

Committee(s):	Date(s):	Item no.
Epping Forest and Commons Finance	13 January 2014 21 January 2014	SEF
Subject: Progress Report – Branching Out (Heritage Lottery project) update Number 10		Public
Report of: Superintendent of Epping Forest		For Decision
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Summary</u></p> <p>The Branching Out projects are broadly on track, with capital elements largely complete: Jubilee Pond landscaping and car park works are finished and all four cattle grids have been installed with minor snags being addressed by Essex County Council. Three new apprentice arborists have been recruited for the final year of the scheme. The spend profile matches the programme.</p> <p>The focus for the next six months is on the design of Gateways and a standard approach to Forest furniture, now that the Open Spaces branding exercise is nearing completion. We are also continuing with the Volunteer Improvement Plan and progressing the evaluation and legacy for Branching Out projects.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I recommend that the budget variances, which balance and therefore do not affect the overall budget total, be approved subject to Heritage Lottery approval. 		

Overview

1. Success Criteria	<p>Car Parks and Access - Creation of four visitor hubs and 20 gateways to the Forest. 1615m of accessible paths, six way-marked trails, and car park resurfacing at High Beach, Connaught Water, Chingford and Jubilee Pond. 12 interpretive panels and signage to the Forest from transport links. Forest Transport Strategy includes road closure, traffic calming, speed reduction and cattle grids.</p> <p>Grazing and Trees –implementing a long term grazing strategy to enhance wood pasture landscapes with 350 ha of additional grazing, an extended season and increase in herd size to 150 over 10 years. Conservation work on 1200 ancient trees with the help of apprentices and new equipment.</p> <p>Coach House - Redevelopment to provide an Interpretation Centre with new permanent exhibition, learning facilities and a shop. Delivery of: a three-year education programme, Discovering Epping Forest, to 2250 pupils. involving communities in the care, management and enjoyment of the Forest, with outreach events a minimum of 76 new volunteers, contributing £144,050 of hours in match funding. Cataloguing and conservation of the Epping Forest archives.</p> <p>Butler’s Retreat - Refurbishment to provide an improved restaurant facility with a display on the history of the Listed building.</p>
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2. Project Scope and Exclusions	<p>Branching Out is a series of projects in Epping Forest, designed to improve access to and interpretation of the historic landscape, as listed above.</p> <p>The project incorporates elements of the Forest Grazing Strategy and Epping Forest Transport Strategy.</p>
3. Link to Strategic Aims	<p>Volunteering and community involvement are included in the Open Spaces Business Plan 2012-2015. The proposals address “The City Together Strategy: The Heart of a World Class City” 2008-2014.</p>
4. Category	<p>4. Substantially reimbursable</p> <p>7.a) Asset enhancement/improvement (capital)</p>
5. Priority	<p>B- Advisable</p>
6. Governance arrangements	<p>Project board chaired by the Director of Open Spaces with representatives from Town Clerks, Chamberlains, City Surveyors and the Epping Forest division.</p> <p>Quarterly Monitoring meetings are held with the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) monitor(s) with representatives from the Epping Forest division.</p> <p>Progress reports are submitted to Epping Forest and Commons Committee and to Finance Committee on resourcing</p>
7. Resources Expended To Date	<p>Spend to the end of September 2013 for Stage 3 totals £5,204,598 (or £5,327,878 including sunk costs, and £5,638,878 including Stage 2 development costs of £311,000). This represents an HLF grant value of £3,870,501 (74.37%). Thus 81% of the budget has been spent at 80% of the way through the project. It is anticipated that the full project budget of £6,518,592 (or £6.8 million including development costs) for Stage 3 will be spent.</p> <p>See Appendix 1 below for more detail of funding and budgets. There will be no additional revenue costs upon completion of the project, as staff are on fixed term contracts.</p> <p>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 has been met by grants from our partners and the Local Risk budget. The Tubney Trust contributed £270,658, and Essex County Council £300,000 towards the Forest Transport Strategy. Development costs of £311,000 were spent and claimed at Stage 2.</p>

Progress

8. Reporting Period	<p>The Epping Forest and Commons Committee received, and approved, the ninth Branching Out project update report at its meeting of 8 July 2013.</p>
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9. Summary of progress since last report

Landscaping

The majority of landscaping works have been completed apart from the design and installation of Gateways and signage. The defects periods have expired and the snags been resolved on all sites apart from the recently completed Jubilee Pond. Some minor alterations may be required at Connaught Water. Additional tree works and grounds maintenance have been undertaken to complement the landscaping and reduce anti-social behaviour in liaison with the Forest keeper team and the local community.

Gateways. The install is now due to commence in spring 2014. The design process restarted in mid November, informed by progress with the Open Spaces identity project.

Forest Transport Strategy. The installation of cattle grids and associated timber fencing has been completed. We are liaising with Transport for London over Legible London signage to/from the Forest.

Volunteers. The match funding target of £153,000 worth of volunteer hours was exceeded by the equivalent of £14,280 hours at the end of September 2013. Volunteers have constructed an accessible fishing platform at Earl's Path Pond and a pond dipping platform as part of the Jubilee Pond improvements, along with planting. The 25th anniversary of the annual Scout Project included installing infrastructure at Gifford Wood. New volunteer roles comprise cattle warden and publication assistant, alongside a renewed recruitment drive for the Forest Centres. A drop-in volunteering day was held in October specifically for young people.

Community Liaison. We are continuing to exceed our targets for introducing new groups to the Forest, alongside repeat visits by organisations such as Kids Co. and career talks. Additional way marked trails have been installed at Lord's Bushes and Gifford Wood. The 2013 Visitor Survey has been completed by volunteers, who have walked 120 miles to survey 1395 visitors, as well as receiving 1,083 completed questionnaires.

The View (Coach House)

Redevelopment. The final snags are in the process of being resolved by the City Surveyor in liaison with the contractor. A user survey has been undertaken, the results of which will be included in the forthcoming Outturn report.

Learning. The learning web resources are online at www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/epping-forest/Learning-activities-material and have received good feedback. A learning strategy for Epping Forest is being progressed.

Butler's Retreat

The business is a very well used local facility and has settled in quickly, exceeding all expectations including income. The estimated turnover in the first year was some 21% higher than expected,

	<p>resulting in additional rental income to the City. Further detail will be included in the Outturn report.</p> <p>Grazing and Trees</p> <p><u>Grazing.</u> The grazier's Red Poll cattle are currently using the invisible fence system on the Forest. Cattle have been grazing at seven locations in Epping Forest this summer and a second report by the Independent Grazing Assessor has been received. The design for cattle out-wintering facilities at Great Gregories has been revised as part of the planning process, with works likely to span this financial year and next. A contractor has been appointed for site clearance and the main stage of the works is out to tender.</p> <p><u>Keystone Trees.</u> 52 trees were completed this summer, bringing the total to conservation work on 780 trees. This is 65% of the original target of 1200 Keystone trees, due to poor tree health meaning that no trees were worked on last summer. An additional season may therefore be required at the end of the Branching Out project – winter 2014/15 – and HLF have provided contingency funding to extend the hire of a second mobile elevated working platform.</p> <p><u>Apprentices.</u> Three new apprentices have been appointed. Two of the apprentices completed the full programme in 2012/13 but one was asked to leave, although he may complete the Capel Manor course.</p>
10. Programme	All projects are on track to complete in November 2014. The next progress report is due in July 2014.
11. Budget	<p>The total budget for the project is £6.83 million over five years, supported by a grant of £4.76 million from Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). Budget variances must be approved by HLF in addition to your Committee.</p> <p>Variances between capital and revenue budgets are listed in Tables 2 and 3 of Appendix 1. The figures mainly reflect a contingency claim from HLF to cover £22,747 increase in budget against the original estimate for Arborist team leader salary and apprentice arborist salaries and training. The training element includes the NPTC Assessments, now paid by CoL rather than the college and so not originally budgeted for.</p> <p>Other changes are minimal or reflect transfers of miscoded items from revenue to capital, which balance out. There is no change to the overall budget allocation, which includes a contingency sum.</p>
12. Risk	Risk registers are maintained for all aspects of the project and are regularly reviewed to mitigate their impact. Where costs are incurred, these are met from HLF contingency or budget transfers.
13. Communications	Regular updates provided online and as articles and press releases.
14. Benefits	Completion of car park and access trail with planting at Jubilee Pond.

achievement	<p>Introduction of new audiences to Epping Forest.</p> <p>Free learning resources available from Epping Forest website.</p> <p>Network of cattle grids and fencing in place to expand the scope of grazing from summer 2014.</p>
15.Lessons	To be reported in the Outturn reports. Feedback and lessons learned are being gathered throughout the project and will be included in the Outturn and HLF reports, as well as Evaluation Workshop results.

Appendix 1	Funding and Budgets
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Appendix 1 Funding and Budgets

Table 1 Funding Sources

Funding Sources Table	£	Claims to Sept 2013	Status
Heritage Lottery Fund Stage 3	4,756,000	3,870,501	Claimed six monthly in arrears
Heritage Lottery Fund Development Grant	231,500	231,500	Claimed
Essex County Council (cattle grids & FTS)	300,000	290,981	Evidence to be provided quarterly
City Contribution All Stages*	1,251,436	1,146,525	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
Total	6,829,594	5,850,165	
*analysis of City Contribution	£	Claims to Sept 2013	Status
Stg 1 bid prep (sunk cost)	123,280	123,280	Expended
City Contribution Development Stage 2	79,500	79,500	Expended
Local Risk	780,436	695,415	Allocated annually
Sub-Total Local Risk	983,216	898,195	
Payments in-kind (volunteers, etc)	268,220	248,330	Claimed with evidence
Total	1,251,436	1,146,525	

Table 2 Budget variations since last progress report

Item	Budget July 2013	Budget Nov 13 & HLF ddn9	Variance (£)	significant variation & transfer details
COACH HOUSE			0	
Capital Costs	1,761,574	1,761,574	0	
Staff: Community Liaison	176,620	176,673	53	To arb team leader in Trees below - balancing budget
Staff – Archivist	40,374	40,374	0	
Conservation work	11,032	11,032	0	
Recruitment (+int expenses)	4,427	4,427	0	
Measuring Project Success	20,000	20,638	638	Balancing budget. Switch with Car Parks & Access
Education Programme	297,530	297,530	0	
Materials, Equipment, Travel for CLO & PM	11,904	11,904	0	
Volunteer equipment + travel + events	48,781	48,781	0	
Events – catering, launches	5,000	5,000	0	

Item	Budget July 2013	Budget Nov 13 & HLF ddn9	Variance (£)	significant variation & transfer details
Revenue Costs	615,668	616,359	691	
Coach House	2,377,242	2,377,933	691	
BUTLER'S RETREAT			0	
Refurbishment	546,137	547,289	1,152	crossover is works not fees – transfer from hlf d cs constr; QS; Surveys; planning fees + CS staff costs
HLF Bid preparation Stage 1	19,403	19,403	0	
Professional fees	73,498	72,346	-1,152	transfer to crossover works: hlf 5 cs wks butlers
Capital Costs	639,038	639,038	0	
Revenue Costs	0	0	0	
Butler's Retreat	639,038	639,038	0	
CAR PARKS & ACCESS			0	
Barn Hoppit Car Park	110,949	110,949	0	
Coach House Forecourt	89,096	89,096	0	
Connaught Water Easy Access Trail	173,372	174,126	754	From hlf 14 ef wks jub pnd
Connaught Water Car Park	109,249	109,419	170	From hlf 14 ef wks jub pnd
Pillow Mounds Car Park	236,371	236,371	0	
Jubilee Pond Access Trail	175,599	170,675	-4,924	Transfer £924 to hlf8 ef wp conn ea t and hlf 9 ef wks conn cp and £4000 to Fees: HLF d Indscp dsgr
Bury Road Car Park	145,699	145,699	0	
Cattle grids (forest grazing strategy)	625,367	625,367	0	
New interpretation panels & signs for trails	53,000	53,000	0	
Small Plant and tools	10,000	10,000	0	
Materials for Gateways	203,176	203,176	0	
HLF Bid preparation Stage 1	44,633	44,633	0	
Professional fees for landscaping	106,468	110,468	4,000	From hlf 14 ef wks jub pnd
Capital Costs	2,082,979	2,082,979	0	
Project Manager	152,229	150,828	-1,401	Switch to Grazing & Trees below to balance
Recruitment	3,000	3,000	0	
Item	Budget July 2013	Budget Nov 13 &	Variance (£)	significant variation & transfer details

		HLF ddn9		
Measuring Project Success	638	0	-638	Switch with Coach House to balance
Office set up - PM & CLO	1,292	1,292	0	
Materials, Equipment, Travel for CLO & PM	18,364	18,364	0	
ADAS	8,000	8,000	0	
Revenue Costs	183,523	181,484	-2,039	
Car Parks and Access	2,266,501	2,264,463	-2,039	
GRAZING & TREES				
Capital Costs	331,509	331,509	0	
Project Manager - 50%	149,427	150,828	1,401.00	Switch to car parks above
Arborist team leader	159,954	165,729	5,775.00	From contingency and CLO salary
Apprenticeship placements	235,733	248,848	13,115.00	From contingency – add course fees
Recruitment	6,000	6,000	0.00	
Training	41,759	45,563	3,804.00	From contingency – add apprentice course fees
Accomm (lodges x2)	99,460	99,460	0.00	
Revenue Costs	692,333	716,428	24,095.00	
Grazing and Trees	1,023,842	1,047,937	24,095.00	
Volunteer Hours	153,150	153,150	0	
Contingency	58,819	36,072	-22,747	transfer to salary and training in Grazing & Trees revenue
<i>Develpmt Cost (D-E)</i>	<i>311,000</i>	<i>311,000</i>	<i>0</i>	
Non project specific	522,969	500,222	-22,747	
ALL PROJECTS	6,829,592*	6,829,592	0	
<i>All projects minus devt costs</i>	<i>6,518,592</i>	<i>6,518,592</i>	<i>0</i>	
HLF Bid preparation Stage 1	123,280.00	123,280	0	
HLF App cost (less sunk & devt costs)	6,395,312	6,395,312	0	
HLF payment 74.36695%	4,755,998	4,755,998	0	

Table 3 Capital and Expenditure Summary Budgets

a) Capital/Expenditure approved July 2013

Project	Capital costs Phases F-L (£)	Revenue costs (£)	Other costs (£)	Total All Years (£)
1. Coach House	1,761,574	615,668	0	2,377,242
2. Butler's Retreat	639,038	0	0	639,038
3. Car Parks and Access	2,082,978	183,523	0	2,266,501
4. Grazing and Trees	331,509	692,333	0	1,023,842
Volunteer Hours	0	0	153,150	153,150
Contingency	0	0	58,819	58,819
TOTAL	4,815,099	1,491,524	211,969	6,518,592
Development Cost	0	0	311,000	311,000
Total inc Development	4,815,099	1,491,524	522,969	6,829,592

b) Capital/Expenditure updated November 2013

Project	Capital costs Phases F-L (£)	Revenue costs (£)	Other costs (£)	Total All Years (£)
1. Coach House	1,761,574	616,359	0	2,377,933
2. Butler's Retreat	639,038	0	0	639,038
3. Car Parks and Access	2,082,978	181,484	0	2,264,462
4. Grazing and Trees	331,509	716,428	0	1,047,937
Volunteer Hours	0	0	153,150	153,150
Contingency	0	0	36,072	36,072
TOTAL	4,815,099	1,514,271	189,222	6,518,592
Development Cost	0	0	311,000	311,000
Total inc Development	4,815,099	1,514,271	500,222	6,829,592