

Committee(s):	Date(s):
Epping Forest and Commons Committee	March 10 2014
Subject: Burnham Beeches, Stoke Common and City Commons Management Priorities for 2014-15	Public
Report of: The Superintendent of Burnham Beeches, Stoke Common and the City Commons	For Decision
<p>Summary</p> <p>This report presents the management priorities for the Burnham Beeches, Stoke Common and City Commons Division that will guide the annual work programme during the period 01 April 2014 to 31 March 2015.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve the Management Priorities for 2014-15 	

Main Report

Background

1. In January 2014 the Superintendent of Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common assumed additional responsibility for the seven City Commons.
2. Each of the nine open spaces in the newly enlarged division has a comprehensive management plan and detailed work programmes to guide management activity over a 10 year period.
3. The work prioritised in the management plans and work programmes, together with any additional project work and organisation requirements, forms a set of annual management priorities. These are presented here.

Current Position

4. The process of combining the two sections of the new division has only just begun and it is not yet possible to present the management priorities in a single consistent format. For this reason the Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common priorities are considered in the main body of this report, while the City Commons priorities are appended to it.
5. The management priorities have recently been presented to local consultative committees for information or will be the subject of discussions later in the year.

Management priorities for Burnham Beeches & Stoke Common (Charity Reg. No. 232987)

6. **Management plan objectives**

The targets and actions listed in the ten year management plan are continually monitored and adjusted. We follow sustainable working practices in order to minimise any harmful impact of our activities upon the environment and others. The works that are carried out all contribute towards meeting the three objectives for each nature reserve:

7. **Objective 1: Biological/Conservation**

To restore and maintain the key habitats of Burnham Beeches to favourable condition and restore and maintain the heathland and associated habitats at Stoke Common to favourable condition.

Key projects for 2014-5

- **Grazing** – Continue to graze Stoke Common and Burnham Beeches as in previous years. Continue to plan grazing expansion at Burnham Beeches including undertaking further trials of the virtual fence
- **Pollarded trees** - Continue restoration work on old pollards, create new ones and cut young pollards in rotation. Start evaluation of experimental plots developed from research report.
- **Heathland restoration** - Continue heathland restoration work on Stoke Common by clearing trees. Carry out follow up work on recently cleared areas including flailing, cutting and removing organic matter. Continue heathland restoration at Burnham Beeches in area close to Hawthorn Lane.

8. **Objective 2: People**

To encourage the sustainable use of Burnham Beeches for the recreation and enjoyment of the public whilst promoting public involvement and fostering greater understanding of the reserve

To encourage low-key public access at a level that is compatible with the conservation features of the reserve and to encourage local community involvement in the management of Stoke Common

Key projects for 2014-15

- **Dog Control Orders** – Implement these at Burnham Beeches, including public consultation and developing enforcement methods and procedures
- **Car parking** - Review car parking charges and procedures at Burnham Beeches

9. **Objective 3: Estate Assets and Legal Issues**

To fulfil all legal obligations and to maintain estate structures in good condition

Key project for 2014-15

- **Protection from development** - Work with South Bucks District Council and Natural England on the Development Management Local Plan for the area including Burnham Beeches to prevent damage to the habitat of European importance

Corporate & Strategic Implications

10. The management priorities support Key Policy Priority number five: increasing the impact of the City's cultural and heritage offer on the life of London and the nation; providing safe, secure and accessible Open Spaces.
11. The management priorities support the five themes of the City Together Strategy and reflects the charitable status of our open spaces.

Implications

12. The projects and tasks outlined in this report will be funded by the local risk budgets of the Burnham Beeches, Stoke Common and City Commons Division.
13. The annual work programme addresses soft landscaping issues and poses no direct implications for the City Surveyor's property maintenance, nor impacts on the revenue works programme.

Conclusion

14. This report presents the proposed management priorities for the Burnham Beeches, Stoke Common and City Commons Division for the period 2014 to 2015.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – City Commons Management Priorities for period 2014-15

Andy Thwaites

Head Ranger

T: 01372 279083

E: Andrew.thwaites@cityoflondon.gov.uk