

# **HIGHGATE WOOD CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**2013-2023  
REVIEWED 2018**

## **SECTION D: CONSERVATION STRATEGY, OBJECTIVES AND ACTION PLAN**

# 1 Vision and Policies

- 1.1 This section of the report takes forward the findings of the preceding sections of this CMP to formulate a vision and management policies for Highgate Wood. The management policies are illustrated in **Figure 10.1: Masterplan**. The Masterplan should be read in conjunction with the woodland management proposals set out in the Highgate Wood Woodland Management Plan (2018) and as shown in **Figure 10.2: Highgate Wood Woodland Management Plan - selected specific management proposals**.

## PUBLIC CONSULTATION

- 1.2 Visitors to Highgate Wood were given the opportunity to comment on the proposals for the conservation and management of the Woods during two public consultation events held on 2<sup>nd</sup> September and 20<sup>th</sup> October 2012. Draft versions of the masterplan, vision and management policies for the Wood were displayed near to the café. Visitors were encouraged to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with each of the proposals. The response from the event was very positive with the results revealing that the majority of respondents were supportive the proposals for Highgate Wood. A full breakdown of the results from the consultation events is provided in **Appendix 8**.

## VISION FOR HIGHGATE WOOD

- 1.3 The vision for Highgate Wood describes the direction for the Management team to follow and is supported by the site wide policies as identified in the tables below.

To ensure the continuity of Highgate Wood as a managed Ancient Woodland site, whilst maintaining its reputation as a safe environment for relaxation, recreation and education. This special character, combining with heritage features, and conservation value will be conserved and enhanced for the benefit of current and future generations.

## SITE WIDE POLICIES

- 1.4 The following site wider policies have been developed and reviewed following the public consultation events.
- 1.5 Status is provided for each policy as follows:
- Short term: 2015/16
  - Medium term: 2016/17 to 2018/19
  - Long term: 2018/19 to 2022/23
  - In process
  - Achieved

## HERITAGE

| Policy I: Heritage |  | Responds to issue, vulnerability or opportunity | Status     |            |             |           | Achieved |
|--------------------|--|---|------------|------------|-------------|-----------|----------|
|                    |  |   | In process | Short term | Medium term | Long term |          |
| Policy I(a)        | <p>Conserve all earthworks through gradual vegetation removal, fencing and interpretation. On-going maintenance of the earthworks will be required.</p> <p><b>Achievements since 2013:</b> New Conservation area of 2012 provided protection of central part of the major earthwork structure (approximately 150 metres) and stabilized erosion. Area will remain fenced off until 2020. Parts of the fence could be left in situ after 2020 to reduce further damage to earthwork profile.</p>  | I(c)<br>2012 Conservation area                  |            |            |             | ✓         |          |
| Policy I(b)        | <p>Mark out all archaeological features and provide relevant education and training to management staff.</p> <p><b>Achievements since 2013:</b> Arboricultural landscape historian provided a series of woodland archaeology classes in 2013 and several Highgate Wood staff attended.</p>   | I(d)  |            |            |             | ✓         |          |
| Policy I(c)        | <p>Seek to extend the education centre to allow for the return of the Roman Kiln structures and display new information about the origin of the earthworks. An initial options appraisal for the extension of the education centre appears in <b>Appendix 9</b> of this Plan.</p> <p><b>Achievements since 2013:</b> The Highgate Wood Roman Kiln HLF bid was submitted in July 2015 but was unfortunately unsuccessful. A Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) was registered with the Charities Commission in 2017 and was registered in March 2018. The Charity, 'Friends of the Highgate Roman Kiln' (FOHRK) are now raising funds for a second bid and have commissioned a draft report in preparation for the bid.</p> | I(f)<br>FOHRK<br>HLF Bid 2013                   | ✓          |            |             | ✓         |          |
| Policy I(d)        | <p>Explore further opportunities for interpretation and education and develop a heritage themed programme of events throughout the year.</p> <p><b>Achievements since 2013:</b> The annual Community Heritage Days have been themed around woodland craft, and products and where possible we have also tried to introduce the heritage theme. A long standing member of the HWCG and the Highgate Society provides a series of historical walks in Highgate Wood every year.</p>  | I(f)<br>Heritage/historical walks               |            |            |             |           | ✓        |

|             |   |      |   |  |  |   |  |
|-------------|---|------|---|--|--|---|--|
| Policy 1(e) | <p>Strengthen links with English Heritage and the Museum of London to explore avenues for future projects e.g. selective excavation and dating of earthworks.</p> <p><b>Achievements since 2013:</b> The Museum of London supported the previous HLF bid for the return of the Roman Kiln to Highgate Wood, but following the unsuccessful bid the original Working Group was disbanded. With the creation of the FOHRK (see above) it is hoped that this will refocus resources on the woodland archaeology and excavate some of the principal earthwork features.</p> | 1(h) | ✓ |  |  | ✓ |  |
|-------------|---|------|---|--|--|---|--|

## NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

| Policy 2: Natural Environment |  | Responds to issue, vulnerability or opportunity        | Status  |            |             |           | Achieved |
|-------------------------------|--|--|---------|------------|-------------|-----------|----------|
|                               |  |  | Ongoing | Short term | Medium term | Long term |          |
| Policy 2(a)                   | <p>Develop a prescriptive management strategy to guide the conservation of the oak and hornbeam population over the next 10 years and beyond.</p> <p><b>Achievements since 2013:</b> A new Woodland Management Plan was drafted and presented to the Highgate Consultative Group in May 2018. This compliments the current Conservation Management Plan, providing a more detailed description of the current woodland management, creating a series of new compartments and establishing prescriptions for future woodland management going forward 2027/8. The vision and objectives mirror those in the Conservation Management Plan. The new Woodland Management Plan also addresses more recent issues such as Climate Change and Biosecurity.</p>                  | 2(b)<br>Woodland Management Plan 2017-2027             |         |            |             |           | ✓        |
| Policy 2(b)                   | <p>Work closely with other City of London Open Spaces, the Forestry Commission and other tree health organisations to plan and protect against present and forthcoming tree disease threats.</p> <p><b>Achievements since 2013:</b> With the arrival of Oak Processionary Moth (OPM) on Hampstead Heath in 2015, and in Queen's Wood in 2017 OPM surveys were carried out. In Highgate Wood from 2016 onwards, including by independent surveyors commissioned by the Forestry Commission. In June 2018 the first OPM nests were found in Highgate Wood and have subsequently been removed but will undoubtedly return next year in 2019. Work also continues to monitor oak decline within the oak population and in 2017 an external consultant provided advice on</p> | 2(d)<br>Started in 2010 and ongoing Oak decline survey |         |            |             |           | ✓        |

| Policy 2: Natural Environment |   | Responds to issue, vulnerability or opportunity | Status  |            |             |           | Achieved |
|-------------------------------|---|---|---------|------------|-------------|-----------|----------|
|                               |   |   | Ongoing | Short term | Medium term | Long term |          |
|                               | potential new sites for conservation areas which have been followed up.   |   |         |            |             |           |          |
| Policy 2(c)                   | <p>Promote research opportunities with students or post graduates with a focus on vulnerabilities of woodland species, in particular the decline of the oak standards.</p> <p><b>Achievements since 2013:</b> A Research Fellow at the Institute of Zoology at Regents Park (ZSL) conducted a survey of hedgehogs during the summer in 2017, in and around greater North London, from Alexandra Palace, Highgate and Queen's Woods, parts of Hampstead Heath, and then Regent's Park. The aim is to find out where hedgehogs still live in our parks and neighbouring gardens and use this information to better understand how we might be able to improve conditions for our urban hedgehogs. The Ecology Team assisted with the survey in Highgate Wood during June using a network of cameras installed across the site. Numbers of hedgehog sightings have dropped dramatically since 2012, so the single hedgehog sighting during the four week survey was not really a great surprise. Golder's Hill Park in contrast has a thriving population and may be an important refuge site for this threatened species. The ZSL survey has also provided opportunities to monitor the fox population and this is now the subject of a separate PhD project.</p> | <p>2(d)</p> <p>Oak decline survey</p>           |         |            |             |           | ✓        |
| Policy 2(d)                   | <p>Strengthen links with London Borough of Haringey and consider opportunities to create and enhance 'green corridors' and coordinate habitat management across local Ancient Woodland sites and raise awareness of this vulnerable habitat.</p> <p><b>Achievements since 2013:</b> The main focus here has been on trying to save individual ancient or veteran trees in the immediate area threatened by development, subsidence claims or safety issues. In 2015 a joint action formed by members of Haringey Council, the Highgate Wood Consultative Group (HWCG), the Highgate Wood Manager, and the owners of an exceptional ancient hornbeam off Highgate North Hill, once part of Highgate Wood managed to save it from being felled due to alleged subsidence. The hornbeam was protected with a TPO and the case went to appeal as Haringey upheld the TPO. Sadly in 2016 a further attempt to save an oak in a rear garden in Church Road, also a survivor of the long lost southern part of Highgate Wood was not successful and the tree was felled. The</p>   | <p>2(e)</p> <p>Working on OPM management</p>    | ✓       |            |             |           |          |

| Policy 2: Natural Environment |   | Responds to issue, vulnerability or opportunity                           | Status  |            |             |           | Achieved |
|-------------------------------|---|---|---------|------------|-------------|-----------|----------|
|                               |   |   | Ongoing | Short term | Medium term | Long term |          |
|                               | Highgate Wood Manager and Tree Officer hosted a London Tree Officer's Seminar in 2017 at Kenwood House, which highlighted the plight of veteran and historic trees in the Highgate area to raise awareness of the loss of these irreplaceable trees.  |   |         |            |             |           |          |
| Policy 2(e)                   | <p>Manage and expand the existing coppice areas and seek opportunities to create new areas.</p> <p><b>Achievements since 2013:</b> The latest Conservation area created in 2017 is next to the 2012 area, with the intention of creating a larger area and allowing coppicing operations in the 2017 area to increase light levels in the 2012 conservation area. This was part of a number of recommendations made to the Highgate Wood Team in March 2017 by an external Woodland Consultant based in South London. We have also carried out a series of smaller conservation areas in 2017 and 2018 focusing on hornbeam coppice that has been badly bark stripped.</p>  | <p>2(f)</p> <p>Consultation of coppicing. 2017 area next to 2012 area</p> |         |            |             |           | ✓        |
| Policy 2(f)                   | <p>Monitor the oak standard population as a keystone species, prolong its longevity and continue restocking operations.</p> <p><b>Achievements since 2013:</b> The oak decline survey started in 2010 continues every summer and in 2019 will complete its tenth year. The survey results presented to the HWCG in May 2018 based on data collected between 2011 and 2017 showed two scenarios, a complete loss of the existing stock of mature and veteran status oaks by 2120, or a more gradual model showing steady loss over the next two hundred years. After nine years we now have data which gives us a much greater understanding of the extent and rate of decline and more latterly regeneration, but the surveys real value will be in another 10 years and beyond. Restocking is taking place including the planting of Hampstead Heath oaks in the 2017 Conservation area, and we are also raising seedling oaks on site to plant out later this year.</p> | <p>2(h)</p> <p>As above. Now using oak seedlings from HH</p>              |         |            |             |           | ✓        |

| <b>Policy 2: Natural Environment</b> |   | Responds to issue, vulnerability or opportunity     | Status  |            |             |           | Achieved |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|---------|------------|-------------|-----------|----------|
|                                      |   |   | Ongoing | Short term | Medium term | Long term |          |
| Policy 2(h)                          | <p>Encourage the Conservation and Arboricultural Staff on Hampstead Heath to become involved in the management of the Wood and explore the possibilities of learning from other CoL sites.</p> <p><b>Achievements since 2013:</b> With the arrival of OPM on Hampstead Heath in 2015 and the increasing frequency of severe weather events in the last 5 years, the Tree Team now visit Highgate Wood monthly, sometimes more often. The Tree Team provide opportunities for the Highgate Team to work at other City of London Open Spaces, notably Burnham Beeches, and Epping Forest, and develop their knowledge and understanding of woodland management and tree safety. In 2017 The Highgate Wood Team also visited a managed woodland in Croydon to develop ideas which could be applied in Highgate Wood.</p> | <p>2(c)</p> <p>HH Tree Team visiting HW monthly</p> |         |            |             |           | ✓        |

## COMMUNITY AND RECREATION

| <b>Policy 3: Community and recreation</b> |  | Responds to issue, vulnerability or opportunity | Timing  |            |             |           | Achieved |
|---|--|---|---------|------------|-------------|-----------|----------|
|   |  |   | Ongoing | Short term | Medium term | Long term |          |
| Policy 3(a)                               | <p>Build on existing relationships with the local community and stakeholders to form a dedicated Friends of Highgate Wood group formed around a core group of volunteers.</p> <p>Develop volunteering activities through Heath Hands and increase sessions.</p> <p><b>Achievements since 2013:</b> No Friends of Highgate Wood has been formed, but significant progress on developing and increasing Heath Hands involvement in conservation work and woodland management have been made in Highgate Wood since 2013. There were 20 Heath Hands sessions in 2013/14, and in 2017/18 the number of sessions had increased to 28, with a total of 598 volunteer hours recorded. There has been a steady increase in size of the group, and most sessions now have anything up to 12 volunteers attending.</p> | 3(a) and (q)                                    | ✓       |            |             |           |          |



|                  |  |   |  |  |  |   |   |
|------------------|--|---|--|--|--|---|---|
| Policy 3(b)      | <p>Improve links with young people and youth community groups.</p> <p><b>Achievements since 2013:</b> Further attempts have been made to include local schools, primary and secondary on the HWCG including this year during the Spring and Summer period, but without success. Fortismere have been proactive in trying to support the Highgate Wood Team with large number of pupils visiting the site during the GCSE period, but there has been no interest in taking this further and involving them with HWCG.</p>   | 3(c)  |  |  |  | ✓ |   |
| ✓<br>Policy 3(c) | <p>Explore opportunities to host events that raise the awareness of the UK's woodland heritage and its vulnerability.</p> <p><b>Achievements since 2013:</b> The Highgate Wood annual walks programme includes a number of walks where the public are made aware of the vulnerability of the woodland environment is highlighted. This has become more apparent in the last 5 years with the increasing visitor numbers and level of activities both licensed and non-licensed. The Highgate Wood Manger has also presented a number of Seminars on Ancient Woodland and its importance to the Hampstead Heath Consultative Group and also other London Tree and Woodland Professionals.</p>   | 3(f)<br>Community Heritage Day                    |  |  |  |   | ✓ |
| Policy 3(d)      | <p><b>Achievements since 2013:</b> This has not been achieved for a number of reasons; poor quality of walking surface especially in the winter months, and conflicting priorities.</p>  | 3(h)  |  |  |  | ✓ |   |
| Policy 3(e)      | <p>Explore options to resolve conflicts between sports people and those enjoying the field area on weekends.</p> <p><b>Achievements since 2013:</b> This issue seems to have largely diminished. There were a number of incidents involving footballers and dogwalkers, but after challenging some of the teams about unrelated bad behaviour this issue has disappeared.</p>  | 3(k)  |  |  |  |   | ✓ |
| Policy 3(f)      | <p>Explore feasibility of increasing charges for hiring out the facilities and explore all avenues for marketing and income generation. The charitable status of the organisation should be highlighted.</p> <p><b>Achievements since 2013:</b> There are now 8 organisations or individuals paying to use Highgate Wood. In 2017 these activities were collectively generating £15,383.00 which nearly three times more than the revenue from the cricket and football bookings. The current fees and charges are in the process of being reviewed and the opportunity for increasing income should be considered, but also needs to be approached with some caution as large increases may force some current users to go elsewhere.</p> | 3(m)<br>Licenced activities increased with income |  |  |  |   | ✓ |

|             |  |  |  |  |  |  |   |
|-------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|---|
| Policy 3(g) | <p>Promote public access but ensure careful monitoring of visitor numbers and restrict access to sensitive ecologically and archaeologically sensitive areas.</p> <p><b>Achievements since 2013:</b> This is the subject of considerable discussion at present; and was raised at the HWCG meeting in 2017 and 2018. Visitor number have increased significantly since 2013, with the growing popularity of forest schools and other activities attracting 3138 additional visitors (mainly children) in 2017. The two most frequent activities are a pre-school nursery group and a forest school and they use specific areas in the woodland that are monitored for tree safety and ground compaction.</p> | 3(o)   |  |  |  |  | ✓ |
| Policy 3(h) | <p>Increase knowledge of and links to Queen's Wood through use of signage, websites, leaflets, maps and electronic information.</p> <p><b>Achievements since 2013:</b> Highgate Wood have strengthened the links with Queen's Wood, and have been involved in Bat Walks, and a series of walks comparing Queen's Wood and Highgate Wood, looking at Geology, Natural Regeneration and a forthcoming walk on Oak decline. Queen's Wood volunteers have a stall at Community Heritage Day every year to promote the Friends of Queen Wood and recruit new members.</p>   | <p>3(g)</p> <p>Dual walks introduced in 2017</p> |  |  |  |  | ✓ |

## BUILT ENVIRONMENT

| Policy 4: Built environment   |   |   | Timing  |            |             |           | Achieved |
|---|---|---|---------|------------|-------------|-----------|----------|
|   |   |   | Ongoing | Short term | Medium term | Long term |          |
| <p>The condition and appearance of existing buildings will be maintained and the setting of key heritage features such as the Fountain and the Lodge will be enhanced. Infrastructure and site furniture will be maintained and rationalised where possible and high-quality design and materials appropriate to the woodland setting will be used throughout. There will be a general assumption against further built development unless it is deemed to have no negative impact upon the heritage, ecology or enjoyment of the site and it is of outstanding architectural design or the benefits it delivers are of sufficient merit.</p> |   | Responds to issue, vulnerability or opportunity |         |            |             |           |          |
| Policy 4(a)   | <p>Investigate options to create a small car park for visitors with mobility difficulties close to Onslow Gate.</p> <p><b>Achievements since 2013:</b> This has been the subject of considerable debate and due to several regular visitors with disabilities expressing their opposition to the proposal, the proposal has not been followed up.</p> | 4 (a) and (d)                                   |         |            |             | ✓         |          |
| Policy 4(b)   | Re-configure the layout of the existing café building to improve kitchen facilities and to  | 4(b)  |         |            |             | ✓         |          |

|             |   |                             |   |  |   |   |  |
|-------------|---|-----------------------------|---|--|---|---|--|
|             | <p>increase the capacity for indoor dining.</p> <p><b>Achievements since 2013:</b> The installation of a kiosk serving light snacks and refreshments has helped capacity issues.</p>  |                             |   |  |   |   |  |
| Policy 4(c) | <p>Rationalise vehicle deliveries and restrict vehicle movements throughout the site.</p> <p><b>Achievements since 2013:</b> In June 2017 the vehicle gates at Onslow entrance were converted over to an electric system, with remote opening and closing controlled by the Highgate Wood Team. This has had a major impact on vehicle deliveries to the café and prevents vehicles entering the site without authorisation. A large secure storage box has been installed just inside Onslow gate so that café deliveries can be dropped off without having to drive into the site. In addition, a post box has been installed on the gates so that Royal Mail can drop off post without needing to drive into the Wood. These measures collectively have reduced vehicle movements and improved the experience of visitors visiting the site.</p> | 4(a)<br>Electronic gates    |   |  |   |   |  |
| Policy 4(d) | <p>Promote access for all and ensure existing provision is DDA compliant.</p> <p><b>Achievements since 2013:</b> In August and September of 2013 we asked for advice from the Head of the City of London's Access Team, who visited the site and made a number of recommendations. The map on the Highgate Wood Website was revised to show which gates are accessible to those with mobility problems, and highlighted the Onslow Gate for those using mobility scooters which have a wider wheel base than standard wheelchairs.</p>  | 4 (d) and (e)               | ✓ |  |   |   |  |
| Policy 4(e) | <p>Improve environmental performance of buildings throughout the wood e.g. insulation of lodges, updating heating systems and photovoltaic installation.</p> <p><b>Achievements since 2013:</b> In September 2013 a new 7.68Kw photovoltaic installation was commissioned installed by City Surveyors. This system is now used to charge an electric vehicle, and a series of other battery operated tools, including a hedge trimmer, leaf blower, and small chainsaws. The installation generates an average 5,500kw annually.</p>  | 4(f)<br>PVs on Machine shed |   |  |   | ✓ |  |
| Policy 4(f) | <p>Increase the range of play equipment to cater for children in the 7 – 10 age group.</p> <p><b>Achievements since 2013:</b> Several new play units installed since 2013.</p>  | 4(g)                        |   |  | ✓ |   |  |



