

HIGHGATE WOOD JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 18 November 2015

Minutes of the meeting of the Highgate Wood Joint Consultative Committee held at the Guildhall EC2 at 1.45 pm

Present

Members:

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| Virginia Rounding (Chairman) | Jan Brooker (Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee) |
| Jeremy Simons (Deputy Chairman) | Lucy Roots (Muswell Hill Friends of the Earth) |
| Professor John Lumley | Alison Watson (Friends of Queen's Wood) |
| Barbara Newman | Michael Hammerson (Highgate Society) |
| Stephanie Beer (Muswell Hill & Fortis Green Association) | |

Officers:

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| David Arnold | - Town Clerk's Department |
| Bob Warnock | - Superintendent of Hampstead Heath |
| Richard Gentry | - Constabulary & Queen's Park Manager |
| Jonathan Meares | - Highgate Wood, Conservation & Trees Manager |

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Marguerite Clark (Highgate Society), Peter Corley (Tree Trust for Haringey), and Councillor Gail Engert (London Borough of Haringey).

2. MEMBERS DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA

There were none.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the public minutes of the meeting held on 22 April 2015 be approved.

Matters Arising

Open Spaces Legislation

The Chairman advised that any comments regarding the draft City of London Corporation (Open Spaces) Bill circulated to the Group prior to the meeting should be sent to the Remembrancer's Office as soon as possible.

Cycling in Highgate Wood

In response to a member's (Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee) question, the Highgate Wood Manager advised that there were no plans by the London Borough of Haringey to introduce a safer cycling route on Muswell Hill Road as it would not be practical alongside the bus lane.

Park Champion(s)

The Superintendent advised that he would approach the two members of this Committee who were Councillors for the LBH to appoint one or both as Park Champions for Highgate Wood.

Conservation Management Plan

In response to a member's (Highgate Society) question regarding the LIDAR survey, the Wood Manager advised that Historic England would be invited back to look at the earthwork.

4. **SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE REPORT**

The Consultative Committee received a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath that provided an update of the management and operational activities in Highgate Wood since April 2015.

Members paid particular attention to the proposed changes to closing times during summer. The Wood Manager explained that the closing of the site was complex due to the nature of the Wood so Officers would not finish until at least 10:00pm with the current closure time of 9:45pm. Members noted that the proposed change was for reasons of staff safety and wellbeing rather than cost-saving reasons and supported the introduction of a new closing time to either 9:30pm or 9:15pm, with a preference for 9:15pm.

Members proceeded to note and consider the following matters arising from the Superintendent's update:

Roman Kiln Project

- The Heritage Lottery Fund application for a maximum grant of £100,000 submitted in August 2015 was unsuccessful due to a very high level of competition, including a separate bid from the City of London Corporation regarding Kenley Common.
- The Working Group would reconvene to discuss future possibilities, which might include a separate bid lead by the London Borough of Haringey who were the owners of the Kiln.

Woodland Conservation and Tree Management

- In response to a question from the Deputy Chairman, the Wood Manager advised that squirrel control was not currently carried out at the Wood.
- Members expressed support for a control strategy which the Superintendent would look into following consultation with colleagues at Burnham Beeches, where squirrel control was currently being implemented.

Oak Decline and Regeneration

- The results of the veteran oak canopy survey was consistent with last years' survey with a small number of trees dying but no increase as a whole across the 327 trees surveyed.

- The Wood Manager advised that soil in Highgate Wood was visually more compacted than in nearby Queen's Wood, which was a potential reason for less oak decline at Queen's Wood.
- The date of the 2016 Queen's Wood and Highgate Wood joint walk would be circulated to the Consultative Committee once finalised.

Community and Events

- Further licensed activity may have to be carefully considered against impact on the woodland environment, which could limit licensed activities to the current levels but with a potential to increase the charges to increase income.
- There had been suggestions to change the name of the Community Day event and to advertise it more widely, which was supported by some members (Friends of Queen's Wood, Highgate Society).
- A member (Highgate Society) suggested that the event should focus more on heritage and wildlife, including high-quality craft sellers and the involvement of the London Wildlife Trust.
- The Wood Manager added that it was the consensus amongst Highgate Wood staff to maintain the event at its current level and retain the rural community atmosphere, avoiding issues of trying to manage a larger scale event with the accompanying issues of vehicles and higher visitor numbers.
- Members suggested that more help could be provided by members of the community, including Heath Hands' Highgate Wood volunteers, in terms of the organisation of the event.
- Members (Muswell Hill & Fortis Green Association, Muswell Hill Friends of the Earth) also suggested the addition of popular street food and craft stalls who would pay for a stall at the event.

Infrastructure and Buildings

In response to a member's (Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee) question, the Wood Manager advised that the proposed new electric gates at Onslow Gate would be remotely controlled to allow vehicular access to the Café car park for disabled badge holders, once they had contacted a member of staff. This would be sign-posted on the new gate.

In response to a member's (Highgate Society) question, the Superintendent advised that he would contact Officers at the London Borough of Haringey regarding their open spaces Local Development Framework.

RESOLVED – That the Superintendent's Update report be noted.

5. **UPDATE ON OAK PROCESSIONARY MOTH (OPM) AT THE NORTH LONDON OPEN SPACES DIVISION**

The Group received a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath that provided an update on the OPM population and its management at the North London Open Spaces (NLOS) Division. Members were advised that the arrival of OPM at the Wood was expected next summer.

In response to a member's (Muswell Hill Friends of the Earth) question, the Highgate Wood Manager leaflets were available from the NLOS Division and the London Borough of Haringey would publicise themselves once OPM had arrived in the Borough. The Superintendent recommended members to download and read the [Forestry Commission's](#) useful leaflet from their website.

In response to a member's (Highgate Society) questions, the Wood Manager advised that the introduction of new and additional pheromone traps could encourage more moths but numbers of males would continue to be monitored. He added that contractors would carry out spraying operations at the Wood in spring 2016. Other feeding caterpillar species could be affected by the spraying but there was no research to suggest that the well-used toxin to eradicate OPM would affect predatory birds.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

6. FEES AND CHARGES 2016/17

The Consultative Committee considered a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath that set out the proposed fees and charges for the range of facilities and services provided at Highgate Wood in 2016/17. The Superintendent advised that the changing room charge would continue to be managed in close consultation with regular football and cricket teams.

RESOLVED – That the proposed fees and charges 2016/17 be noted and the views of the Consultative Committee be conveyed to the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee.

7. NORTH LONDON OPEN SPACES - RISK REGISTER

The Group received a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath that set out the collective risk register for the North London Open Spaces (NLOS) Division, including the Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Charity.

RESOLVED – That the NLOS Risk Register be noted.

8. QUESTIONS

In response to a member's question regarding the Water House development, the Highgate Wood Manager advised that the London Borough of Camden would be meeting to consider the planning application in December 2015. Highgate Wood staff had scrutinised reports on trees and the construction on Millfield Lane and would provide feedback on the Planning Officers' report once it was made available.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There was none.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED – That the date of the next meeting to be held at 12:00pm on 20 April 2016 be noted.

The meeting closed at 3.05 pm

Chairman

**Contact Officer: David Arnold
David.Arnold@cityoflondon.gov.uk
020 7332 1174**