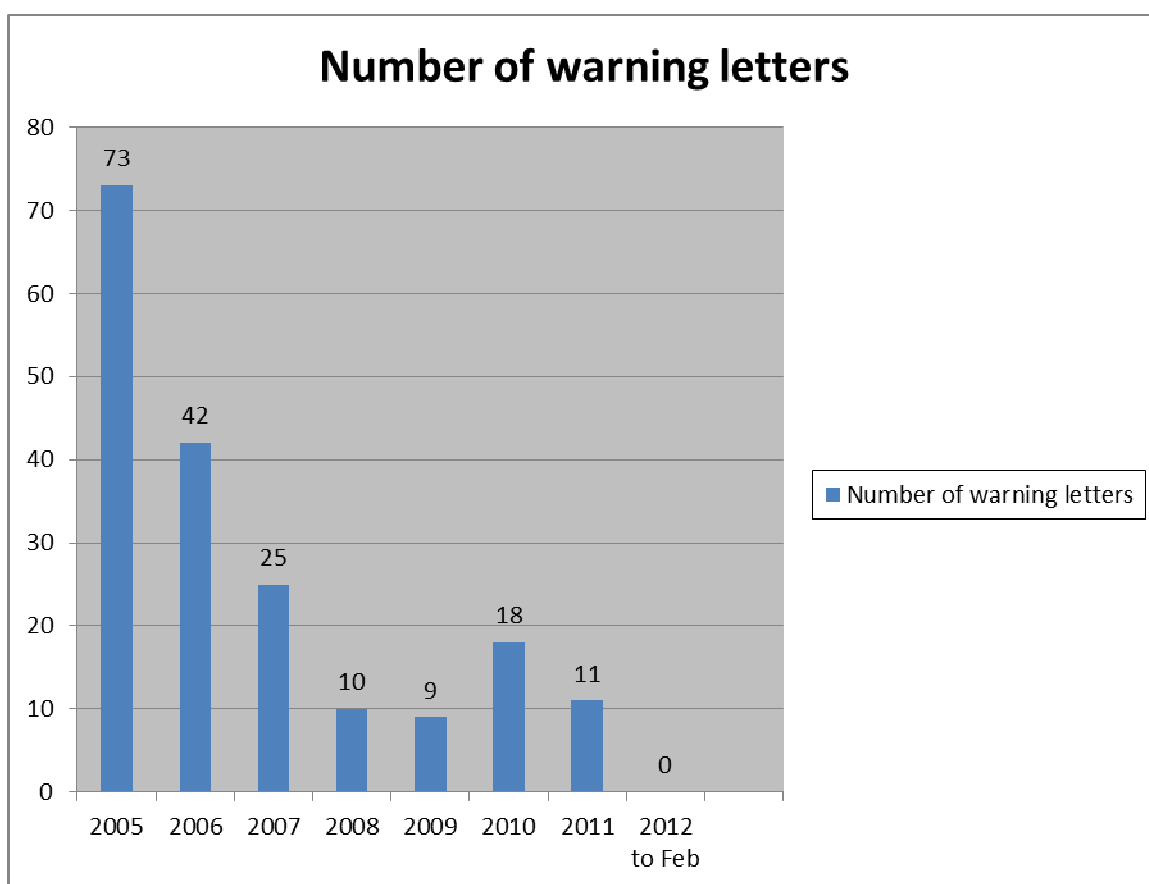
<b>Name</b>	<b>Court</b>	<b>Byelaw offence(s)</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
Darius Razanta	Harlow	Removing fungi from the Forest	Fine £100.00 Costs £240.00 Surcharge £15.00
Steve Cooper	Harlow	Removing more than the prescribed amount of wood from the Forest.	Fine £50.00 Costs £240.00 Surcharge £15.00
Elena Burenkova	Harlow	Removing fungi from the Forest	Fine £50.00 Costs £120.00 Surcharge £15.00
Vladimer Burenkova	Harlow	Removing fungi from the Forest	Fine £50.00 Costs £120.00 Surcharge £15.00
Lee Beswick	Harlow	Driving a vehicle beyond 45metres	Fine £116.00 Costs £240.00 Surcharge £15.00

**Table 2: Epping Forest Byelaw Prosecutions:**  
**Years 2005-2012**

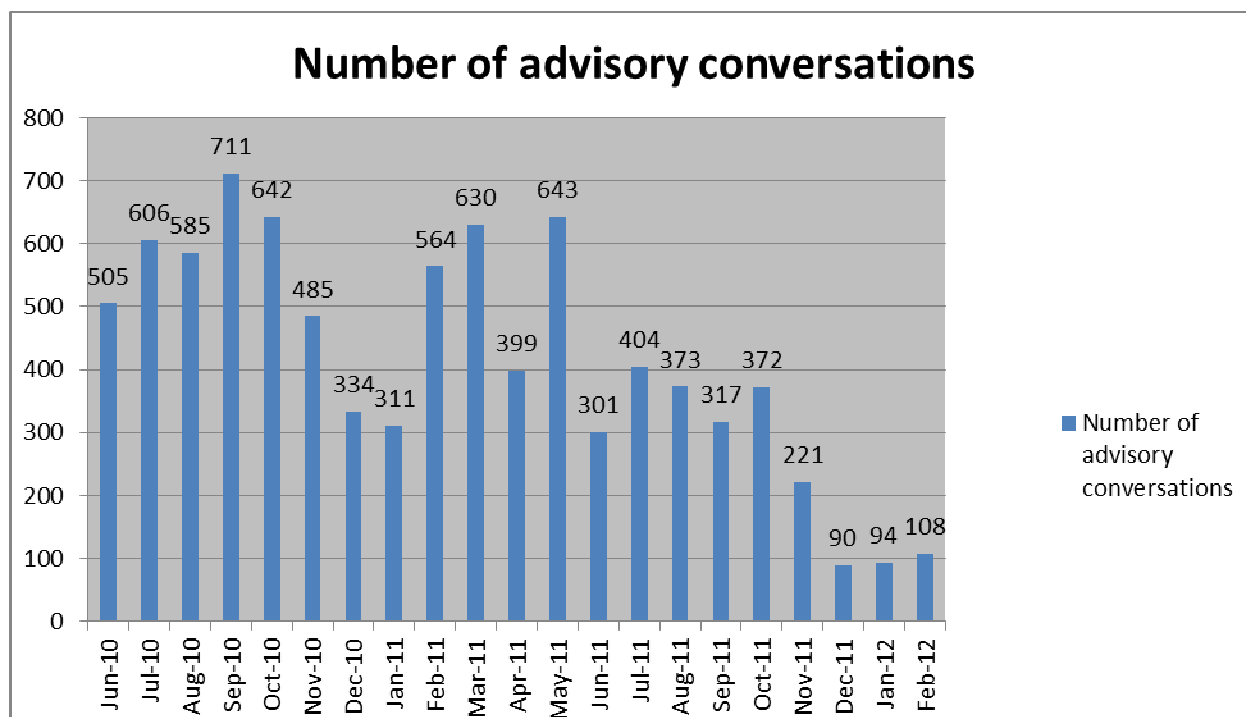




**Table 3: Epping Forest Byelaw Warning letters:  
Years 2005-2011**



**Table 4: Forest Keeper Advisory Conversations**



**Table 5: Tariff of “Court Costs” requested at Magistrates Court**

	2010/11	2011/12
Forest Keeper’s initial involvement, reports etc.	£40	£60
Office Administration	£40	£80
Forest Keeper’s Court appearance	£40	£80
Other costs, travel etc	£40	£20
	£160	£240
Costs requested for disposal of dumped waste (minimum 1 tonne)	Nil	£128
+ each additional tonne	Nil	£97
Flytipping Reward Scheme	Up to £500	Up to £500

**Contact:**

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Committee(s):	Date(s):	Item no.
Epping Forest and Commons	14 May 2012	
Subject: Update on Volunteering in Epping Forest 2011		Public
Report of: Superintendent of Epping Forest SEF 14/12		For Information

### Summary

There were 214 people volunteering in 234 roles for Epping Forest at the end of December 2011. Sixteen of our volunteers fulfil more than one of the 30 available roles. A further 145 people have participated in the mass volunteering days.

For the City of London volunteers, there has been a 4.7% increase in hours from 8,157 in 2010 to 8,543 in 2011.

This report informs your Committee with regard to progress with the implementation of the Epping Forest Volunteer Policy adopted by your Committee on 8 March 2010.

A total of 19,536 hours of volunteer activity were donated during 2011, including 8,543 hours from volunteers managed by the City of London; 6,415 hours by the Epping Forest Centenary Trust and 4,578 hours by the Epping Forest Conservation Volunteers. A further 720 hours of work was provided by the Youth Reparation Service.

The volunteer recruitment target for 2011 was to fill 27 roles. The total number of volunteers actually recruited was 36 exceeding the target by 9 volunteers, which is a 15% increase on 2010.

.The Volunteer Party in January 2012 was a great success and was held in the newly refurbished Butlers Retreat. Five Gold, 19 Silver and six Bronze medals were awarded.

For the first time, a long serving volunteer, Alan Sibley became a Freeman of the City of London. Last year he was awarded a gold medal for completing 489 hours during 2011.

Epping Forest has worked co-operatively with external volunteer providers Orange RockCorps and 'The Challenge Network' for the first time on a joint project where young people have been involved in vegetation clearance work.

### **Recommendations**

I recommend that Members note the content of this report and in particular the wide ranging activities undertaken by volunteers over the last year.

## Main Report

### **Background**

1. Many volunteers seek to support the work of the Conservators as a way of caring for a public Open Space, which plays an important role in their lives. Others volunteer to support specific activities that the Forest promotes; the natural and heritage conservation value of the Forest or as a way of contributing to the community in which they live. Volunteering can also provide new experiences, the opportunity to gain new skills; meet new people or secure experience to facilitate change.
2. Epping Forest has a long tradition of volunteer involvement which stretches all the way back to campaigns to secure the Forest for public benefit.
3. Volunteering contributes significantly to the sustainable management of Epping Forest.
4. At present, there are 214 volunteers in 234 roles at Epping Forest, such as Fishing Bailiff, Information Assistant, Litter Picker, Tree Warden, Visitor Surveyor and Lakes and Ponds Volunteer.
5. The expansion of volunteering is a key element of your Committee's Volunteer Policy and the five year **Branching Out** project, which acts as a catalyst for increasing the number of volunteers engaged across Epping Forest, and integrating them in a more coordinated way.
6. Through better coordination of our voluntary activities and working relationships with partners, **our volunteer programme aims to:**
  - 6.1 inspire people to volunteer for Epping Forest by creating new roles for, and actively recruiting, volunteers, in accordance with the division's objectives;
  - 6.2 use volunteering as an opportunity to reach out to hard-to-reach communities and promote access to the Forest;
  - 6.3 pursue partnership and funding opportunities to ensure the sustainability of our work; and
  - 6.4 ensure that volunteers across the organisation have an excellent volunteering experience.

### **Current Position**

7. The following are some of the volunteering highlights of the year. Unless otherwise stated, figures in this report are based on data collected for the calendar year 2011 (January to December).
8. The Epping Forest division recruited people to **36 new volunteer roles**, which is an increase of 19.5% on 2010.

9. The volunteers directly managed by the City of London (at Epping Forest and the London Metropolitan Archives) have completed **8,543 volunteer hours**, which is an increase of 4.7% on 2010.
10. The Epping Forest Centenary Trust (EFCT) completed 6,415 volunteer hours in 2011 and the Epping Forest Conservation Volunteers (EFCV) 4,578 hours. The Trust's hours were down on last year, due to an Officer injury and cancellation of tasks during the unseasonably bad weather in the early part of 2011.
11. In 2011, Epping Forest ran an event with **Orange RockCorps** for the first time. Orange RockCorps is a charity that encourages young people to give their time to others and in return they can earn themselves a ticket to a concert organised by Orange RockCorps. Over 30 teenagers cut back burnt gorse on Leyton Flats, with the assistance of arborist staff who chipped and removed the Gorse.
12. The Community Liaison Officer and Volunteer Development (VDO) set up Epping Forest's first project with The Challenge Network, a charity that empowers young people to work within their community. Last year they helped clear hawthorn and blackthorn as part of Project Nightingale. The task was run over two days where 80 young people aged 15 to 16 came and helped.
13. The VDO continues working with the **Youth Reparation Service** around Hollow Ponds. This year the group have expanded their work programme to include other areas of the Forest and working with the community. 24 work days were completed in 2011, with an average of 12 young offenders attending each work day for two and a half hours, completing 720 hours. These figures are not included in the volunteer hours, as it is compulsory for them to participate.
14. In 2011 the annual Scout Project was organised by the VDO in conjunction with the EFCT. The Scouts undertook a total of four projects consisting of two conservation tasks, clearing Silver Birch and Gorse. One pond task, clearing Phragmites from Bulrush Pond and a construction task. The construction task was to weave Willow Spilling in front of previously installed geotextile revetments at the Eagle Pond to naturalise and stabilise the revetment. The events were a great success and enjoyed by all involved.
15. The Lakes and Ponds Task Force continue with the improvements to Hollow Pond, Eagle Pond and Connaught Water, creating new disabled angling swims and planting marginal and aquatic plants.
16. The **Volunteer Awards Party** in January 2011 in the newly refurbished Butler's Retreat was a great success. Five gold (for 600 hours), 19 silver (300 hours) and six bronze medals (150 hours) were awarded. The event was photographed by Volunteer Photographer, Bob Good.

17. Volunteer, Alan Sibley, has been a Volunteer Fishing Bailiff on the Forest for more than 10 years. Last year he became a **Freeman of the City** in recognition of over 10,000 hours of service.
18. The training of Volunteers and staff has continued, with both staff and volunteers receiving joint training in First Aid, Visitor Surveys, Leading Health Walks and the Safe Use of Brush Cutters.

### **Plans for 2012**

19. The recruitment target for Branching Out for 2012 rises from 27 to 35 volunteer roles.
20. Additional training for volunteers in 2012 will include Working with Willow, Chainsaw Operation and Sustainable Woodland Management.
21. The VDO plans to continue working with Orange RockCorps and the Scouts to involve young people in further tasks in the Forest.
22. The VDO will be working closely with Visitor Services in 2012 to help organise a recruitment campaign for volunteers to assist in the operation of all three Visitor Centres including the new Visitor Centre at the Coach House, Chingford.
23. Volunteers will be constructing fishing platforms and planting marginal and aquatic plants at Connaught Water. A full risk assessment is being made of plans to construct a major boardwalk across one corner of the reservoir.
24. Six Community events have been planned between March and July 2012, which will include the **Youth Reparation Service**.
25. The VDO will be expanding activity in the south of the Forest by working more closely with groups such as the Wanstead Parklands Community Group and The Lake House Lake Project.

### **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

26. Volunteering and community involvement are included in the Open Spaces Business Plan 2010 – 2013 Strategic Aims to Celebrate a sense of place by involving local communities in the care and management of our sites, With objectives of encouraging use of the Opens Spaces by underrepresented groups and developing volunteering opportunities at all sites. The City of London Corporation as Conservators of Epping Forest hold the land in trust for the recreation and enjoyment of the public.
27. The proposals meet *The City Together Strategy: the Heart of a World Class City 2008-14* vision of a *World Class City* and, specifically, theme 1 of its 5 themes ‘a World Class City which is competitive and promotes opportunity; theme 2 ‘a World Class City which supports our communities’; theme 3 ‘a World Class City which protects, promotes and

enhances our environment'; and theme 4 'a World Class City which is vibrant and culturally rich'.

28. By promoting volunteering to a more diverse audience and reaching out to specific communities, we are increasing access to our activities in the Forest. This helps meet the Epping Forest Management Plan 2004-2010 objective to improve accessibility to education and enjoyment. Volunteering contributes to two more Management Plan objectives - to enhance the diversity of wildlife habitats and improve recreational activities.

### Financial Implications

29. Training will be required for new and existing volunteers, together with induction courses for approximately 35% of the volunteers.
30. The costs for 2011/12 have been and will be met in 2012/13 from the Branching Out budget.

**Table 1: Volunteer cash flow**

<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2011/12 Projected spend (£)</b>	<b>2011/12Actual spend (£)</b>	<b>2012/13 Projected spend (£)</b>
Design, print & postage	2,000	1,880	2,000
Tools & Equip + PPE	3,500	6,997	6,500
Induction	1,500	1,000	1,000
Travel and Expenses	3,000	1,705	2,000
Awards event	0	1000	1,200
Uniform + ID badges	2,000	0	1,500
Training	3,000	1,665	2,300
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,000</b>	<b>14,247</b>	<b>16,500</b>

31. The budget is under spent by £753, in main due to only four volunteers claiming travel and expenses. Spend on additional equipment is balanced by savings elsewhere such as uniform.
32. The total budget for 2012/13 is £16,500, as anticipated in the Volunteering in Epping Forest report approved by Committee in January 2010. Due to the success in recruiting volunteers to date, volunteer numbers are likely to

rise considerably over the next year so a decrease in the volunteer budget would not be wise.

**Table 2: Match funding calculated from volunteer hours.**

33. The match funding provided by calculating volunteer hours as the equivalent of cash (£50-£350 per day depending on experience) is exceeding targets.

<b>Quarter</b>	<b>Volunteer hours</b>
January to March 2011	£11,271.88
April to June 2011	£11,021.88
July to September 2011	£21,707.50
October to December 2011	£18,420.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£62,421.26</b>

**Legal Implications**

34. All Volunteers at Epping Forest are fully covered by the City of London's Employers Liability Policy which exceeds the requirements of the Employers Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969.

**Conclusion**

35. A total of 36 volunteers roles were recruited to in the period January to December 2011. This is an increase of 19.5% on 2010 and there has been a 4.7% increase in volunteer hours from 8,157 in 2010 to 8,543 in 2011.
36. For a relatively small budget, the volunteers have contributed time equivalent to approximately five full time staff.

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Committee(s):	Date(s):	Item no.
Epping Forest and Commons	14 May 2012	
Subject: Epping Forest Visitor Services Activity Programme 2012/13		Public
Report of: Superintendent of Epping Forest SEF 11/12		For Information
<p><b><u>Summary</u></b></p> <p>In previous years, the Visitor Services Team has provided reports to the Epping Forest Joint Consultative Committee summarising the previous six months of service provision for visitors to Epping Forest. This is the first report where the Visitor Services Team sets out its programme of work for the coming financial year.</p> <p>The first part of the report is a summary of the Visitor Services Team's staffing structure and operational priorities. The second part of the report addresses priorities for the next twelve months and is particularly focussed on the staffing structure and operational priorities associated with the implementation of the Epping Forest Staffing Review and the opening of the new Visitor Centre situated on Rangers Road, Chingford in Spring 2012.</p> <p><b>Recommendations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That this report be received.</li> </ul>		

## **Main Report**

### **Background**

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

### **Current Position**

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

3. There are seven areas the Visitor Services Team focus on and they are as follows –

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

### ***Operating the Forest Centres***

4. The Visitor Services Team currently delivers an information service for Epping Forest visitors from three buildings:

- i) The Epping Forest Visitor Centre, a purpose built building located at High Beach and opened in 1991;
- ii) The Queen Elizabeth Hunting Lodge built in 1543 and specifically protected under the Epping Forest Act 1878 and managed as a visitor attraction since 2001; and
- iii) The Temple at Wanstead Park, restored in 1995 and currently offering information services over weekends and Bank Holidays.

#### 4.1 Visitor Centre Opening Times

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

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

4.3 The Visitor Centres are also responsible for income generation from retail activity and income has grown in the last three years. 2011/12 has been our most successful year with turnover at £78,560.

***Visitor Centre Income (£k)***

Year	Visitor Centre	Hunting Lodge	The Temple	Total
2008/09	43,346	9,445	5,480	<b>58,271</b>
2009/10	46,397	12,396	7,280	<b>66,073</b>
2010/11	54,022	12,095	7,508	<b>73,625</b>
2011/12	58,013	13,054	7,493	<b>78,560</b>

4.4 Delivering Life Long Learning Sessions

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

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

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

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

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

### ***Public Events***

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

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

### ***Producing Forest Interpretation***

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

### ***Developing Football and other sports***

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

10. Wanstead Flats also hosts a weekly 5km 'Parkrun' event and hosts weekly health walks every Tuesday mornings, and will operate a series of themed Olympic events based on a Festival of Health and Wellbeing during 2012.

## **Proposals**

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

### ***Visitor Services Staffing Structure***

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

### ***Proposed Changes***

13. By incorporating the Wanstead Flats Grounds Staff into the Visitor Services Department there will be a greater emphasis placed upon on the quality of the visitor experience, together with improved marketing and promotion. Summer Football Tournaments will grow in number and there will be a greater emphasis with regard to a chain of custody in the customer booking process. Communication and co-ordination between the Grounds Staff and the Football Development Officer will be improved and the greater involvement of local volunteers will be nurtured.
14. Similarly the incorporation of staff at Chingford Golf Course into the Visitor Services Department will see a greater focus on communication between the Grounds staff, the Golf Professional and golf users with a focus on improving the quality of play; the maintenance and improvement of the course and the overall profitability of the operation.
15. The 'Zipporah'<sup>TM</sup> events booking system piloted at Epping Forest for the Open Spaces Department has not proved to be resilient enough to deal with the booking arrangements at Wanstead Flats. Visitor Services staff will be working with colleagues to identify a suitable alternative booking system.

### ***Operating the Forest Centres***

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

### ***Proposed Opening Times***

	VC @ Chingford	QEHL	Temple
<b>Peak Opening Hours</b> (13 weeks of school holidays and all weekends)	7 days a week, 10.00a.m. – 5.00p.m.	7 days a week, 10:00 a.m. – 5.00 p.m.	Saturday and Sunday, 10.00a.m. – 3.00p.m.
Peak hours per week	49	49	10
<b>Off Peak Opening Hours</b> (Monday to Friday during Term Times)	5 days a week, 10.00a.m. – 5.00p.m.	5 days a week, 12.00p.m. – 5.00p.m. (Booked groups in morning)	Saturday and Sunday, 12.00p.m. – 5.00p.m.
Off Peak hours per week	35	25	10

### ***Delivering Life Long Learning Sessions***

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

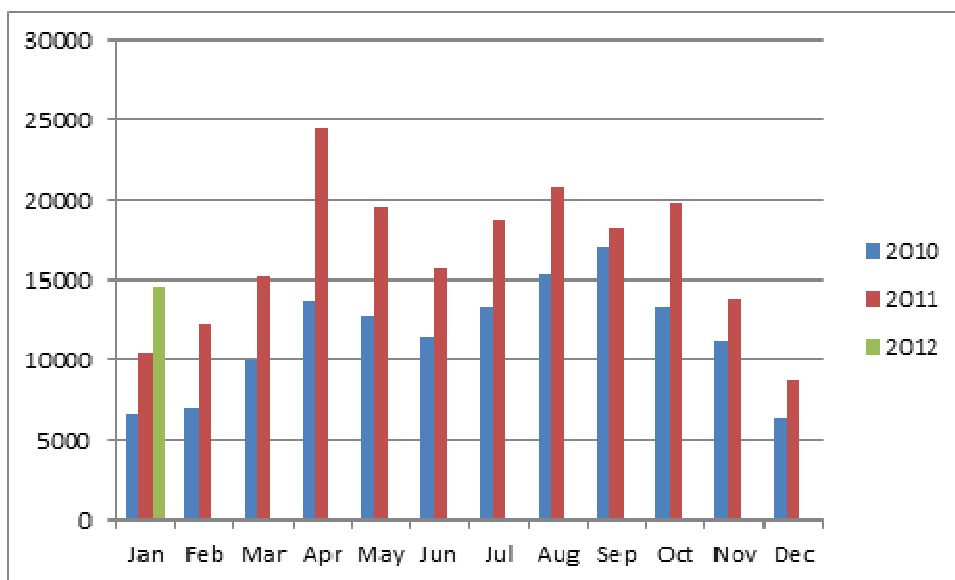
### ***Public Events***

19. Visitor Services will continue to provide a varied programme of events including 3 Outdoor Theatre Events, Family Learning Events during all Half Term Holidays, exhibitions at the Temple and weekend events.
  
20. 2012/13 will also see a full programme of Temporary Exhibitions, held at the new Visitor Centre at Chingford in the dedicated Temporary Exhibition

space. The first two months (April and May 2012) will see a children’s art exhibition and then June and July will see a ‘Royalty and the Forest’ temporary exhibition held. Further exhibitions are currently being planned.

***Producing Forest Interpretation***

- 21. Visitor Services will continue to produce three editions of Forest Focus and the Events Diary for 2013 as well as ensuring a stock of promotional leaflets are available. We will continue to develop relationships between the local press and ourselves by continuing to produce Press Releases.
- 22. Particular attention will be focussed on the development of our digital communication with the public by re-launching our Web Site in June 2012 with the intention of increasing web hits beyond the 2011 182,000 total. The Team will also concentrate efforts on our Twitter account seeking to increase the number of followers from the current level of 273.



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

***Developing Football and Other Sports***

- 24. The Football Development Officer will continue to develop coaching schemes and community outreach projects in line with the Sports Development Plan.
- 25. The Conservators of Epping Forest currently operate 58 football pitches at Wanstead Flats. The reduction to 58 pitches from 63 pitches reflects the decision to rest 'The Dell' pitches close to Aldersbrook Road following poor grass germination associated with goalmouth improvement works

during the Summer of 2011. The 58 pitches are served by three sports pavilions at Aldersbook Road, Capel Road and Harrow Road. The Harrow Road Pavilion was redeveloped in 2009 as phase 1 of the Sports Development Plan. Phases 2 and 3 at Aldersbrook Road and Capel Road still require upgrading and improvement, and will be the subject of a dedicated report to your Committee later this year.

## **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

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

- A Vibrant and Culturally Rich City

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

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

## **Conclusion**

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

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 - Staffing Structure

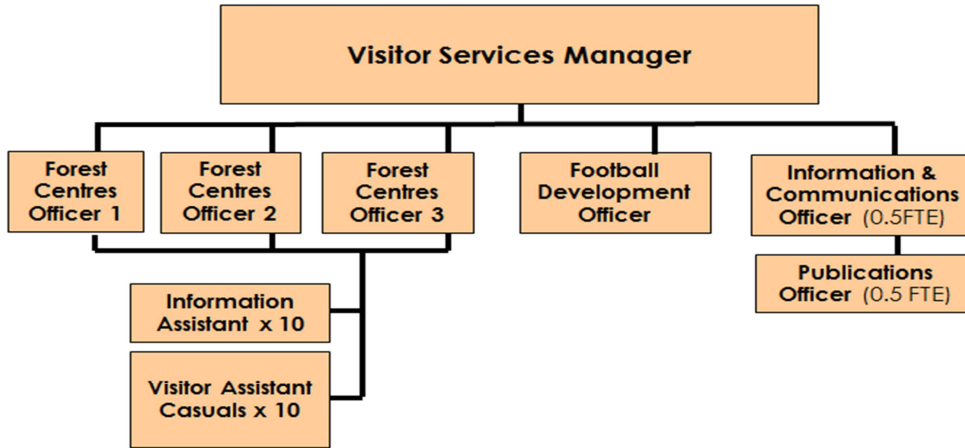
### **Contact:**

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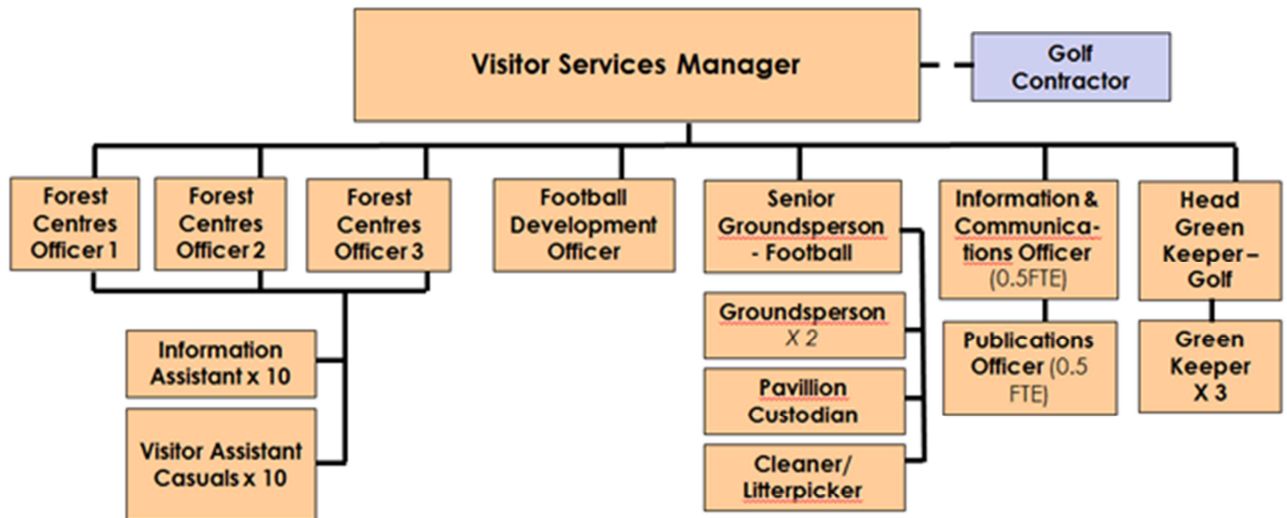


# Visitor Services Staffing Structure (Appendix 1)

As at February 2012 –



Proposed Structure –



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Committee(s):	Date(s):	Item no.
Epping Forest and Commons Finance	14 May 2012 29 May 2012	
Subject: Epping Forest – Branching Out project (Heritage Lottery Fund) – Progress Update report – Number 7		Public
Report of: Superintendent of Epping Forest SEF 15/12		For Information
<p><b><u>Summary</u></b></p> <p>This report provides an updated budget and progress report on the City’s £6.83 million Branching Out project, which began in August 2009 with a grant of £4.76 million from Heritage Lottery Fund.</p> <p>Overall, the project is progressing well towards completion with some delays to the capital projects. The Coach House redevelopment and new exhibition are nearing completion and due to open to the public in June 2012. Butler’s Retreat café opened to the public in February 2012 and is proving popular. Landscaping works at Chingford, Connaught Water and High Beach will be complete in June 2012. Volunteering and community targets are being exceeded.</p> <p>This sixth progress update reports spend at £3,256,886 for Stage 3 to the end of December 2011, at approximately halfway through the project. The report includes an updated budget, with virements between budget headings that do not affect the total budget amount. These include allocation of £209,195 of the contingency budget, principally to cover the landscape elements, which does not have its own contingency, and time extensions to the capital build projects. Contingency budgets are standard for Heritage Lottery funded projects and the remaining contingency budget is 10% of the outstanding capital works. All changes remain within the total budget allocation for the project. There is no change to the City of London financial contribution.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Recommendations</b></p> <p>I RECOMMEND that the budget variances detailed in Table 2 and the appendices be approved; and accordingly that £209,195 of contingency funds be allocated to cover the increase in costs for the Coach House and Butler’s Retreat.</p>		

## **Main Report**

### **Background**

1. Branching Out is a series of projects in Epping Forest, designed to improve access to and interpretation of the historic landscape. The total budget for the project is £6.83 million over five years, supported by a grant of £4.76 from Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).
2. The four main strands of the Branching Out project are:
  - 2.1. **Car Parks and Access** - Creation of four visitor hubs and 20 gateways to the Forest. Accessible and way-marked trails and car park resurfacing at High Beach, Connaught Water, Chingford and Jubilee Pond.

- 2.2. **Coach House** - Redevelopment to provide an Interpretation Centre with improved education and learning facilities as well as a shop. This project includes an education programme, Discovering Epping Forest, community liaison, volunteers and cataloguing and conservation of the Epping Forest archives.
  - 2.3. **Butler's Retreat** - Refurbishment to provide an improved restaurant facility
  - 2.4. **Grazing and Trees** –implementing a long term grazing strategy to enhance wood pasture landscapes. Managing ancient trees with the help of apprentices and new equipment.
3. The Epping Forest and Commons Committee received, and approved, the sixth Branching Out project update report at its meeting of 12 September 2011.

### **Current Position**

4. **Coach House construction** works are due to be completed by mid May 2012. The contractor's delay to the project have been caused by the late supply of the glazing and timber colonnade packages and additional works required to windows to the south elevation. The impact has been mitigated by partial possession of staff offices and lavatories, enabling the portacabins to be removed from the forecourt and the landscaping works to progress. The redeveloped coach house buildings and exhibition will be formally launched at Ladies Day on 12 July 2012 by the Duke of Gloucester. .
5. **Interpretation** – The interpretation company, Cod Steaks, are progressing well with design and layout, and are scheduled to install the exhibition in May. Staff workshops were used to identify key themes and stories. Editing of content by City of London staff and Verderers is taking longer than originally programmed, but the work is coming together. Objects in the museum collection have been catalogued using a website called eHive.
6. **Car Parks, Access and Landscape** improvements are largely finished at Chingford, Connaught Water and High Beach, with overall completion due in May 2012. Some delays have been incurred due to the adjusted construction programmes. HLF has agreed use of the contingency budget to install reclaimed granite, as opposed to concrete, kerbs at High Beach and Connaught Water. The following is a general progress report on landscaping works:
- 6.1. Chingford Hub –the Bury Road and Barn Hoppit car parks are complete. Laying of the final resin bonded surface material around the hunting lodge and in front of the coach house is due to be laid in one batch. Turf has been laid in front of Butler's Retreat to enable the outdoor seating to be placed there during May.
  - 6.2. High Beach car park and Manor Road have been reopened. Some snagging is required in the area of the tea hut, including the resolution of picnic furniture design. The process of formally reallocating land between highways and Epping Forest has commenced.
  - 6.3. Connaught Water – the accessible path and car park are largely complete. The installation of benches and the completion of an additional path from the spillway are outstanding. Volunteers have built two disabled fishing platforms.
  - 6.4. Gateways, signage and developing Forest standard for all furniture will be contracted out to the exhibition design company and/or the landscape architects, rather than employing specialist staff as originally planned.

7. **Butler's Retreat** was opened as a café/restaurant by new tenant, the Larder, in February 2012 and is proving popular. Relocation and conservation of the nearby Durning Lawrence Fountain is complete but the Thames Water connection is outstanding and the utility company has not provided a timescale. The current drought orders may impact on the operation of the fountain.
8. **Community engagement** introduces new audiences to Epping Forest, principally by inviting under represented groups such as youth to introductory events and by improved online and hard copy communications. Outreach targets for the year were met, partly via partnerships with The London Wildlife Trust, Earn Your Travel Back, Play in the Forest, (Essex County Council) and Orange Rock Corps. Staff from across the Epping Forest division have assisted the Community Liaison Officer with these activities and found them rewarding. The John Muir award programme is being continued with local schools and has been adopted by Epping Forest Centenary Trust. These events have resulted in young people volunteering with us on a more regular basis and gaining work experience.
9. **Learning** – The third and final year of Discovering Epping Forest (DEF) with 25 schools finishes in summer 2012. Feedback to date from pupils and teachers has been extremely positive and there is a noticeable improvement in the confidence of group members following repeated visits to the Forest. DEF has been shortlisted under the 'Educational Initiative' category for this year's Museums and Heritage Awards. We are working together with the learning partners.
10. **Trees** – We met our target of conservation works to 53% of the 1,200 keystone trees at the end of the winter season. Overall, work has been completed on 639 keystone trees – these are all oaks, as the beeches are already under stress from the dry period earlier in the summer. Eight periods of work have been completed out of the 15 planned for the duration of the project.
11. **Apprenticeships** – The third year of the five-year apprentice arborist scheme is going well. This year's trio of apprentices are particularly keen and have requested additional training. Capel Manor College, where the apprentices study, has strengthened the Level 2 Work Based Diploma in Trees and Timber course this year, and the students are much more positive. The apprentices have had an energising effect on the whole team, who have enjoyed their role as mentors.
12. **Grazing** – Wildlife and Countryside Services has been appointed as the City's new grazing contractor for six years. The City of London now own the cattle and the aim is to become a more sustainable business with a productive herd of over 50, in line with the Grazing Strategy. Further expansion of the herd is dependent on the outcome of the invisible fencing trials and ownership.
13. **Forest Transport Strategy** – The Secretary of State has approved the installation of four new cattle grids in Epping Forest, following a public inquiry. Speed delimit signs have been installed to significantly reduce speeds, including a reduction from 60 to 40 miles per hour along the A104. The prohibition of motor vehicles from Queen's Green and Lodge Road has been formalised. The solution for Fairmead Road is still under discussion with Essex councillors.

14. **Invisible fencing** – the first year of the ongoing trial of virtual cattle fencing and grids has been evaluated. The buried wire (invisible fence) is performing well and has been tested beneath a road as a virtual grid. Some of the cattle collars have been replaced and more purchased. Version two of the collar is being developed and officers are meeting with the manufacturers, Lacme in May.
15. **Volunteers** – 214 people are now volunteering in 234 roles for Epping Forest. A further 145 people have participated in the mass volunteering days. We are exceeding targets for volunteer hours. (Please see full report also being considered at the Epping Forest and Commons committee meeting in May.)
16. **Archives.** Volunteers at the London Metropolitan Archives (LMA) completed their work on the Superintendent's correspondence 1920 – 1938 at the end of 2011. The partnership between LMA and Epping Forest to promote the Epping Forest Archive at LMA is in its third and final year 2012.
17. **Evaluation** – the Visitor Survey for 2011 has been completed and will be reported to your next committee meeting. The results have been compared with those from 2010, giving a more accurate picture of visits to the Forest. Epping Forest staff and volunteers are putting more work into the survey, while the input from the consultant, Alison Millward Associates is tapered to the end of 2014.
18. The Epping Forest and Commons Committee received, and approved, the sixth Branching Out project update report at its meeting of 12 September 2011.

### **Plans for 2012/13**

19. Complete Coach House construction works, install new exhibition and shop, open to the public and have a formal launch on Ladies day in July.
20. Complete Car Parks, Access and Landscaping at Chingford, Connaught Water and High Beach. Construction of boardwalk and planting at Connaught Water by volunteers. The Epping Forest division are liaising with City Surveyors over the relining of Jubilee Pond, which needs to take place in late 2012, prior to landscaping in early 2013.
21. Continue community engagement with expansion of bush craft and John Muir Award. Increase number of volunteers, focussing on visitor services at the new visitor centre.
22. Epping Forest together with the three learning partners, Epping Forest Field Centre, Epping Forest Centenary Trust, Suntrap Field Centre are working on a legacy for the DEF project. This involves a full evaluation report at the end of 2012 and a website for March 2013. We will also engage a consultant to advise on the learning legacy, agree the legacy with learning partners and commence delivery. This will include a strategy for the Epping Forest Archive at LMA.
23. Promotion for the September intake of three new apprenticeships began with the Capel Manor Festival of Trees in April.
24. Continue conservation works to keystone trees. Evaluate impact to date to inform future strategy.

25. Forest Transport Strategy – Essex County Council are planning to install cattle grids in autumn 2012, which will be accompanied by some timber fencing. Any remaining budget, due to savings from reducing number of grids, will be used for other aspects of the Forest Transport Strategy such as a signage review.
26. Continue to test invisible fencing. Agree policy for herd expansion. Advertise cattle monitoring volunteer roles.
27. Complete the third year of the visitor survey. Visitor Survey during 2012 and 2014 will mean that all areas selected within the Forest will have been targeted, so that we can start assessing the impact of Branching Out projects from 2015.
28. Agree a standard design for gateway structures and signage, with a Forest standard to inform design of furniture. Install the remaining three waymarked trails.

### Financial and Risk Implications

29. **Funding** from HLF is **74.37%** of total spend at Stage 3 (excluding the Stage 1 sunk costs of £123,280). The remaining 25.63% of the total Stage 3 budget of £6,395,314 will be met by grants from our partners and the Local Risk budget. This includes a grant of £270,658 from the Tubney Trust and £300,000 towards the Forest Transport Strategy from Essex County Council.
30. The £311,000 development cost was spent at Stage 2. See **Table a** below.
31. **Table 1: Funding Sources**

<b>Funding Sources Table</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>Claims to Dec 2011</b>	<b>Status</b>
Heritage Lottery Fund Stage 3	4,756,000	2,330,368	Claimed quarterly in arrears
Heritage Lottery Fund Development Grant	231,500	231,500	Claimed
Essex County Council (cattle grids & FTS)	300,000	121,190	Evidence to be provided quarterly
City Contribution All Stages*	1,251,436	830,564	See breakdown below
London Borough of Waltham Forest	20,000	20,000	Expended on highways works
Tubney Trust	270,658	270,658	Fully paid in 2012
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,829,594</b>	<b>3,795,280</b>	
<b>*analysis of City Contribution</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>Claims to Dec 2011</b>	<b>Status</b>
Stg 1 bid prep (sunk cost)	123,280	123,280	Expended
City Contribution Development Stage 2	79,500	79,500	Expended
Local Risk	771,436	467,262	Allocated annually
<b>Sub-Total Local Risk</b>	<b>983,216</b>	<b>670,042</b>	
Payments in-kind (volunteers, etc)	283,220	160,522	Claimed with evidence
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,251,436</b>	<b>830,564</b>	

32. Project spend is approximately 50% at just over half way through the project. Spend at this stage is slightly lower than estimated due to building works delays. It is anticipated that 80% of the capital budget will be spent by end May 2012; once the construction and majority of the landscaping targets have been delivered.
33. **Table 2: Cumulative Spend** Stage 3 included in HLF claims to end December 2011.

Project	Capital claim (£)	Revenue claim (£)	Total (£)
1. Coach House	1,089,470	369,583	1,459,053
2. Butler's Retreat	519,978	0	519,978
3. Car Parks and Access	587,833	86,866	674,699
4. Grazing and Trees	189,874	320,713	510,587
Volunteer Hours (£ equivalent as match)	0	92,569	92,569
<b>Total Spend Stage 3</b>	<b>2,387,155</b>	<b>869,731</b>	<b>3,256,886</b>

34. Claims totalling £3,256,886 for Stage 3 (or £3,567,886 including Stage 2 development costs of £311,000) have been submitted to HLF up to the end of December 2011 (**Table 2** above), representing an HLF grant value of £2,330,368 (74.37%). It is anticipated that the full project budget of £6,518,592 for Stage 3 of the project will be spent. Development costs of £311,000 were spent and claimed at Stage 2.
35. **Table 3: Variances** between capital and revenue budgets arising from comparing the budget approved by your committee in September 2011 with budget revisions in April 2012 (Appendix 1), where negative figures represent a reduction in the budget. The revised budget reflects contingency items approved by HLF.

Project	Capital costs (£ variance)	Revenue costs (£ variance)	Total (variance £)
1. Coach House	53,071 <sup>A</sup>	11,234 <sup>B</sup>	64,305
2. Butler's Retreat	51,031 <sup>C</sup>	0	51,031
3. Car Parks and Access	250,327 <sup>D</sup>	-166,652	83,675
4. Grazing and Trees	-5,718	6,802	1,084
Volunteer Costs	0	9,100	9,100
Contingency		-209,194 <sup>E</sup>	-209,195
Development Cost	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>348,711</b>	<b>-348,711</b>	<b>0</b>

36. Summary explanations for variances A-E in Table 3 above are given below, with a more detailed breakdown in Appendix 2:



A. The works and fees budgets for the Coach House have been increased by £53,071 due to an extension of time for four weeks due to additional works to windows, an additional insurance premium, minor design changes and the need for additional materials.

B. The volunteer equipment and expenses budget has been increased by £14,143 with monies vired from salaries savings across the project due to the City of London pay freeze and some from contingency.

C. The works and fees budget for Butler's Retreat has been increased by £51,031 due mechanical and electrical issues, with significant time delays due to gas utilities connection.

D. Development of the Forest Standards has led to additional costs from the substitution of granite kerbs for concrete and Coxwell gravel for hoggin. A greater depth of sub base was required at High Beach than anticipated. These total £104,351. It is also proposed to transfer £145,976 from revenue to capital to cover the design and build of gateways as a contract rather than employing staff.

E. Contingency of £209,195 has been allocated to cover the above revisions to the budget previously reported in September 2011. The projected overall total cost remains the same.

37. There is £113,298 remaining in the contingency budget, which is considered adequate given that the capital projects are approaching 80% completion. This would leave contingency of over 10% on the final 20% (approximately one million pounds) in the capital budget. Please note that contingency budgets are standard for Heritage Lottery funded projects.

#### **Corporate Property Implications**

38. Epping Forest is a major land holding, whose conservation is charged in perpetuity to the City together with its infrastructure and buildings, requiring a high level of financial and resource commitment.
39. Redevelopment of the coach house interpretation centre is nearing completion. **Butler's Retreat** was opened as a café/restaurant by new tenant, the Larder, in February. These deliver the planned improvements to two of Epping Forest's significant heritage property assets and complement asset management aspirations.
40. Relining of Jubilee Pond will go through the Project Gateway process via the City Surveyor. Completion of this project is required prior to landscaping works as part of the Branching Out project.

#### **Strategic Implications**

41. Volunteering and community involvement are included in the **Open Spaces Business Plan 2011-2014**, one of the strategic aims of which is to "Celebrate a sense of place by involving local communities in the care and management of our sites". Objectives include encouraging use of the Open Spaces by under represented groups and developing volunteering opportunities at all sites.
42. The City of London Corporation as Conservators of Epping Forest hold the land in trust for the recreation and enjoyment of the public. The proposals address "**The City Together Strategy: The Heart of a World Class City**" 2008-2014.

## **Conclusion**

43. The Branching Out project is making good progress and all the conditions attached to the HLF grant have been met.
44. Development works at the Chingford Hub and the first phase of landscaping are due to be completed in May. The Discovering Epping Forest schools programme is going well and receiving excellent feedback. Targets for community liaison and volunteering have been exceeded. Conservation work to the keystone trees is on track.
45. The report includes an updated budget, which draws on £209,195 of the contingency, principally to cover landscaping works, for which there was no project-specific contingency, and time extensions to the capital build projects. The projected overall total cost remains the same. Contingency budgets are standard for Heritage Lottery funded projects.
46. Approval of the budget revisions and the updated budget in Table 3 and the appendices is required to enable the capital works to progress, having gained approval from Heritage Lottery for allocation of the contingency budget.

**Appendix 1** Capital and Expenditure Budgets

**Appendix 2** Budget variations agreed by HLF since last progress report

## **Background Papers:**

*Epping Forest - Branching Out Project (Heritage Lottery Fund) – Progress Update Report – Number 6, 12 September 2012*

*Update on Volunteering in Epping Forest 2011 – 14 May 2012*

## **Contact:**

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*020 8532 5311*

## Appendix 1 Capital and Expenditure Budgets

**Table a)** Capital/Expenditure approved September 2011

Project	Capital costs Phases F-L (£)	Revenue costs (£)	Other costs (£)	Total All Years (£)
1. Coach House	1,701,216	582,453		2,283,669
2. Butler's Retreat	593,561	0		593,561
3. Car Parks and Access	1,828,537	337,245		2,165,782
4. Grazing and Trees	311,027	698,011		1,009,038
Volunteer Hours	0	0	144,050	144,050
Contingency			322,492	322,492
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,434,341</b>	<b>1,617,709</b>	<b>466,542</b>	<b>6,518,592</b>
Development Cost	0	0	311,000	311,000
<b>Total including Development Cost</b>	<b>4,434,341</b>	<b>1,617,709</b>	<b>777,542</b>	<b>6,829,592</b>

**Table b)** Capital/Expenditure updated April 2012.

Project	Capital costs Phases F-L (£)	Revenue costs (£)	Other costs (£)	Total All Years (£)
1. Coach House	1,754,287	593,687	0	2,347,974
2. Butler's Retreat	644,592	0	0	644,592
3. Car Parks and Access	2,078,864	170,593	0	2,249,457
4. Grazing and Trees	305,309	704,812	0	1,010,121
Volunteer Hours	0	0	153,150	153,150
Contingency	0	0	113,298	113,298
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,783,052</b>	<b>1,469,092</b>	<b>266,448</b>	<b>6,518,592</b>
Development Cost	0	0	311,000	311,000
<b>Total including Development Costs</b>	<b>4,783,052</b>	<b>1,469,092</b>	<b>577,448</b>	<b>6,829,592</b>

## Appendix 2 Budget variations since last progress report

Item	Variance (£)	Reason for significant variation	Budget line transferred from/to
<b>Coach House</b> Main Contract Construction	39,563	Extension of time due to design changes for render and windows to façade. Additional oak flooring as cutting list allowed no waste. Add insurance premium (£2,480) previously under CoL global	From contingency – pending HLF approval
Museum collection display	6,200	Additional time spent on images and content	From contingency – pending HLF approval
Professional fees	7,308	4 week extension to works has led to add fee claims. There are also CDM services for interpretation	From B's R prof fees & contingency – partially approved by HLF
<b>Capital Costs</b>	<b>53,071</b>		
Staff - Community Liaison Officer	-2,944	savings from pay freeze	To volunteer equipment and expenses
Archive conservation	35	to reflect anticipated invoice	From contingency
Volunteer equipment and expenses	14,143	Budget for Year 3 from salary savings	From salaries & contingency approved by HLF
<b>Revenue Costs</b>	11,234		
<b>Coach House</b>	<b>64,305</b>		
<b>Butler's Retreat</b> Refurbishment	51,770	increased spend due to M&E, gas utilities and time delay	From contingency approved by HLF
Professional fees	-739	add time to manage extension and utilities less than anticipated	To coach house prof fees
<b>Capital Costs</b>	51,830		
<b>Butler's Retreat</b>	<b>51,0131</b>		
<b>Car Parks and Access</b>	0		
Connaught Water Easy Access Trail	2,712	Coxwell surface as part of Forest standard instead of hoggin	From contingency approved by HLF
Connaught Water Car Park	14,547	reclaimed granite kerbs from contingency	From contingency approved by HLF
Pillow Mounds car park	65,164	reclaimed granite kerbs from contingency (28,567) and add sub base (36,597)	From Contingency & Trees vehicles (below) pending HLF approval
Bury Road car park	6,520	Coxwell surface as above	From contingency approved by HLF
Forest Transport strategy	16,500	Shuttle bus Yr 2 & 3 from contingency, part of FTS	From contingency approved by HLF
Gateways staff	145,976	To be covered by exhibition and/or landscaping contract	From revenue – pending HLF approval
<b>Capital Costs</b>	250,327		

<b>Item</b>	<b>Variance (£)</b>	<b>Reason for significant variation</b>	
Gateways staff	-145,976	Contract rather than staffing	To capital
PM equipment & expenses	-11,576	Husqvarna PPE reallocated to match funding rather than existing budget heading	-£15k to match (Husq PPE) + £3424 from contingency pending HLF approval
Supply and planting of trees	-9,100	match from volunteer hours instead due to lack of suitable trees	To volunteer hours
<b>Revenue Costs</b>	-166,652		
<b>Car Parks and Access</b>	83,675		
<b>Grazing and Trees Vehicles</b>	-5,718	reduced to help cover additional costs at High Beach	Transfer to car parks capital
<b>Capital Costs</b>	-5,718		
Arborist team leader	-2,905	savings from pay freeze	To volunteer equipment and expenses
Apprenticeship placements	-5,293	savings from pay freeze	To volunteer equipment and expenses
Equipment for apprentices	15,000	Better location for PPE Husqvarna match funding	From PM equipment car parks
<b>Revenue Costs</b>	6,802		
<b>Grazing and Trees</b>	-1,084		
Volunteer hours	9,100	increased due to no suitable trees from forest as match	From supply and planting of trees
Contingency	-209,195	For reasons above – HLF agreed and pending approval	To headings above as indicated
<b>Non project specific</b>	-200,095		
<b>ALL PROJECTS</b>	0		

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Committee(s):	Date(s):	Item no.
Epping Forest and Commons	14 May 2012	
Subject: Knighton Wood – Consideration for further conservation designation.	Public	
Report of: Superintendent of Epping Forest SEF 18/12	For Information	

### Summary

This report informs your Committee of the potential implications of a private application made by members of the public seeking a listing by English Heritage for Knighton Wood on the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest, and designation of the wood by the London Borough of Redbridge as a Conservation Area.

Knighton Wood was purchased in 1930 by the Conservators of Epping Forest at a cost of £10,500 (£51,800 at 2010 values) with support from the then Urban District Council and the owners on the understanding that the Wood would be managed for its ‘natural aspect’ under the Epping Forest Act, rather than its landscaped qualities. The current Integrated Site Plan for Knighton Wood maintains this ‘managed senescence’ approach which will also be reflected in a forthcoming Conservation Management Plan for the site.

In addition to its status as Forest Land, Knighton Wood is the subject of overlapping nature conservation designations, together with Green Belt and Heritage Land status under the London Borough of Redbridge Local Plan. It is suggested that the further designation of Knighton Wood is inappropriate on the grounds that there is no proven case for listing and the broad protection of the area’s wider conservation interest is already afforded under existing legislative protection.

### **Recommendations**

It is recommended that:-

- i. The Conservators of Epping Forest make formal representations to English Heritage; the London Borough of Redbridge and the Garden History Society stating that the designation of Knighton Wood is not appropriate as the criteria for registration are not met and additional designation may conflict with the protection of the area that is already afforded under the Epping Forest Act 1878 (as amended); the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and Conservation (Natural Habitats,&c.) Regulations 1994.

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| <p>ii. And to further suggest that the integrated management of Knighton Wood is best achieved through a dedicated Conservation Management Plan which the City of London is scheduled to complete.</p> |
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## Main Report

### Background

1. Knighton Wood was enclosed from Lords Bushes, originally Lodge Bushes, from the Woodford Walkes area of Epping Forest by 1781, becoming part of the privately owned Knighton Estate, which was purchased by Edward North Buxton in 1893. A brief history of the acquisition of Knighton Wood is given at Appendix 1.
2. While the woodland garden of Knighton Wood was purchased intact, its future administration under the Epping Forest Act would indicate a clear requirement to manage the wood in the interest of the ‘natural aspect’ outlined in section 7 of the Act. This approach was confirmed by your Committee of 16th June 1930 in response to a request from Woodford Urban District Council to preserve the existing condition of woodland and its special beauty. Following consideration of legal advice your Committee resolved “*That the Council be informed that the Committee can only deal with the portion of the Knighton Estate about to be acquired as forming part of Epping Forest, and that it must therefore be subject to all the rights and obligations to which Epping Forest is subject to under the control of the Conservators*”. For the past 82 years the Conservators have followed an effective and sympathetic policy of ‘managed senescence’, or biological ageing, for the landscaped garden, by not actively removing most non-native plantings, while not perpetuating or replacing the planted interest as it matured. This approach together with the phased removal of invasive *Rhododendron ponticum* is reflected in the Integrated Site Management Plan (ISP) for Lords Bushes and Knighton Woods 2004-10 which was adopted by your Committee on 12 July 2004.
3. Knighton Wood and Lords Bushes have been subject to extensive fires in the past, which may have irreparably damaged the plantings at Knighton Wood. A report of the Superintendent of 2 November 1959 to your Committee reported 496 fires in Epping Forest in September alone including a fire “that burned for about three weeks in Lord’s Bushes”. A further report to your Committee on 13 September 1976 reported damaging fires in woodlands which ‘burnt away even the root systems of mature trees’. In a specific reference to Knighton Wood the report states that it ‘*became necessary for me immediately before the summer bank holiday weekend to cause notices to be erected around the perimeter of those parts, bearing the words “Danger. Fires and Falling Trees. Keep Out”*’.



4. The widespread historical use of *Rhododendron ponticum* as a preferred rootstock for the grafting of many Rhododendron hybrids may indicate that some, or indeed many, of the current *R. ponticum* plants in Knighton Wood may be the result of fire damaged hybrid plants that have reverted to *R. ponticum* on regrowth. Without careful management *R. ponticum* is also prone to reproduce from its root base, a process known as suckering, which again will see the loss of the grafted hybrid interest through a reversion to the basic rootstock.
5. As part of the ISP recommendation for the controlled removal of invasive *R. ponticum* two surveys by specialist adviser Lear Associates in May 2010 and 2011 identified 27 improved or hybrid Rhododendrons. Locally significant 'notable' plants include 11 high quality hybrids often found in late Victorian or Edwardian collections including 'Sappho'; 'Soleil d'Austerlitz' and 'Album Grandiflorum', all raised before 1870. A hybrid between 'Mrs Tom Agnew' and 'Multimaculatum' is considered to be one of the most 'important' Rhododendrons at Knighton, which could be of regional or even national importance. Further surveys of the Rhododendron and hybrid Holly interest are planned subject to funding considerations.
6. *R. ponticum* is a key host plant for the fungus *Phytophthora ramorum* the infective agent of the devastating woodland plant disease known as Sudden Oak Death (SOD). SOD is already present in English Woodlands in Cannock Chase; East and West Sussex and the South West Peninsula and poses a real long term threat to Epping Forest. Any occurrence of SOD in London or the East of England would result in a request to your Committee to accelerate the removal of *R. ponticum* from Epping Forest.
7. Epping Forest was designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in 1953 under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, and further notified under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (now amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000). The basis for designation was the habitats of high nature conservation value including ancient semi-natural woodland, principally wood pasture, old grassland plains and scattered wetland, together with nationally significant invertebrate, fungi and bryophyte species.
8. Unit 131 of the SSSI, which includes Knighton Wood, was last reviewed by Natural England on 26 January 2010 where it was assessed as 'Unfavourable recovering' on the basis of habitat survey data and proposed management works. The presence of non-native species due to the history of the unit are recognised by Natural England in its condition assessment appendices as 'acceptable provided invasive species are kept under control and any diseased specimens are immediately removed'. Natural England has yet to determine its position with regard to a potential formal heritage listing.

9. Epping Forest is also designated as a Special Area of Conservation under the EC Habitats Directive (1992) which was transposed into UK legislation under the Conservation (Natural Habitats and c) Regulations 1994 to reflect the importance of its beech forest and heathland habitats.
10. The London Borough of Redbridge Unitary Development Plan designates Knighton Wood as Green Belt and Special Advertisement Control Area; Site of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation and Heritage Land.
11. Your Committee of 3 May 1995 approved a request by the Buckhurst Hill Residents Society to install an easy access path within Knighton Wood at a cost to the Conservators of £33,000.
12. The planted banks at Knighton Wood also form part of a proposed Local Geological Site designated in 2010 by the London Geodiversity Partnership due to the extensive exposures of Woodford Gravel.

### **Current Position**

13. Knighton Wood has been Forest Land since 1930. As shown in Map 1 the Wood forms 16 hectares (37 acres) of a larger woodland parcel known as Lords Bushes totalling 53 hectares (131 acres). Together, these woodlands form part of a 'satellite' feature close to the main body of Epping Forest in the Parish of Buckhurst Hill.
14. A private application has been made by members of the public to secure additional protection for the garden interest at Knighton Wood by:
  - i. Listing by English Heritage for Knighton Wood on the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest
  - ii. Designation by the London Borough of Redbridge as a Conservation Area.
15. English Heritage uses nine selection criteria to assess whether to register a site as a Park and Garden of Special Historic Interest (See Appendix 2). The application for listing cites two criteria: (iii) 'Sites with a main phase of development post 1840 which are of special interest and relatively intact' and (vii) 'Sites which are early or representative examples of a style of layout or type of site, or the work of a designer (amateur or professional) of national importance'.
16. The application to English Heritage indicates that this garden, designed arguably as a homage to the picturesque movement may have influenced future Edwardian landscape designs, though this contention is not substantiated in the application. Similarly, the absence of any surviving garden plans and any records of Knighton Wood's architect possibly undermines the application, though the application suggests Edward North

Buxton may have been the guiding hand. While Buxton's achievements as a conservationist are noteworthy, it would be difficult to suggest that his work as a garden designer meets the criteria's test of 'national importance'. Subsequent research by the London Parks and Gardens Trust suggests that nurseryman and landscape gardener William Barron of Borrowash may be the designer.

17. English Heritage also states that "the application of the criteria must be accompanied by expert and extensive knowledge of the country's parks and gardens as a whole, to ensure that decisions are consistent". This information is also absent from the listing application and it remains unclear how important Knighton Wood is in relation to other notable Picturesque Gardens.
18. As there is no accurate detailed record of the historic landscape, such as plans, descriptions or inventories and therefore it would be impossible to reinstate or restore the woodland gardens to their former condition. In these circumstances it is questionable as to what English Heritage could insist be undertaken over and above the existing management regime for Knighton Wood. The City would presumably want to challenge any landscape Listing proposal on this basis.
19. Epping Forest currently has two Grade II\* Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest at Copped Hall and Wanstead Park. The City of London first supported the listing of Wanstead Park as a Grade II Park and Garden of Special Historic Interest in 1987. The five important phases of landscape design involving national designers such as Repton and London; the rich record of garden plans and the surviving features such as The Temple, the Fortification and the five lakes clearly merit formal recognition. The City also funded additional research which resulted in a reconsideration of the grading as II\* reflecting the national significance of the landscape.
20. Your Committee of 9 May 2011 approved plans by the City Surveyor to undertake a full Conservation Management Plan (CMP) for Knighton Wood during the period 2012 to 2016 at a cost of £15,000. A CMP undertaken to Heritage Lottery Fund specifications would identify the significance of all the extant elements of the site; catalogue the existing conservation interest and make clear management recommendations for the future stewardship of the site. The compilation of a CMP would in this instance remove the need for a revision of the existing ISP.

## **Options**

21. Your Committee can either choose to support the heritage listing application and/or designation of Conservation Area status, or argue that Knighton Wood already has sufficient protection under the Epping Forest Act, together with subsequent Site of Special Scientific Interest and Special Area of Conservation designations.
22. In supporting a heritage listing for a garden that has not been actively managed for its planted interest for over 80 years, there is an inherent danger that without substantial investment the garden would inevitably be placed upon English Heritage's annually published 'Heritage At Risk' Register. While 'At Risk' status can provide improved access to advice and capital grants, the Conservators would face additional costs for dedicated gardening staff and annual maintenance expenditure.

## **Proposals**

23. Since its acquisition in 1930, your Committee has been very clear that Knighton Wood would be managed in line with the Conservators responsibilities for the natural aspect rather than its landscaped interest. The application now being made over 80 years later for heritage listing would appear not to meet the basic tests demanded by English Heritage's designation criteria.
24. It is therefore proposed that the Conservators of Epping Forest make formal representations to English Heritage, the London Borough of Redbridge and the Garden History Society indicating that further designation of Knighton Wood is inappropriate and unnecessary on the grounds that there is no proven case for listing and the protection of the area is already afforded under the Epping Forest Act 1878 (as amended); the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994.
25. Indeed, the introduction of a heritage listing could conflict with progress to securing favourable status for the Site of Special Scientific Interest through the progressive removal of invasive non-native species. A more appropriate approach would therefore be the completion of a Conservation Management Plan which would address the integrated management of the heritage landscape components alongside the objectives of the Epping Forest Act and the existing overlapping conservation designations.

## **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

26. The proposal to resist an application for Listing Knighton Wood as an historic landscape is endorsed from the Corporate Property viewpoint.

27. The effective management of the High Beach Visitor Centre supports the **‘The City Together Strategy: The Heart of a World Class City’** 2008-14 under the following themes;

- To encourage and support services and initiatives which benefit communities within the City and City fringes, contributing to local prosperity.
- Provide high quality accessible Open Spaces and services in accordance with nationally recognised standards for the benefit of London and the Nation.

### **Legal Implications**

28. Section 7iii of the Epping Forest Act 1878 states that “The Conservators shall at all times as far as possible preserve the natural aspect of the Forest, and especially shall preserve and protect the ancient earthworks called Ambresbury Banks and all other ancient remains, and the Purlieu Bank, and such other Forest marks and boundaries, if any, as still exist in the Forest; and shall protect the timber and other trees, pollards, shrubs, underwood, heather, gorse, turf, and herbage growing on the Forest; and, subject to the provisions of this Act, shall prevent all persons from felling, cutting, lopping, or injuring the same, and from digging the gravel, clay, loam, and soil of the Forest.” While the description of the ‘natural aspect’ relates principally to the Forest’s natural landscape, the definition does make reference to earthworks and woodbanks. The derivation of the term ‘natural aspect’ arguably has a ‘picturesque’ movement influence or origin.

29. English Heritage is enabled by section 8C of the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953 to compile a register of gardens and other land of special historic interest. This register came into being with the passing of The National Heritage Act 1983 which set up the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England.

30. The inclusion of an historic park or garden on the Register in itself brings no additional statutory controls. Registration is a material consideration in planning terms as outlined in Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012) Local Planning Authorities are required to consult English Heritage where the application affects a Grade I or II\* registered site, and the Garden History Society on all grades of registration.

31. Similarly, apart from the risk of negative publicity and community opprobrium, the declaration of ‘At Risk’ status on the register does not expose the City of London to any direct legal or financial sanction.

32. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 provides Local Planning Authorities with the power to determine and designate ‘which parts of their areas are areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which is desirable to preserve or enhance’.
33. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published on 27 March 2012 which replaces previous Planning Policy Guidance states at section 109 that ‘*The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils ...and minimise impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government’s commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;*’.
34. With regard to heritage conservation section 126 of the NPPF argues that ‘*Local planning authorities should set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. In doing so, they should recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance*’.
35. With regard to Conservation Areas the NPPF states at section 127 ‘*When considering the designation of conservation areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest*’.

## **Conclusion**

36. The Conservators already face challenges at its two Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs) where the duties placed upon the Charitable Trust by the Epping Forest Act and statutory responsibilities associated with subsequent SSSI and SAC designation, conflict with obligations under subsequent heritage legislation. Given the Forest’s long history, there are similar potential tensions for a range of notable heritage landscapes within the Forest, which like Knighton Wood, have not been officially designated. This dichotomy has been identified as a key theme for the forthcoming Epping Forest Management Plan.
37. The position at Knighton Wood is unambiguous due to its later acquisition in 1930, where your Committee has determined an approach on the future management of the site. Knighton Wood has in effect been the subject of a ‘managed senescence’ technique since its acquisition in 1930, allowing the non-native planted elements of the wood to mature before being removed

and not renewed. While the heritage listing application provides valuable insight into the history of the garden's development, the document does not provide a decisive argument for listing under English Heritage's designation criteria. Moreover, the application for heritage listing of the wood could place new and costly obligations on the Conservators to actively manage the garden as it was landscaped for the comparatively narrow period of 61 years between 1863 and 1924, contrary to the basis upon which it was clearly acquired and stated for Forest purposes, and which would have resource implications for the main thrust of the Conservators responsibilities.

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 - A Brief History of the acquisition of Knighton Wood

Appendix 2 – English Heritage Parks and Gardens Designation Criteria

Map 1

### **Contact:**

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## Appendix 1 - A Brief History of the acquisition of Knighton Wood

- i. Edward North Buxton purchased the Knighton Estate in 1863. Buxton, and his brother Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton, played an important role in the conservation of Epping Forest through their involvement in the campaign group, the Commons Preservation Society. Edward North Buxton also served as a Verderer of the Forest from the beginning of the Epping Forest Act for 44 years.
- ii. Under Buxton's ownership the Knighton Estate was widely landscaped in the Victorian style with extensive plantings of non-native trees, shrubs and plants. Knighton Wood was specifically landscaped to provide a transition between the house and formal gardens of the estate and the relative 'wildness' of Epping Forest represented by Lords Bushes and beyond.
- iii. The wood was planted in what is argued to be the 'Picturesque' style. The Picturesque movement which was at its height between 1650 and 1850 drew its philosophical basis from the new informal 'order' of human freedoms which was seen to be represented by the natural world. This informality was outwardly represented in the relationship between garden and landscape views and the visual arts.
- iv. The picturesque character of the woodland was 'enhanced' though the restrained planting of individual non- native trees such as European Black Pine; Corsican Pine; Copper Beech; Norway Maple; Wellingtonia; Cedar and flowering Cherry at strategic locations and 'bundles' native trees particularly on earth mounds to emphasise the exposed root systems which were an object of picturesque fascination. Further interest was added through the widespread planting of hybrid Rhododendrons and Azaleas, together with drifts of daffodils; bluebells; Solomon's Seal and Lily of the Valley.
- v. Additional 'picturesque' contrast was provided by the construction of artificial rock exposures comprising of imitation stone known as 'Pulhamite' and a series of ponds and lakes created by gravel workings. Building was restricted to a pair Lodges on the edge of the Wood, one of which survives, and a now lost thatched boathouse adjacent to Knighton Lake.
- vi. Edward North Buxton died in 1924, followed by his wife Emily in 1929, which resulted in the sale of the then 100 acre Knighton estate. Some 59 acres, including the house and formal gardens, were sold for housing development with development commencing from 1931.
- vii. Your Committee further resolved *'that the Coal and Corn and Finance Committee be informed that this Committee is of the opinion*



*that the acquisition of the pink land forming part of the Knighton Estate, would be very advantageous to the public, and make a valuable addition to the Forest; that if the land be acquired the Conservators would be prepared to administer the same in accordance with the terms of the Epping Forest Act, 1878; further this Committee considers that the local authorities and residents should make a substantial contribution towards the cost of acquiring the land in question’.*

- viii. Knighton Wood was subsequently purchased for return to the Forest at a cost of £10,500 (equivalent to £518,000 by 2010 values) for 32.5 acres with the cost shared equally between the Corporation of London and Woodford Urban District Council. A further 5 acres were gifted by Buxton’s heirs in addition to the purchase. A total of 37.5 acres of Knighton Wood were officially opened for public access by The Ranger, the Duke of Connaught at a ceremony on 21st July 1930.

## **Appendix 2 – English Heritage Parks and Gardens Designation Criteria**

- i. Sites formed before 1750 where at least a proportion of the layout is still in evidence.
- ii. Sites laid out between 1750 and 1840 where enough of the layout survives to reflect the original design
- iii. Sites with a main phase of development post-1840 which are of special interest and relatively intact, the degree of required special interest rising as the site becomes closer in time
- iv. Particularly careful selection is required from the period after 1945
- v. Sites of less than 30 years are only normally registered if they are of outstanding quality or under threat.
- vi. Sites which were influential in the development of taste, whether through reputation or reference in literature.
- vii. Sites which are early or representative examples of a style of layout or type of site, or the work of a designer (amateur or professional) of national importance.
- viii. Sites having an association with significant persons or historic events.
- ix. Sites with a strong group value with other heritage assets

<b>Committee(s):</b>	<b>Date(s):</b>	<b>Item no.</b>
Epping Forest and Commons Committee	14 <sup>th</sup> May 2012	
<b>Subject: A 5 year trial of ‘Invisible Fencing’ at Burnham Beeches.</b> Expansion of the Conservation Grazing Scheme at Burnham Beeches	<b>Public</b>	
<b>Report of: The Superintendent of Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common.</b>	<b>For Decision</b>	
<p><b><u>Summary</u></b></p> <p>The City of London introduced conservation grazing at Burnham Beeches in 1992. Since that time the area grazed has grown from 3.5 ha to 43ha (approximately 25% of the site) and currently supports a small herd of British White Cattle and Exmoor Ponies.</p> <p>The 2010 – 2020 management plan for Burnham Beeches was approved by this Committee in July 2010. Approval included the ‘keystone project’ to expand conservation grazing across as much of the site as possible (approximately 95%).</p> <p>In May 2011 your Committee approved the use of cattle grids to prevent egress by livestock along the public roads that run through the site.</p> <p>In November 2011 the Burnham Beeches team inspected the ‘Boviguard, Invisible Fencing’ trials at Epping Forest. At this point it became clear that the cost of cattle grids could not be justified at Burnham Beeches without first carrying out trials of this new option (as is also proposed at Epping Forest).</p> <p>Although still at an early stage in its technological development the commercially available Boviguard Invisible Fencing has the potential to greatly simplify the keystone project bringing benefits in terms of reduced installation and maintenance costs, formal consultation requirements and access and environmental considerations.</p> <p>Natural England’s Higher Level Stewardship Scheme at Burnham Beeches runs until January 2018. It is anticipated that it will provide up to 80% of the capital cost of the keystone project as well as £23,000 per annum in habitat improvement payments until that date.</p> <p>Your Superintendent continues to work closely on this project with Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC), Natural England (NE) and</p>		

the Burnham Beeches Consultation Group (BBCG).

**I recommend that:**

- Approval is given for a phased and expanding trial of ‘Invisible Fencing’ and ‘Virtual Grids’ at Burnham Beeches during the HLS period.
- Your Superintendent provides this committee with regular reports on related matters as the trials progress and widen.
- The use of Invisible Fencing as the sole means of preventing livestock from straying from the site is reviewed by this Committee at the end of the second year of the trials.
- Your Superintendent continues to liaise closely with the Superintendent’s team at Epping Forest in terms of the development and implementation of the Invisible Fencing system across both sites.

**Main Report**

**Background**

1. For hundreds of years Burnham Beeches was grazed by livestock. Many of its trees were pollarded to generate a regular supply of firewood whilst the livestock formed part of the local food supply. This style of land management created the wildlife rich landscape that we enjoy today. When grazing and pollarding stopped over 100 years ago scrub woodland began to grow on much of the previously open pasture and heath and the unmanaged pollards began to die.
2. Over the last two decades the City of London has meticulously planned and undertaken a programme of works to regenerate the ancient pollards and restore the rare and valuable habitats. The project to expand the conservation grazing scheme across the Beeches is the most ambitious element of that long-term plan and one that aims to permanently reverse the once steady decline in biodiversity on the site.
3. The project will eventually provide a more open landscape for visitors to enjoy and the opportunities this affords to see livestock grazing extensively across the site will help to forge closer links between people, food and their environment. The regeneration of the ancient pollards coupled to

extensive grazing will also enable the site to provide wood fuel and food for the local community.

4. Currently around 25% of Burnham Beeches is grazed by a small herd of British White Cattle and four Exmoor ponies. Pigs are occasionally brought on to the site during the pannage season. Grazing takes place within a large enclosure and this requires extensive use of permanent fencing, internal cattle grids and access gates. The livestock are owned and managed by the City of London and fences, gates and grids are provided and maintained from local risk budgets.
5. The project to expand grazing across the site is now the 'keystone' project in the Burnham Beeches Management Plan 2010 – 2020 which was approved by this Committee in July 2010.
6. The project aims to use livestock as the main tool to achieve the City Corporation's obligation to maintain Burnham Beeches in 'favourable condition'. It is anticipated that a small proportion of the site, perhaps 5%, will be excluded from the grazing scheme e.g. the café area, car parks and potentially, the most dangerous sections of highway.
7. The principle of the wider grazing scheme continues to enjoy cross party support at a local political level and the Attorney General (and local MP) Mr Dominic Grieve has given his personal backing. BCC and TfB remain committed to the delivery of the project and continue to provide Officer time when required. South Bucks District Council and Natural England are also supportive of the project as too are the Burnham Beeches Consultation Group.
8. The project is already in the public domain having gained a good level of support during the current Management Plan's consultation process.
9. In the longer term the project will link to a larger, landscape scale scheme to help protect the green belt around Burnham Beeches. In this respect the project plays an important part in the delivery of Buckinghamshire County Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy and associated Local Nature Partnership, and the North West Green Arc.

#### **Current Approval – Cattle Grids**

10. In May 2011 your Committee approved the findings of a preliminary design report that recommended up to 17 cattle grids and associated bypasses and gateways be installed to contain livestock within the site's boundary. This would prevent livestock leaving the site via the public highways.

11. The preliminary design report also suggested that all 'internal' stock fencing and gates be removed placing reliance instead on the fences of neighbouring properties to restrict livestock from straying from the Beeches. This is 'normal practice' on registered commons such as the Beeches where neighbours are legally required to prevent livestock from encroaching on their property. The number of neighbours affected is relatively small and most have sturdy fences and gates.
12. The delivery cost of this option was estimated to be £285,000 - £331,000.

### **A new option - 'Boviguard Invisible fencing'**

13. Since approval of the May 2011 report the 'Boviguard Invisible Fencing System' has been successfully trialled at Epping Forest. The system was tested both as an invisible fence and as a means of providing 'virtual cattle grids' on minor public roads.
14. The system consists of a simple cable loop, buried a few inches below ground through which a radio signal is transmitted. Livestock are fitted with a 'radio receiver' collar that picks up the signal in the loop when in close proximity. This signal is converted to audio as a first warning to the livestock that they are nearing the loop. If the livestock persist in approaching the loop the signal is then used to produce a small electric shock. Trials indicate that livestock soon learn to heed the audio signal.
15. I inspected the preliminary trials at Epping Forest and it became clear that there was cause for optimism about its long-term use for extensive grazing at Burnham Beeches. It was evident that the system has the potential to provide a viable alternative to the installation of traditional cattle grids.
16. The trials also indicated that not all situations would be suitable for its use, such as alongside busy 'A' roads or convoluted, indistinct woodland boundaries. In such complex situations it may be more appropriate to consider invisible fencing as part of package of solutions that also includes traditional fencing and grids.
17. However, the combination of a simple woodland boundary and the quiet, 'C' and 'Unclassified' roads that pass through the Beeches may allow the system to be used as the single solution to containing livestock on the site.
18. Under such circumstances the Boviguard system has many potential advantages when compared to traditional cattle grids and may to greatly simplify the delivery of the grazing expansion project at Burnham Beeches:

- The system is relatively quick to install with minimal disturbance to property, highways, road users and neighbours.
- Visual intrusion is limited to small ‘covered chambers’ for batteries, energisers etc.
- Noise pollution is zero – negating likely opposition to the scheme due to ‘cattle grid rumble’.
- Equipment and installation costs are low when compared to traditional fencing (at least 40% less expensive). Maintenance costs should also be low.
- Loops can be used as a cheap method of protecting boundaries to private property.
- Cattle can be excluded from dangerous sections of road reducing the risk of accident to livestock and road users.
- Additional loops can be installed to provide a back-up to reduce the risk of livestock escaping due to equipment failure.
- Expensive infrastructure associated with cattle grids such as such as additional access gateways and bypasses are not required.

19. There are however a number of technical and production issues that have been raised with the manufacturer who are now considering how best to:

- Improve the radio collars to ensure that they can withstand hard use.
- Improve the radio receivers to simplify monitoring when in use.

20. The above issues indicate that a phased approach to the use of invisible fencing at Burnham Beeches would be sensible. This would allow time to carry out further trials on the site and for the manufacture to improve the functionality of the equipment

**It is proposed that:**

21. Burnham Beeches adopts the ‘Boviguard system’ and develops its use in a phased manner, expanding over the Beeches during remaining 5 years of the Higher Level Stewardship Scheme.

22. This proposal replaces the cattle grid option previously agreed by this Committee in 2011. All other elements of that original proposal, such as the removal of existing internal fences and gates and reliance on neighbouring boundary fences, remain.
23. A large scale (15ha) trial of the invisible fencing system is carried out commencing September 2012. This would be achieved by the creation of an 'enclosure' at the North Eastern boundary of the site. This area has the advantage of being remote and contains a very quiet public road (fewer than 70 cars per day). The enclosure will include two virtual grids across that highway and two on Drives owned by the City. See maps 1 and 2.
24. If the trial proves successful then the 'Boviguard system' will be expanded in a phased manner at other locations (to be determined) on the Beeches during 2013.
25. The project is reviewed by this committee by November 2013 and considered for approval as the permanent method of livestock control across the whole of the site. NB. If trials are unsuccessful then it may be necessary to develop a hybrid scheme whereby the virtual grids and invisible fencing is used on areas of lowest risk with cattle grids associated furniture used elsewhere.
26. Your Superintendent continues to work closely with the Superintendent of Epping Forest and the equipment manufacturers to resolve technical and design issues as they arise.
27. Progress will be reported to this Committee at each stage of the project.

**Financial and Risk Implications**

28. It is estimated that the cost of designing and delivering the trials leading to 95% coverage of the site over the 5 year period will be as follows:

- Year 1 (2012) - creation of a single enclosure. £5,000
- Year 2 (2013) – creation of further enclosures. £15,000
- Year 3-5 2014/17) – expansion across the site. £20,000

**Total            £40,000**

29. The above costs will be refined as the project is developed but are expected to represent excellent value for money when compared to the cost of cattle grids and associated infrastructure.



30. The Superintendent will apply for 80% capital funding from Natural England's Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) scheme to fund the cost of installing the invisible fencing and virtual grids. The remaining 20% will be provided from local risk budgets. Delivery remains possible without external funding if necessary.
31. Once the grazing scheme is delivered across the site the HLS agreement will provide additional income of £23,000 per annum until 2018. This will be used to cover project related costs such as husbandry and livestock purchases.
32. Savings are also anticipated with regard to the costs currently associated with the maintenance of existing fences and gates which will be permanently removed from the site. It is anticipated that these savings will cover the maintenance costs of the invisible fencing.
33. Legal liability and highway issues, such as the maintenance of the cables crossing the public roads, remain to be resolved. These matters are currently under detailed consideration.
34. The options and costs for acquiring suitable livestock to graze the site will be investigated as the trials progress and will form part of the reporting process to this committee in 2013/14. Purchases are likely to be phased over a 2 – 3 year period and consist of no more than 15-20 additional animals in total. A review of husbandry requirements will also be carried out to ensure that the additional livestock continue to be managed to the required standards.
35. It is important to ensure that visitors, neighbours and other stake holders are kept informed of the scheme's progress and the potential impacts that the grazing project will have. It is proposed that the Superintendent carries out further consultation with local organisations and neighbours based on the timetable attached – Appendix 1.
36. It is also proposed that a marketing campaign is devised to inform site visitors of the detail of the scheme. This will be of the style adopted successfully for the recent introduction of car park charges at the site.

### **Access Implications**

37. Visitor access can often be hindered by physical obstructions such as cattle grids and associated bypasses and gateways; however because of the technology Boviguard utilises the City's Access Office has commented that he would positively welcome its installation. Such an improvement to the pedestrian environment would provide a safer area for all users, including

visually impaired and the less ambulant pedestrian or wheelchair user and as a result improve the usability and enjoyment of the area as a whole.

### **Legal Implications**

38. The installation of the Boviguard system shall require the Corporation to obtain a street works licence from the local highway authority under the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991. This is a largely administrative cost with some legal costs payable to the grantor of the licence. The licence for each highway location is required to enable the laying of cable apparatus in the public highway. In addition, the trial must include consultation with the local highway authority's engineers and traffic managers to evaluate a proportionate use of 'Boviguard', in place of cattle grids.

### **Property Implications**

39. The Superintendent will need to be responsible for ensuring that the implementation and use of the invisible fencing along with the subsequent animal grazing continues to be appropriate for the conservation of Burnham Beeches. In addition the operation of the trial should take place with minimal impact on any existing infrastructure or buildings located at the Beeches.

### **HR Implications**

40. There are no HR implications at this stage.

### **Strategic Implications**

41. The production of the management plan supports the 'Protect, promote and enhance the environment' and 'Support Communities' elements of the 'City Together Strategy'.
42. The plan to expand conservation grazing across Burnham Beeches is a key project within the Departmental Business plan.

### **Assessment of Sustainability Issues**

43. The provision of conservation grazing across Burnham Beeches will assist the City to:

#### **Economic**

- Prepare for and adapt to the likely impacts of climate change.
- Support local workforces, SME's and community activities.

## Environment

- Encourage best environmental practice in service delivery by the City Corporation, its stakeholders and contractors.
- Encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport.
- Improve or create habitats for wildlife.

## Social

- Enhance and encourage preventative health services, activities and education.
- Consult, inform and engage the community in decision making.
- Reduce crime and fear of crime.

44. An Equality Impact Assessment will be required on approval of this report.

## Consultees

45. The Town Clerk, Chamberlain, Comptroller and City Solicitor, City Surveyor and Access Officer have been consulted in the production of this report.

## Conclusion

46. The expansion of the current grazing scheme at Burnham Beeches to cover around 95% of the site is pressing in terms of ensuring that the City of London meets the requirements of Natural England to maintain the site in 'favourable condition'. Its implementation will bring long term benefits to neighbours, visitors and wildlife alike and help to ensure a sustainable future for the Beeches and the wider local landscape. The project also has the potential to further enhance the City's international reputation for excellence in open space management
47. The project has been designed in such a way as to test and develop the Boviguard system. If it proves successful then it will greatly reduce the project delivery and maintenance costs outlined in the cattle grid option presented for approval to this Committee in May 2011.
48. Consultation on the principle of expanding grazing across 95% of the Beeches was carried out in 2009 with a high level of support from visitors.
49. Funding (likely to be in the region of 80%) for the delivery of the scheme will be sought from Natural England via the higher Level Stewardship Scheme. Completion of the project will provide an additional income to the site of around £23,000 and this will be used to meet husbandry costs.

**Background Papers:**

Report to the EFCC. Burnham Beeches Management Plan 2010 - 2020. July 2010

Report to the EFCC. Expansion of conservation grazing at Burnham Beeches. May 2011.

**Appendices**

- Appendix 1. List of proposed consultees
- Map 1. Location of initial large scale trial

**Contact:**

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**List of people/organisations for consultation about the expansion of grazing** (note the first 10 people/organisations have already been consulted but will need an update regarding the virtual fencing)

Who to consult	Who?	How?	Target completion date
<b>Phase 1. Updates to key stakeholders, staff &amp; vols: January -April</b>			
City Surveyors	HR, AB	Email	Done
BBCG	MT	Updates at meetings	May
SBDC - Officers	AB	Send letter after meeting with BCC in January	June
SBDC - Members	HR, AB	Send letter after meeting with BCC in January	June
English Heritage	HR	Email Daniel Bashford	June
Portman-Burtley	HR, MH	Meeting or email to Andrew Allen	May
Burnham LAF	AB	Presentation at group meeting	June
Parish Councils	AB	Talk to Bill's PAG	June
National Trust	AB, HR	Meeting with John Waxman and/or Nigel Boden	May
Local Members of Parliament	AB/HR	Letter giving update & offer of a meeting	May
Staff	MT	Special meeting	Ongoing
Information volunteers	HR/CM	Update at their meeting	April/May/June
Open Spaces Society	HR	Meet with Nicola Hodgeson	July 2012
County archaeologist	HR	Email or speak to Sandy	July 2012
<b>Phase 3. Promote the project more widely: June - November</b>			
Start of general marketing of project	All staff & vols		June 2012- November 2012
Local equine owners/users	HR (AB, MH) + BHS rep	Meeting	June 2012- November 2012
DDA & Access groups	AB	Meet with Don Lindskog	June 2012- November 2012
Cyclists (sustrans)	HR/AB	Meet with Sustrans & local group	June 2012- November 2012
Other major user groups and event organisers (joggers, JAWS, Burnham joggers, Happy Herts,	MT	Meet with appropriate groups	June 2012- November 2012

Burnham Beeches Rotary Club etc.)			
CPRE	HR		June 2012- November 2012
Burnham Historians	HR	Talk	When situation arises
Special interest biological groups, county recorders etc	HR		When situation arises
Emergency services	MH	MH to decide when (also included in TfB Safety audit)	

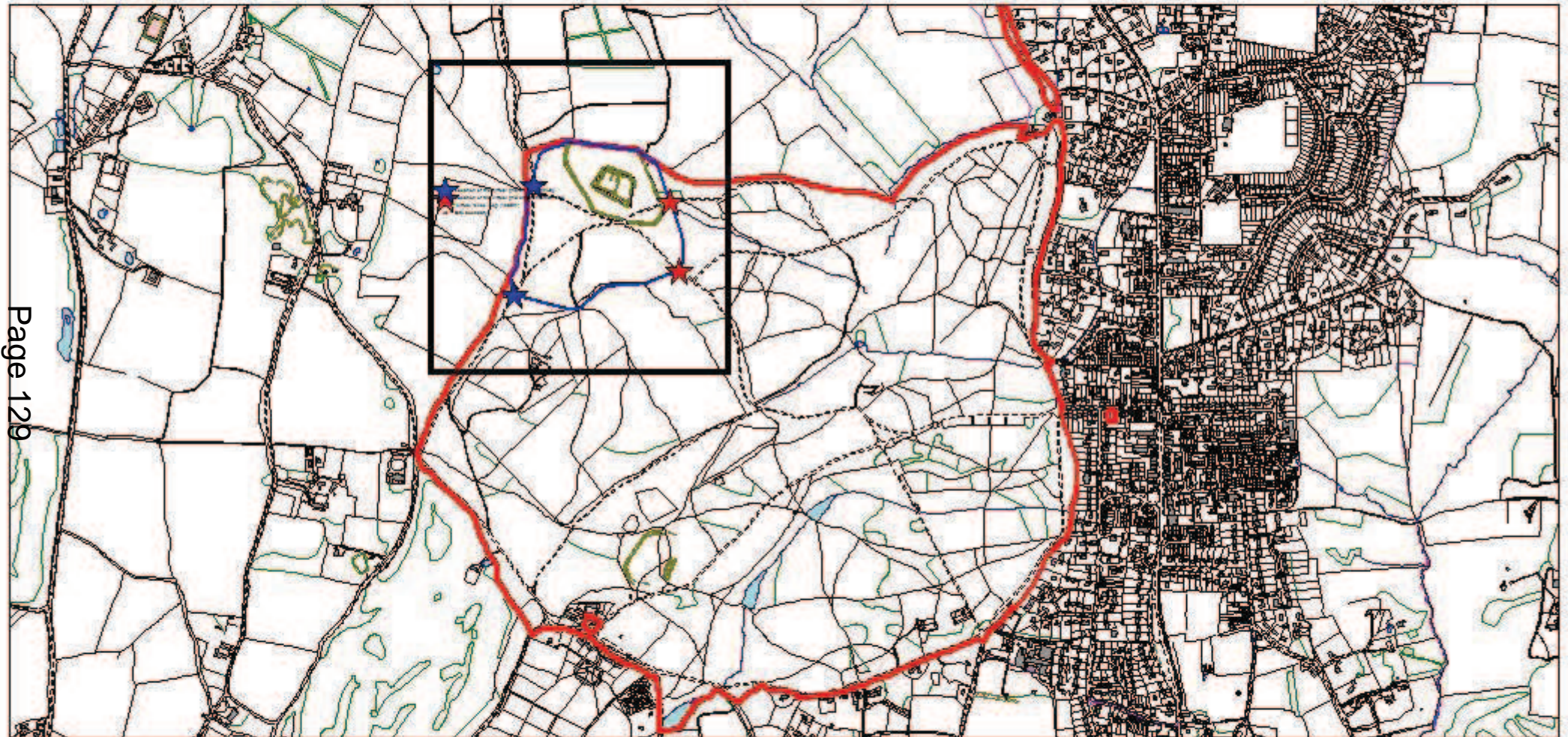


# Proposed Trial Grazing Area 2012

General location

Scale 1:15300

Burnham Beches  
Corporation of London  
Hawthorn Lane  
Farnham Common  
Bucks. SL2 3TE



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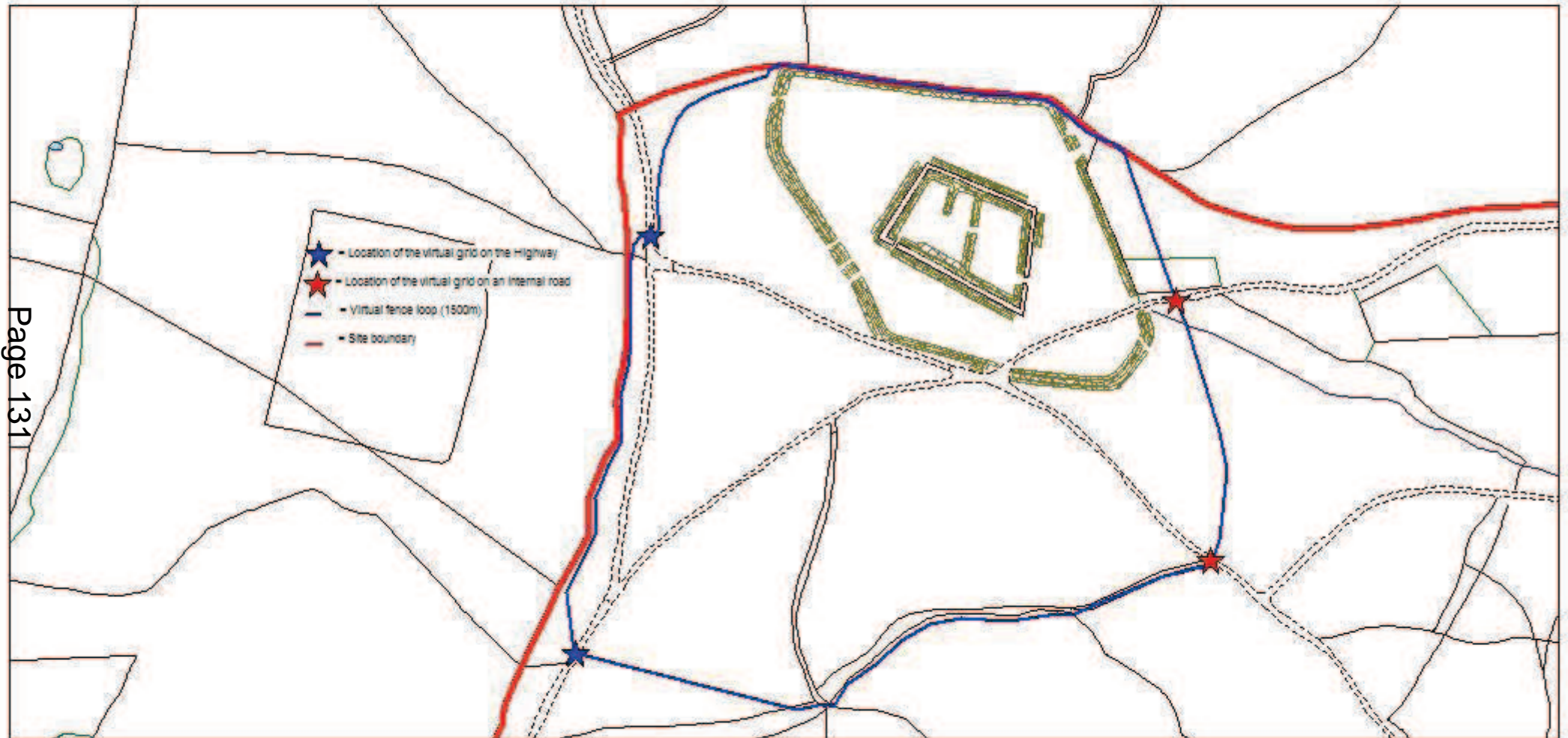


# Proposed Trial Grazing Area 2012

Detailed location

Scale 1:4000

Burnham Beches  
Corporation of London  
Hawthorn Lane  
Farnham Common  
Bucks. SL2 3TE



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<b>Committee(s):</b>	<b>Date(s):</b>	<b>Item no.</b>
Open Spaces	14 May 2012	
<b>Subject:</b> Visitor Numbers at Burnham Beeches		<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> The Burnham Beeches Conservation Officer		<b>For Information</b>

### Summary

- A full visitor count survey was carried out for Burnham Beeches in 2010/2011. This was a repeat of a similar exercise done in 2002/2003
- It is estimated that 585,106 visits to Burnham Beeches were made in 2010/2011 this is an increase of 2.4% on the previous count made in 2002/3. An estimated 215,502 dogs visits are made to the Beeches each year
- 85% of visits are made by adults. The majority of visitors arrive through the Lord Mayor's Drive east entrance by car. The number of visits made by cyclists and horses has decreased since the previous count.
- An average of 70 cars arrive through Lord Mayor's Drive east each hour at weekends and 37 per hour on week days.
- A model has been produced to enable automatic traffic counter data to be used to give an estimate of the number of visitors each year.

#### **Recommendations**

- to receive this report

### Main Report

#### **Background**

1. In 2002/3 an estimate of the numbers of visitors to Burnham Beeches was produced. The numbers of visitors entering by car and on foot were counted, and the data analysed at Manchester Metropolitan University and a final report produced. It was estimated that there were at least 560,000

visits made to Burnham Beeches per year at that time with a modelled estimate of 572,415 (taking into account bank holidays etc.).

2. This report presents the results of an updated survey to estimate the numbers of visitors to Burnham Beeches.

### **2010/2011 survey - methods**

3. A repeat survey was conducted during 2010/11 to gain an update of the number of visitors and to reflect changes to the management of the site since the last survey, notably:
  - The closure of the western end of Lord Mayor's Drive to traffic, stopping vehicles from driving through (rat running); a significant feature of the previous survey.
  - The closure of the café and toilets at the western end of Lord Mayor's Drive and the opening of the new café and visitor information point at Victory Cross
  - The closure of some smaller outlying car parks
4. In order to minimise the costs of the survey some changes were made to the original method. The number of entrances covered was reduced (for example where two pairs of entrances had previously yielded similar results); the counting days were split so that some were half days and the people doing the counting were entirely staff and volunteers rather than agency staff as was previously the case.
5. A pilot was carried out to check the methods and forms. 15 survey dates were then undertaken from October 2010 to August 2011. These covered all four seasons, weekdays, weekends and one bank holiday. Visitors were counted at five entrances. At the main entrance i.e. the east end of Lord Mayor's Drive, all vehicles were stopped and a count made of the occupants. All visitors were categorised as adult or child, their mode of transport noted (for example walking, bicycle, horse or wheelchair). The number of dogs with them was also recorded.
6. A permanent traffic counter loop was installed at the entrance to Lord Mayor's Drive east and data from this was used to obtain the number of vehicles accessing the Beeches each day of the year. From the manual counts the number of people per vehicle could be estimated on different days of the week and times of day so gaining a more accurate picture of the total number of visits.

7. Data entry to spreadsheets was undertaken by Burnham Beeches staff and volunteers.

### **2010/2011 survey - results**

8. It is estimated that 585,106 visits to Burnham Beeches were made in 2010-2011 this is an increase of 2.4% on the comparable number modelled in 2002-3 which was 571,415.
9. An estimated 215,502 dog visits are made to the Beeches each year, 50% of which are brought in cars which enter through Lord Mayor's Drive east. This is an increase of 67% on the estimated number of 128,921 in 2002-2003 at least partly due to the more accurate method of counting them (stopping cars and asking rather than just observing). However, the increase is noted and remains of potential concern.
10. The proportion of visitors arriving to the Beeches at Lord Mayor's Drive east has increased from 50% to 63%; this is largely due to the closure of Lord Mayor's Drive west to traffic.
11. Fewer visits are made on weekdays than weekends and bank holidays. The peak seasons are autumn and spring.
12. Over 85% of visits are made by adults. The majority arrive by car to Lord Mayor's Drive east (56%). 4% of adults and 5% of children arrive on bicycle; 0.02% of adults and 0.49% of children arrive on horses and 40% of adults and 35% of children arrive on foot or park in one of the outlying car parks and walk in through a smaller entrance. Some 0.32% of adults come in to Burnham Beeches in their wheelchairs (this is higher than the previous count and probably due to a small number of very regular visitors with electric models).
13. Several changes have been recognised from the previous counts made in 2002/3, aside from the overall increase in visitors and dogs. Bicycle usage and access by horse has declined whereas arrival at the site by wheel chair has increased.
14. The majority of vehicles driving into the Beeches are cars or 'people carriers'. Only one minibus and one coach were recorded during the surveys. Very few motorbikes were recorded. The number of vehicles servicing the site (e.g. café deliveries) averages at less than 1 per day.
15. On average there are 70 vehicles per hour entering the site through Lord Mayor's Drive east at weekends and 37 per hour on week days.

16. A model has been produced which uses the automatic traffic counter data to produce annual estimates in future.
17. The number of days with accurate counts was necessarily limited due to financial and time constraints, more days of counting would make the data more accurate, as would counting at all the smaller entrances but this was deemed impractical in terms of the resources available.

### **Use of the data and future proposals**

18. The data gathered has since been used to inform a report on the impact of local housing developments on Burnham Beeches and is likely to be quoted in a variety of documents both internal and external such as grant applications. The updated figure for the number of dogs being brought to the site will also provide valuable evidence in relation to the management of dog related incidents on Burnham Beeches.
19. This survey will be repeated in 2019-2020. Minor surveys may take place in the interim to reflect changes to the site as required.
20. The numbers of visitors to Stoke Common have not previously been counted but automatic counters have recently been installed on the gates, funded in part by a Higher Level Stewardship grant. In future years it should be possible to obtain estimates of visitor numbers to this reserve as well.

### **Financial and Risk Implications**

21. The cost of the external consultant in design of the project, design of recording sheets and database, training in data input, analysis of data and production of a final report was £4,000.
22. Staff time was required for management of the project, planning and managing staff and volunteers during the counting and data input. Staff time amounted to 410 hours (equivalent to £8,200) and the volunteers contributed 381 hours.

### **HR Implications**

23. Financial savings were made by using volunteers rather than agency staff, although they required more support from City of London staff. The process was managed by an Assistant Ranger but did require co-operation and involvement from all staff and had a minor impact on most staff workloads.

### **Strategic Implications**

24. This project is listed in the Burnham Beeches management plan and Open Spaces Business Plan.

## **Conclusion**

25. An updated estimate of the number of visitors to Burnham Beeches has been obtained, including information about the pattern of visiting time, how they travel to the reserve and how many dogs they bring with them. This information will be useful for future reports and grant applications and can be used to seek to influence visitor behaviour.

## **Contact:**

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## CITY COMMONS CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

29<sup>th</sup> February 2012

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CITY COMMONS CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE HELD AT MERLEWOOD ESTATE OFFICE ON WEDNESDAY 29<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2012 AT 6.30PM.**

### **Present**

#### **Members:**

Barbara Newman (Chairman)

Alderman Gordon Haines (Deputy Chairman)

Chris Baguley	Kenley Airfield Friends Group
Alan Clifford	Old Coulsdon Residents' Association
Gladys Edmonds	Wickham Common Residents Association
Robin Eve	City of London Corporation
Gwyneth Fookes	Bourne Society
Keith Harris	West Wickham Residents Association
Bridget Hogan	West Wickham and Spring Park Volunteers
Malcolm Jennings	Association of Croydon Conservation Societies
Graham Lomas	Friends of Farthing Downs
Sarah Lovatt	New Hillbillies Volunteers
John Matthews	West Wickham Residents' Association
Jane McLauchlin	Croydon Natural History & Scientific Society
Sylvia Moys	City of London Corporation
Cllr Steve O'Connell	London Borough of Croydon
Phil Rathbone	Croydon Conservation Volunteers
Cllr Neil Reddin	London Borough of Bromley
Avril Sleeman	British Horse Society
Cllr Hilary Turner	Tandridge District Council
Sam Wheatcroft	Wickham Common Residents Association

#### **Officers:**

Bob Warnock	Superintendent
Allan Cameron	Head Ranger
Paul Ritchie	Head Ranger
Steve Wise	Senior Ranger
Luke Barley	Ranger
Steve Bruce	Ranger
Maria Traynor	Support Services Officer

## **1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from: Rachel Adams, Dr Ian Waite, and Mark Green.

The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming Sam Wheatcroft of Wickham Common Residents Association and Graham Lomas from the Friends of Farthing Downs.

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

There were no declarations.

## **3. MINUTES**

The public minutes of the meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2011 were agreed.

### Matters Arising

The Chairman informed the meeting that the local plans for Coulsdon and Kenley Commons had been approved by the Epping Forest & Commons Committee.

## **4. HEAD RANGER UPDATE**

Allan Cameron reported on the Operational Team hi-lighting the following:

- Operational Team continues to be fully staffed.
- Completed year 1 of ESS programme of conservation work.
- Continued focus on gaining economies through combined tendering projects including: haymaking, tree safety and roadside working.
- Completion of significant project work which included: resurfacing Riddlesdown track, fencing at Farthing Downs, soak away constructed on Kenley Common and erosion control on Coulsdon Common.
- Pilot Green Flag Inspection in December 2012 and the submission of 2012/13 applications had been completed.
- Currently, the team were updating Health & Safety systems particularly in relation to the: appointment and control of contractors, risk assessments, safe systems of work, certificates of competency & training records, supervision and routine spot checks.

### **Q. What is classed as an accident?**

Paul Ritchie responded an accident is an incident or occurrence where harm to people or damage to property has happened or could have happened.

### **Q. If Green Flag is awarded to the City of London Corporation will each site get a flag?**

Allan Cameron responded yes they would.

**Q.** Will the health & safety have an impact on the targets you wish to achieve?

Allan Cameron responded stating he hoped that it would not have an impact fundamentally on what the team wished to achieve.

**Q.** Are there any direct implications to the volunteers with regard to the implementation of the health & safety systems?

Allan Cameron responded stating there will be no cuts to what the volunteers are due to do.

## **5. REPORTS OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF THE CITY COMMONS**

### **a) Work Programme 2012/13**

The Senior Rangers gave the following updates.

#### Farthing Down and New Hill

- Chaldon Way – North Entrance Landscaping
- Farthing Downs – Rotational Scrub cutting in three areas
- 13 Acre Bury – Scrub clearance for grassland restoration

**Q.** What is the impact of halo release on the yew trees?

Steve Bruce responded that we would take out the taller specimens of other species of tree so that it would thin the canopy out making it more open for the yew trees.

**Q.** Are there any plans to create a more accessible route from the Mead Way entrance along the boundary as it is particularly steep?

Steve Bruce responded that it will be looked at in the future for pedestrian access but it would involve significant earth works for this access to take place. An alternative route for walkers is currently available.

**Q.** Will the removal of the trees in relation to the bridleway have an impact on the deer on Farthing Downs?

Steve Bruce responded that we have considerable numbers of deer on Farthing Downs and New Hill and they will use other wooded areas to take cover in and the woodland work will create more open areas for browsing.

**Q.** Are you going to clear all the trees marked on the map?

Steve Bruce responded yes, this is scrub that has established on an area that has been designated to be restored to species rich grassland.

**Q.** Do we consider wildlife habitat used by deer when planning work?

Allan Cameron responded stating on Farthing Downs we only get Roe deer and they are naturally attracted to areas where we have completed scrub clearance for browsing particularly on bramble *rubus fruticosus*.

### Coulsdon Common

- Coppicing Rydons Wood
- Clear new fence line route to extend wood pasture at The Grove.
- Clear fence lines and repair the fence at the Maze.

### Kenley Common

- Coppice willow in July/Aug for purple emperor butterfly
- Coppicing
- Scrub clearance

**Q.** When is the fence at the Maze to go?

Steve Wise responded stating it is to stay for now, at a later date we will consult on the future arrangements for grazing this area of Coulsdon Common.

**Q.** How durable are wood chippings for surfacing?

Steve Wise responded that you have to put a base in for drainage and then put the chippings on top otherwise they are not very good.

**Q.** What is the rotation of the coppice work?

Steve Wise responded every 16 years.

### Spring Park

- Hedge weeding with volunteers
- Pond maintenance
- Half the coppicing completed
- Links with local scout groups
- Queen Diamond Jubilee – Providing a stand to promote volunteer opportunities at a local event being organised by the Residents Association.
- Small Leaf Lime trees

**Q.** What further work will be involved with regard to the small leaf lime trees?

Luke Barley responded informing the meeting that there had been a subtle variation to the coppice regime to promote the small leaf lime trees and that an overriding management principle had been adopted to promote the resilience of the resource.

Bridget Hogan took this opportunity to inform the meeting of a Charcoal Burn taking place in Chaney Wood on 7<sup>th</sup> March. Everyone is welcome to attend.

**Q.** What has happened to the trees that were infected?

Luke Barley responded informed the meeting that all infected trees had been felled, but the majority of coppice stools had grown back infection free.

**Q.** Did the infection from the sweet chestnuts spread to other sites?

Luke Barley responded No, the phytophthora is found naturally in trees and woodland, and tends to be a problem when mature trees under stress such as where soils are too dry and lack nutrients like at Spring Park.

**Q.** Are you finding small leaf lime seedlings?

Luke Barley responded yes they are.

#### Riddlesdown

- Fencing project linking grazing areas
- Riddlesdown Fun Day
- Primary school visits
- Continuation of works on Famet

#### West Wickham Common

- New Oak Barway to be installed
- Weed heathland
- 15 oak pollards – replace the fencing around them
- Link with primary schools is being maintained

**Q.** Has the heather on West Wickham Common continued to progress?

Luke Barley responded stating it had and that they were very happy with the progress of restoring heathland.

**Q.** Has a decision been made regarding what to do with the damage on the corner of Hartfield Crescent?

Luke Barley responded stating that at the moment we are trialling timber posts on Stites Hill Road on Coulsdon Common to see if they resolve the problem of vehicles overrunning the corners of junctions. If they are successful we will install them at Hartfield Crescent.

## **6. KEY PROJECTS**

Paul Ritchie gave the following update:

### **Quality – Planning & Monitoring our work**

- All 7 Commons have new local plans in place to show that we are doing up to 2020.
- Making minor changes to the layout of plans for our SSSIs at Ashtead Common, Farthing Downs and Riddlesdown to reflect Environmental Stewardship Scheme (ESS) agreement.
- We have monitoring framework in place with system for tracking how meeting our targets.

### **Inclusion – our Visitor Survey**

- Total annual visits 903,496 across City Commons

- 75-80% of visitors are physically active: dog walking, walking, cycling or running.
- Visitor profile generally close to profile of residents in our catchment areas (2km)
- People with observable disabilities – absent
- Only small increase in visits at weekends (unusual)

### **Environment – conserving habitats & landscapes**

- Biodiversity conservation – ESS prescriptions and 10- year work programmes built into operational plans.
- We are creating Biodiversity Conservation Plans to collate all our research about wildlife
- Heritage conservation – applications submitted for Green Heritage Conservation Awards at Ashtead Common and Kenley Common.
- We are creating Heritage Conservation Plans to collate all our research about archaeology.
- We have delivered all our Local Improvement Plan objectives.

### **Promotion – our communication Strategy**

- In light of the changes to COLC website and need for more electronic communication we are reviewing the City Commons Newsletter and What's New publications.

### **People – promoting our Volunteers**

- 10,000 volunteer hours achieved in 2009/10
- 28% increase in volunteer hours in 2011/12
- Volunteer Leader training day October 5<sup>th</sup> 2011
- Volunteer Policy & Induction Pack has been prepared
- Volunteer Improvement Group – volunteer representatives are being sought

**Q.** Would any of the volunteers like to represent the volunteers on the Volunteer Working Group?

Yes, the three volunteers Sarah Lovatt, Phil Rathbone and Bridget Hogan responded asking for the invitation to be emailed to them, they would attend if possible depending on time of day.

**Q.** How had we got to the 28% with regard to the increase in volunteer hours?

Paul Ritchie responded informing the meeting that he had got to that figure using the volunteer hours figures provided monthly from our performance tracker.

**Q.** Alderman Haines enquired whether with regard to Consultation Strategy we were using the new IT software which saves a huge amount of time?

Paul Ritchie responded that we are aware of the new system and Epping Forest had used it with some success. Whilst we were ensuring we referred to the model

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) created at Epping Forest we were looking to create a more deliverable version for City Commons

**Q.** Have there been any archaeology publications published?

Paul Ritchie responded that there will be a project to interpret the finds of Wessex Archaeology, but we are unable to circulate the research we have in its current format.

## **7. FRIENDS' GROUPS UPDATES**

### **a) Kenley Airfield Friends Group**

Chris Baguley gave a verbal update regarding the Heritage Lottery Application informing the meeting that the group are very optimistic that the application will be successful although it is early days. The Friends have put together a power point presentation for any interested organisations.

Kenley Airfield Heritage Day will be on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2012

**Q.** What has happened to the interpretation panels on the wing at the Tribute? The wood is drying out at the moment but will be put back out on Kenley soon.

### **b) Friends of Farthing Downs**

Graham Lomas gave a verbal update:

Graham Lomas introduced himself as the new Chairman of the Friends of Farthing Downs.

The group was set up 5 years ago initially being very informal. This last year they have become more formal and recently had their AGM. Every month an activity has been arranged and Graham Lomas circulated a draft of the events diary for this year to everyone at the meeting. Although they had recently had two resignations from the group they had, had three new people who were interested in joining.

**Q.** Have you put in a bid to the Community Infrastructure Levy?

Graham Lomas responded that they have not, but he will look into it.

## **8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**Q.** Do we have the Fun Day dates?

All event dates will be published in the City Commons Newsletter which is soon to be published.

**Q.** Malcolm Jennings informed the meeting that the leaflet “Green Croydon for All” needs to be re-printed and made a request for funding of this from this group. The costs for this have been estimated at £800.00 for a re-print of 2500.

Bob Warnock responded stating he would look into the possibility of funding.

**Q.** Have the Open Spaces Department of the City of London Corporation been in consultation with the Green Grid?

Bob Warnock responded stating we have made a substantial contribution and once we have the report it will be made available.

Bridget Hogan passed on a message of thanks from the volunteers stating the volunteers had felt they were receiving more support and a positive attitude towards them.

Alderman Haines informed the meeting that this would be the Chairman’s last meeting and would like to thank her for all the hard work she had put in over the years.

**9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**RESOLVED:** That the next meeting be held at the Merlewood Estate Office on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> October 2012 at 6:30pm. Tea, coffee, juice and sandwiches will be available from 6:00pm.

**The meeting closed at 8:30**

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**CHAIRMAN**



# Agenda Item 27

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 3, 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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# Agenda Item 28

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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# Agenda Item 29

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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