

HIGHGATE WOOD JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
Wednesday, 9 November 2016

Minutes of the meeting of the Highgate Wood Joint Consultative Committee held at
Committee Rooms, 2nd Floor, West Wing, Guildhall on Wednesday, 9 November
2016 at 11.30 am

Present

Members:

Virginia Rounding (Chairman)
Karina Dostalova (Deputy Chairman)
Professor John Lumley
Barbara Newman
Stephanie Beer (Muswell Hill & Fortis Green Association)
Jan Brooker (Highgate Conservation Area Advisory)
Councillor Gail Engert (London Borough of Haringey)
Councillor Bob Hare (London Borough of Haringey)
Lucy Roots (Muswell Hill Friends of the Earth)
Alison Watson (Friends of Queens Wood)
Michael Hammerson (Highgate Society)

Officers:

Fern Aldous	-	Town Clerk's Department
Jonathan Meares	-	Highgate Wood & Conservation Manager
Bob Warnock	-	Superintendent of Hampstead Heath
Richard Gentry	-	Constabulary and Queen's Park Manager

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Jeremy Simons, Marguerite Clark (Highgate Society) and Peter Corley (Tree Trust for Haringey).

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

There were no declarations.

3. MINUTES

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting held on 13 April 2016.

Matters Arising

It was confirmed an appeal would be progressing for the Water House development. It was likely to be heard by written representation, and the Corporation would be making a submission.

The Chairman reported that the Highgate Wood Community Day had been a success and thanked all involved in its organisation.

4. **SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE REPORT**

The Consultative Committee received a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath providing an update on the management and operational activities in Highgate Wood since April 2016.

Members discussed the progression of the Pavilion Café procurement process. Over 1500 responses had been received for the café consultation and learning would be discussed at a Café Working Party workshop. A representative from Highgate Wood was sought and Officers undertook to send Members the details of the session.

The possibility of holding a Special Meeting in January 2017 to discuss the recommendations of the Working Party was supported by the Committee.

Members proceeded to note the following matter's arising from the Superintendent's update:

Changes to Closing Time

A trial of the amended closing time had been successful and it was recommended that this was now confirmed. Three complaints had been received and these had been concluded satisfactorily.

Changes to Working Arrangements

It was reported that the changes to the working arrangements had been implemented successfully. A reciprocal staffing arrangement with the Heath meant that staff at the Wood had the opportunity to develop their skills in a different ecological environment.

Roman Kiln Project

The Roman Kiln Working Party would be reinstated with the aim to fundraise for a further bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund. It was felt the bid was more likely to succeed through increasing the level of match funding. Heritage Lottery Fund were providing advice.

Sustainability

A commitment had been made to replace the system providing hot water to the changing rooms by spring 2017.

Woodland Conservation

- Work on the new conservation area, adjacent to the previous area, was due to begin. Lessons had been learnt from the management of the previous area, which had seen sparse growth in some parts.
- The only viable option for squirrel population control was trapping. A small batch of six traps was being procured with advice from English Heritage, with more to be procured if the trial proved successful. It was confirmed the traps would be placed in secure locations away from public areas.
- In response to a query from a Member in relation to Hedgehog population, it was reported that although none had been found in a

recent survey it was likely that the less populated areas were likely to get positive results.

- It was noted that “Hedgehog Tunnels”, with paint to capture footprints, were utilised.

Volunteer Activity

Activity had been focused on the 2012 conservation area. Sessions had been well attended and the Chairman expressed her thanks to all the volunteers.

Oak decline and regeneration

The Superintendent reported that many of the oak trees that had been protected had died as a result of mildew. The surviving trees were being helped to prosper. The oak decline survey was ongoing and the results were currently stable. The long term continuation of the survey was important to capture any decline.

Tree disease and biosecurity issues

It was reported that no Oak Processionary Moth nests had been found; it was felt this was in part due to the wet weather over the spring period. Their arrival was anticipated in 2017. It was confirmed photographs had been installed to inform the public to be vigilant for their nests.

Ash dieback had been found in the Highgate area although had not yet been detected in the Wood. The spread was being monitored.

Community and Events

Approximately 800 people had used the canopy stair which had been installed as part of Community Day.

Planning and Local Development

- It was anticipated that two large developments close to the Wood would have a large impact on visitor numbers.
- The Onslow Gate project was progressing and it was predicated the project would be completed by April 2017.

Annual Work Plan

The Superintendent advised that any additional comments on the work plan could be submitted in writing prior to the meeting of the Grand Committee on 21 November 2016. Both the Roman Kiln Project and the Onslow Gate Project were included in the plan.

It was noted that the Wood had received a Green Flag award for the 20th year, one of only five sites to have done so.

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5. FEES AND CHARGES 2017/18

The Consultative Committee received a report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath detailing the proposed fees and charges for the facilities and services of the North London Open Spaces.

Members discussed the policy on memorial benches, the charges for which were to remain unchanged until a review had been conducted. It was reported that the policy was currently inconsistent on length of time before inscriptions were reviewed. Suggestions for alternative memorial schemes were discussed, including a scheme where patrons could sponsor items of equipment needed to support the volunteers working in Highgate Wood.

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6. QUESTIONS

In response to a query from a Member, the Superintendent confirmed that the veteran tree seminar had been well received and the outcomes were being incorporated into the Divsional Plan.

A Member queried the relation between the Wood and the local schools that used it. It was hoped that a more formal relationship could be developed with the sector.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There was no other business.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was noted to be 31 May 2016.

The meeting ended at 12.31 pm

Chairman

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