

Committees:	Dates:
Epping Forest & Commons	6 July 2020
Open Spaces & City Gardens	14 July 2020
West Ham Park	14 July 2020
Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queens Park	9 September 2020
Subject: Open Spaces Departmental Business Plan 2019/20 – Year End performance report	Public
Report of: Colin Buttery – Director, Open Spaces	For information
Report author: Gerry Kiefer, Open Spaces	

Summary

This report provides Members with a review of the Open Spaces Department's delivery of its 2019/20 Business Plan. The report provides examples of some of the activities the Department undertook which helped achieve the Department's three top line objectives: 'Open Spaces and Historic Sites are Thriving and Accessible', 'Spaces Enrich People's Lives' and 'Business Practices are Responsible and Sustainable'.

The report identifies the level of achievement against performance measures with only one performance measure not achieved. Financially the services that report through the Open Spaces Committees have managed their income and expenditure well with only a small net underspend mainly due to goods not received due to COVID19 and for which carry forward requests have been made. The income generation target of £4.7M was overachieved by 2%.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report

Main Report

Background

1. The Open Spaces & City Gardens Committee approved the Departmental Business Plan 2019/20 (Appendix 2) on 8 April 2019.
2. The Department's Vision is: *we enrich people's lives by enhancing and providing access to ecologically diverse open spaces and outstanding heritage assets across London and beyond.*
3. The Business Plan identified three main objectives under which sit twelve outcomes which are set out on page one of the Business Plan (Appendix 2)

Current Position

4. Detailed information about achievements and performance in relation to services which sit outside the responsibility of Open Spaces Committees will be reported separately.

Delivering our Objectives and Outcomes

5. The business plan identified several departmental activities that would help achieve the Departments three top line objectives. Key areas of progress or completion of these activities are listed below.

Open spaces and historic sites are thriving and accessible

- Coudon Common and the London Borough of Croydon's Happy Valley were declared a new National Nature Reserve in July
- Members agreed the ten-year Burnham Beeches Management Plan and the Epping Forest Strategy and Management plans.
- Provision of full ULEZ compliant fleet within City Gardens and several electric All Terrain Vehicles purchased to replace diesel vehicles across the Department.
- Significant influence with local planning authorities relating to numerous strategic planning documents and planning applications.
- New interpretation signage installed for the Kenley Revival Project

Spaces Enrich People's lives

- West Ham Park playground proposal supported by RASC for 70% capital funding. Public consultation on the detailed design carried out March 2020. Submitted Stage 2 London Marathon Trust funding application.
- Planning Applications submitted for improvements at the Vale, Preachers Hill and Adventure Playgrounds at Hampstead Heath.
- Improvement projects at St Bartholomew the Great and St Dunstan in the West were completed in the square mile.
- Sense and the Outdoor Society partnered to create a sensory walking guide for Golders Hill Park.
- Three new mobility scooters with increased off-road capability were introduced to the free hire scheme at Hampstead Heath.
- 4,540 visits from local schools to the Wild Schools Programme at West Ham Park, enhancing teachers understanding of nature to the curriculum and pupils' enjoyment of nature and 'the outside'.
- West Ham Parks wildlife garden hosted regular sessions for a school for children with autism and Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) students,
- 30th anniversary celebrations held at Hampstead Heath and various events held in Epping Forest as part of Waltham Forest London Borough of Culture programme.

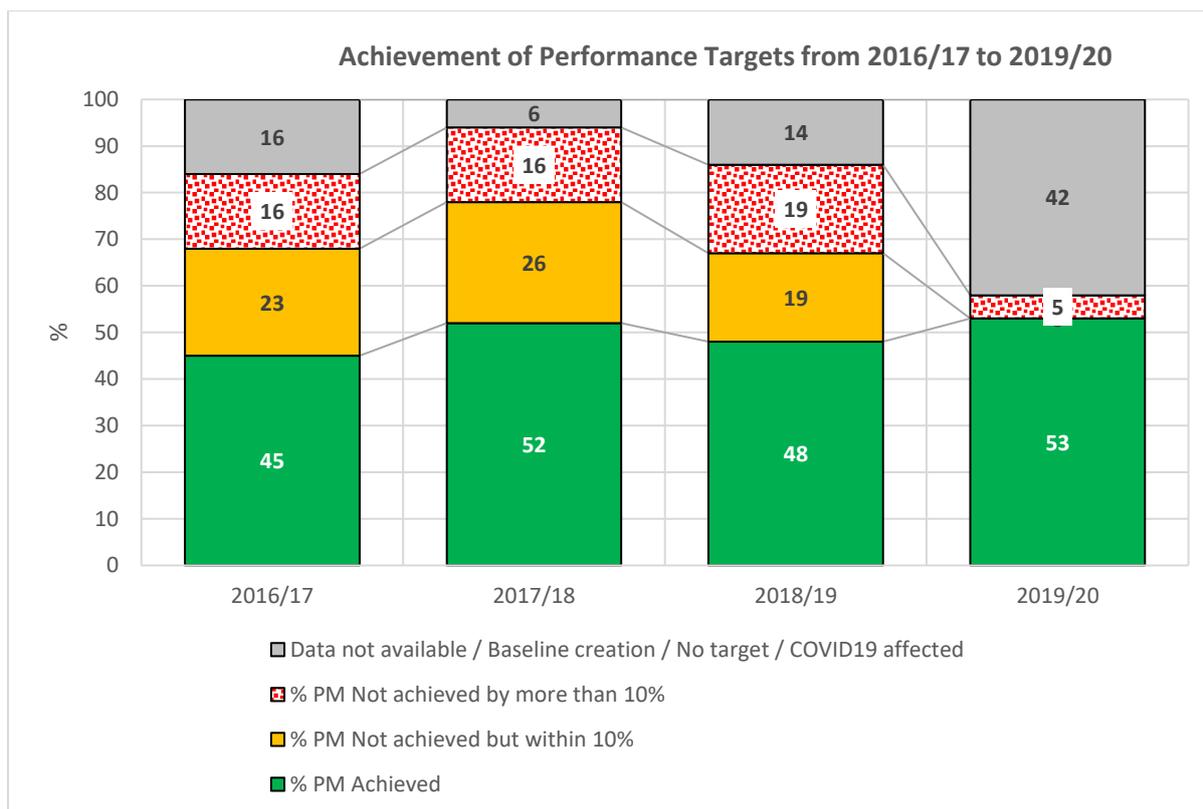
Business practices are responsible and sustainable

- Detailed Fundamental Review submission made to RASC.
- Five capital funding bids supported by RASC and a sixth agreed in principle but to be resubmitted in July.

- Green Spaces & the Natural Environment' grant aid scheme revised and £120k of awards were granted to eleven organisations.
- West Ham Park former nursery site was approved to Gateway 4 at Committee in October 2019. The project will seek to develop residential accommodation on half of the nursery site, with the remainder forming new additional parkland. A public briefing was held in December and discussion with the Charity Commission is ongoing.
- Finsbury Circus reinstatement proposal supported by RASC for capital funding.
- Completed the review of swimming at Hampstead Heath and in March, members agreed the subsidy level for swimming at the Lido and Ponds.
- Completed the investigation into the history and future sustainable uses of Warren House
- Several lodges at Epping Forest now let as Assured Shorthold Tenancies and refurbishment of lodge for 'holiday let' near completion.
- Committee approved hosting of a new four-day fairground event in West Ham Park to generate additional income and attract new audiences.
- Eco Café at Burnham Beeches introduced, and Hampstead Heath Extension Annex Room approved for tendering as a refreshment kiosk
- Procurement of cashless parking management system and development of car parking charge infrastructure progressed at The Commons
- More effective use of IT and technology means many more meetings held with officers attending 'virtually' to reduce travel and 'working from home where possible' implemented successfully in March in response to COVID19 and Government instruction.
- New mobile app has been trialled and rolled out to the entire team at City Gardens. The app allows staff to complete a checklist of tasks whilst out on site, logging the task and the time it was completed, and allowing for the reporting of faults and incidents, thereby negating the need for paper copy forms back at the office.
- Procurement of new tree management software is delivering an improved system.

Performance Measures

6. Only one measure was not achieved this year and ten measures were achieved or exceeded. Eight measures are either establishing baselines in 2019/20 or the measure is more general with a commentary update, data is still missing or COVID19 stopped external accreditation from taking place.
7. The table below shows the percentage of performance targets relevant to the Open Spaces Committees that were achieved or missed, over the last four years. The actual items that were being measured will have varied slightly over this period, but it provides a general picture.



9. Areas where we achieved our targets include:

- Hours of tennis court usage was 6% over target due to the doubling in court hours at West Ham Park with the introduction of new membership passes for households, increased tennis coaching, tournaments and events.
- We have significantly influenced planning authorities by reviewing and commenting on planning applications (referenced regularly in Superintendents' updates) and influencing strategic planning documents, mitigation strategies and S106 arrangements.
- Net expenditure had a slight underspend and income generation was 2% over target (see paragraphs 12 to 14)
- 89% of health and safety accidents were investigated within the 28-day corporate timeframe – the target was 85%,
- We retained our 15 Green Flag and 13 Green Heritage accreditations.
- Participation in the learning programme's activities resulted in improvement in all learning impact areas: understanding, confidence, nature connection, wellbeing and involvement.

10. Areas where we did not reach our targets include:

- Web pages visits only achieved 74% of its target due to a functionality problem that occurred between May and September which prevented Android phones from accessing the City Corporation website and there was restricted appearance of Open Spaces webpages on Google Searches. This was reported to Committees at the 6-month review.
- The number of volunteer hours – this was to a small degree due to cessation of all volunteering activity in mid-March due to COVID19 but overall numbers

are down and officers are looking into the reasons for this. Data for Epping was not able to be provided at the time of writing this report.

- Visitor attraction numbers across the Department were below target mainly due to closure of facilities in mid-March due to COVID19.

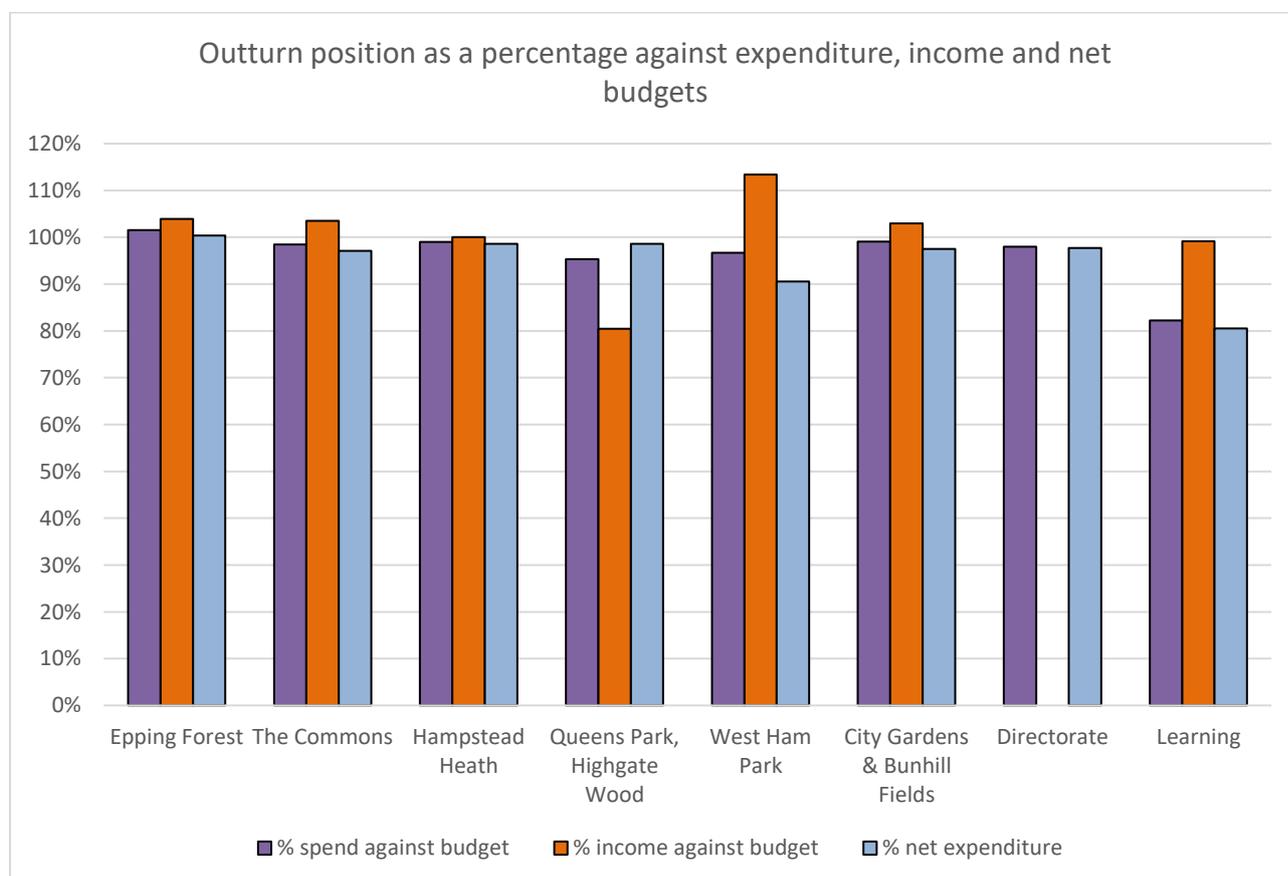
11. The list of performance measures as they relate to this Committee including the results and targets for 2019/20 and for comparison (where applicable), our performance in 2018/19, is contained within appendix 1.

Financial Performance

12. Open Spaces achieved its two financial performance measures: net expenditure and income generated.

- The **net expenditure outturn position** for the Open Spaces City Fund and City Cash budgets reporting to the various Open Spaces Committees, was a £307k (2%) underspend from a total net local risk budget of £13million. Towards year end, several supplies and services which had been ordered earlier in the year were not delivered or provided due to COVID19. This varied from tractors and trailers, irrigation storage tanks, grounds maintenance supplies and specialist audits. We have requested £214k carry forward for COVID19 undelivered supplies and services.
- The **total income outturn position** was £4,862,302 which is £88k (2%) above target.

13. The table below shows the outturn positions as a percentage of the budgeted expenditure, income and net position.



14. The information below details the outturn position against budget, by City Fund and City's Cash:

- **City Fund (CF)** – spent 99% of its local risk expenditure budget and achieved 103% of its local risk income target. Thus, its overall net position was 3% (£18k) underspent which was due to items having been ordered but were not received due to COVID19. A carry forward in addition to the COVID19 related underspend has been made for the purchase of a small electric tipper vehicle to start phasing the City Gardens fleet away from euro 6 diesel to electric. This carry forward request is still to be confirmed.
- **City's Cash (CC)** – spent 99% of its local risk expenditure budget and achieved 102% of its local risk income target. Thus, its overall net position was 2% (£196k) underspent. A carry forward request for £196k has been made for this COVID19 related underspend. This carry forward request is still to be confirmed.

15. More detailed information regarding the year end outturn financial position for each Service Committee is provided in reports from the Chamberlains Department.

Property

16. One property; The Laundry Cottage within Epping Forest had been previously declared surplus as part of the Operational Property Review. This property was disposed of and generated a capital receipt for the CoL of £475k during 2019/20.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Open Space Charities

17. Most of the Open Spaces sites are registered charities. Officers have been asked to remind Members that decisions they take in relation to the relevant charity must be taken in the best interests of that charity.

The Corporate Plan

18. The Open Spaces Department actively contributes to all the Corporate Plan 2018-23 aims and ten of its twelve outcomes.

- Contribute to a flourishing society**
- Support a thriving economy**
- Shape outstanding environments**

Conclusion

19. The Department continues to perform well both in terms of finances, achievement of performance targets and progress of its activities that help achieve the Department's objectives and outcomes.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 - Performance Measures
- Appendix 2 - High-level Business Plan 2019-20

Background Reports

- Final Departmental Business Plan 2019/20 – Open Spaces, April and May 2019.
- Departmental Business Plan 2019/20 – Six month performance update:
December 2019 to January 2020

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Appendix 1 – Performance Measures

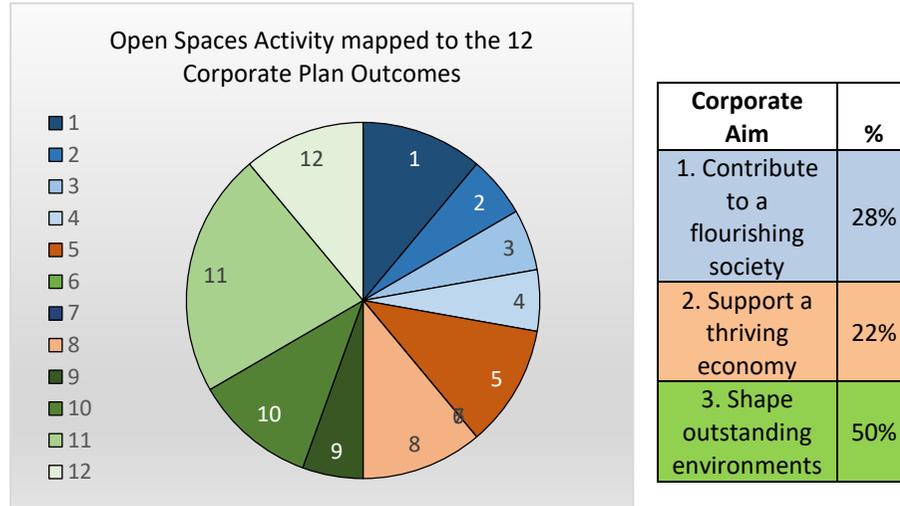
Performance Measure Description	2018/19 Actual (annual)	2019/20 Target (annual)	2019/20 Actual (annual)
Green Heritage Site Accreditation	13 Green Heritage Awards	Retain 13 Awards	ACHIEVED 13 Green Heritage Awards
Green Flag Awards	15 green flag sites overall band score 53% = 80+ 40% = 75 – 79 7% = 70 - 74	Retain 15 Awards	ACHIEVED 15 green flag sites overall band score 13% = 80+ 53% = 75 – 79 33% = 70 - 74
Improving the condition of our Sites of Special Scientific Interest	Not a performance measure	New measure. Favourable = 12 (28%) Unfavourable recovering = 22 (52%) Unfavourable - no change = 7 (17%) Unfavourable - declining = 1 (2%)	ACHIEVED No change to 2018/19 as Natural England officers have not been able to undertake a new assessment
Reducing our environmental footprint	Performance measure changed	Commentary	City Gardens fleet fully ULEZ compliant. Electric all terrain vehicles purchased to replace diesel at The Commons and NLOS. Electric buggies at West Ham park. Water consumption 30% reduction on 18/19 data. Electricity usage has reduced by 0.5%
Influencing planning authorities development approvals and planning policy documents	Not a performance measure	Commentary	Approx. 3,000 planning applications reviewed. EF objected to EFDC habitats regulation assessment, influenced EFDC & LBWF Green Infrastructure Strategy. The Commons have developed Mitigation Strategies with host/neighbouring local authorities
Active management of our ancient trees as part of the Stewardship Schemes at Epping Forest and Burnham Beeches.	Not a performance measure	No target for 2019/20. Epping Forest's ten year total = 2,182. Burnham Beeches ten year total = 202 Numbers of trees identified for future years but weather and	EF - 80 trees completed - managed by re-pollarding or crown reduction Burnham Beeches - 9 trees completed, managed by crown reduction.

Performance Measure Description	2018/19 Actual (annual)	2019/20 Target (annual)	2019/20 Actual (annual)
		other conditions will influence the number of trees actively managed each year.	
The number of 'visitors' to the Open spaces webpages.	927,166	930,000	Not achieved 686,677
Learning & volunteer programme measures	Not a performance measure	Increase in positive and very positive responses to the 'learning impacts'	ACHIEVED Increase identified across the learning impacts: nature connection (19%) confidence (13%), well-being (5%), understanding (1.5%)
Increase the amount of directly supervised volunteer work hours	37,040	37,040	24,394 Epping data to be added
Increase the amount of indirectly supervised volunteer work hours	8,303	8,300	3,051 Epping data to be added
Increase the amount of unsupervised volunteer work hours	26,751	26,750	19,935 Epping data to be added – if same figure as 2018/19 this will exceed target
Increase the number of visits to our heritage visitor attractions (This includes Tower Bridge, Monument, Keats House, The Queens Hunting Lodge hub and The Temple)	Not a performance measure	1,124,401	ACHIEVED 1,100,110
Improve customer satisfaction at our heritage visitor attractions (This includes Tower Bridge, Monument, Keats House, Epping Forest experience)	Not a performance measure	Commentary	Visit England Annual Quality Attraction Assessment Scheme survey not undertaken for Epping Forest due to COVID19.
Increase the number of hours of tennis court usage	26,495	31,505	ACHIEVED 33.550
Apprentice performance	Not a performance measure	Establish baseline	81% pass their training qualification (4 left before the end of the course) 20% (that we know of) have got jobs, 25% have progressed from level 2 to level 3

Performance Measure Description	2018/19 Actual (annual)	2019/20 Target (annual)	2019/20 Actual (annual)
Average number of days per FTE short term sickness	4.24	4.24	ACHIEVED 3.37
Health and safety accident investigations	New measure for 2019/20 using the Corporate target of 28 days	85%.	ACHIEVED 89%
Open Spaces Net expenditure (OS Director local risk only)	£10,344,132 Final Agreed Budget: £10,648,000	£12,941,000	ACHIEVED £12,633,989
Open Spaces Income generated (OS Director local risk)		£4,709,000	ACHIEVED £4,862,303

Appendix 2 - OUR VISION: We enrich people’s lives by enhancing and providing access to ecologically diverse open spaces and outstanding heritage assets across London and beyond.

The Department’s Business Plan Activity is mapped below to the 12 Corporate Outcomes and 3 Corporate Aims



The Department manages open spaces across London and beyond, a Cemetery & Crematorium, Keats House, the Monument & Tower Bridge.

City Gardens and the Crematorium and Cemetery operate as local authority functions funded by City’s Fund. The other Open Spaces & Keats House are Charitable Trusts and with The Monument, are funded by the City of London through City’s Cash. Tower Bridge is funded by Bridge House Estates.

Our total 2019-20 budget is:	(Expenditure) (£000)	Income £000	Net cost (£000)
DIRECTORS’S LOCAL RISK:			
City’s Fund	(5,013)	5,626	613
City’s Cash	(15,543)	4,422	(11,121)
Bridge House Estates	(6,435)	6,217	(218)
TOTAL Director’s Local Risk	(26,991)	16,265	(10,726)
City Surveyor’s local risk (across all funds)	(4,898)	-	(4,898)
Recharges (across all funds)	(7,345)	1,330	(6,015)
Central risk (across all funds)	(1,121)	1,522	401
GRAND TOTAL ALL CHARGES	(40,355)	19,117	(21,238)

Our three top line objectives and twelve outcomes are:

- A. Open spaces and historic sites are thriving and accessible.**
 - 1. Our open spaces, heritage and cultural assets are protected, conserved and enhanced (12)
 - 2. London has clean air and mitigates flood risk and climate change (11)
 - 3. Our spaces are accessible, inclusive and safe (1)
 - 4. Our habitats are flourishing, biodiverse and resilient to change (11)
- B. Spaces enrich people’s lives.**
 - 5. People enjoy good health and wellbeing (2)
 - 6. Nature, heritage and place are valued and understood (3)
 - 7. People feel welcome and included (4)
 - 8. People discover, learn and develop (3)
- C. Business practices are responsible and sustainable.**
 - 9. Our practices are financially, socially and environmentally sustainable (5)
 - 10. London’s natural capital and heritage assets are enhanced through our leadership, influence, investment, collaboration and innovation (10)
 - 11. Our staff and volunteers are motivated, empowered, engaged and supported (8)
 - 12. Everyone has the relevant skills to reach their full potential (8)

What we’ll measure:

- Green Flags Awards & Green Heritage Accreditation
- Condition of our Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- Our negative environmental impact
- Planning influence
- Active veteran tree management
- Internet access
- Learning
- Visits to our heritage attractions
- Customer satisfaction
- Tennis participation
- Net budget
- Income generation
- Volunteering
- Apprenticeships
- Short term sickness
- Health and safety investigations

KEY: The numbers in brackets show how the Open Spaces Outcomes link to the twelve [Corporate Plan Outcomes 2018-2023](#).

We will work across the Department, with colleagues in City Surveyors, Chamberlains, Town Clerks, Comptrollers, Remembrancer's, Built Environment, Community and Children's Services and with Members, partners, stakeholders and our local communities to deliver our activities which will help us achieve our Departmental objectives and outcomes.

Departmental activity

A. Open Spaces and Historic Sites Are Thriving and Accessible

- a) Protect our heritage: developing partnership funding bids where possible (A1) (10d)
- b) Progress reviews, drafting, approval and implementation of management / conservation / heritage plans (A1) (11b)
- c) Reduce the negative environmental impacts of our activities (A2 & C9) (11a)
- d) Engage with the local planning process to mitigate and protect against the impact of development on our open spaces (A4) (12b)
- e) Review security and access control provision (A3) (1c)
- f) Protect and enhance our sites' biodiversity and determine the 'value of our green infrastructure'. (A4) (11b)

B. Spaces Enrich People's Lives

- g) Provide a sustainable range of sports and recreational opportunities (B5) (2d)
- h) Improve the visitor and cultural offer, including the development of facilities, new technologies, customer service and a programme of events celebrating our anniversaries, historic sites and nature. (B6 & B7) (4a)
- i) Determine our 'learning offer' (B8) (3b)

C. Business practices are responsible and sustainable.

- j) Maximise the value and opportunities of our built and natural assets (C9) (10c)
- k) Deliver opportunities arising from improved management capability from the City of London Corporation (Open Spaces) Act 2018 (A1) (1c)
- l) Develop innovative approaches to income diversification (C9) (5c)
- m) Make more effective use of IT and technology and adopt 'smarter' ways of working (C9) (9b)
- n) Support the development of asset management plans and master plans for each site and influence the City Surveyors implementation of their operational property review (C9, C10) (12a)
- o) Maintain our regional and national influence with regard to environmental, open space, burial, heritage and tourism matters (C10) (11d)
- p) Implement the recommendations arising out of the workforce plan, staff and customer surveys (C11) (8a)
- q) Develop our apprenticeship programme and volunteering opportunities across the Department (C12) (8d)
- r) Commence the process for prioritisation of services to mitigate efficiencies and establish long term sustainable service provision (C9) (5c)

Key:

The letter/number in brackets (e.g. A2) shows which Open Spaces outcome our activities are helping to achieve.

The number/letter in brackets (e.g. 2a) shows which Corporate Plan activity our activities are helping to achieve.

See appendix 1 for the detail behind these synopsised Departmental activities

Corporate programmes and projects:

In addition to those programmes and projects listed above and in appendix 1, we will support the delivery of Corporate Strategies in particular: Responsible Business Strategy, Apprenticeships, Volunteering, Education Social Mobility and the emerging strategies including: Customer Service, Climate Action, Transport, Visitor Destination, Local Plan.

We will contribute to development of the Culture Mile.

How we plan to develop our capabilities this year:

Actions k), m), p) and q) particularly show how we will develop our capabilities including those of our staff and volunteers. This is also reflected within Appendix 1.

The Open Spaces Cultural Values

which staff should uphold in the course of their work are:

**Collaborative and Inclusive,
Passionate and Driven,
Respectful and Open
Honest and Responsible**