

Committee(s)	Dated:
Epping Forest and Commons	16 January 2017
Subject: Epping Forest - Superintendent's Update for October and November 2016	Public
Report of: Superintendent of Epping Forest (SEF 01/17)	For Information
Report author: Paul Thomson – Epping Forest	

Summary

This purpose of this report is to summarise the Epping Forest Division's activities across October and November 2016.

Of particular note was the consideration of the City of London Corporation (Open Spaces) Bill by the House of Commons Opposed Bill Committee; 29 threshold gateway and hub welcome signs were installed across the Forest; the successful award of funding, totalling £120,213, for energy efficiency projects at Epping Forest; work on an Information Sharing Agreement with the Metropolitan Police Service; a comprehensive response to the Epping Forest District Council Local Plan and the successful award of Arts Council Museum Accreditation to The View collection.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Staff and Volunteers

1. Two full-time posts were recruited during the reporting period covering the roles of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Officer and Safety and Assets Assistant.

Budgets

2. Overall spending is at 81% for the 2016/17 financial year which is 9% above the required 72% profile at the eight month point. This figure reduces to 76% when the 3 years of Rural Payments Agency grant funding arrears are taken into account. Both income and expenditure are being carefully planned and monitored accordingly for the remainder of the financial year.

Sustainability

3. Epping Forest has been successful in securing a £55,513 grant from the City of London Energy Efficiency Fund to install Photovoltaic (PV) Solar Panels on 3 roofs at The Warren Complex for which Planning Consent was granted on the 12 December.
4. Epping Forest was also successful in securing additional funds through the Open Spaces Fleet and Machinery fund to make the following environmental improvements:
 - a) £7,457.00 to install window films on the sun facing sides of the Warren office and the View offices in order to reduce heat and glare in the buildings.
 - b) £35,723.00 to upgrade our current lighting to energy efficient Light Emitting Diode (LED) lighting at 4 sites, Harrow Road, Queen Elizabeth Hunting Lodge, High Beach visitor centre, High Beach Public Toilets.
 - c) £21,520.00 to install PV Solar Panels on the roof of Harrow Road Changing rooms.
5. Most of the projects will be run by City Surveyors with a completion date of 2018, while the LED upgrade works will be project managed by Epping Forest for a completion by March 2017.

Epping Forest Projects

Open Spaces Bill 2016

6. The City of London Corporation Open Spaces Bill successfully completed its Opposed Committee stage in the House of Commons on Tuesday 15th November. The Committee determined that there should be one addition, to Clause 12 regarding the applicability of Freedom of Information requests. Officers are considering how to respond to this matter most effectively. The Bill now passes to its Report Stage and Third Reading of the Bill in the Commons in the New Year, after which, if successful, the Bill will move to The House of Lords.

Branching Out HLF Project-

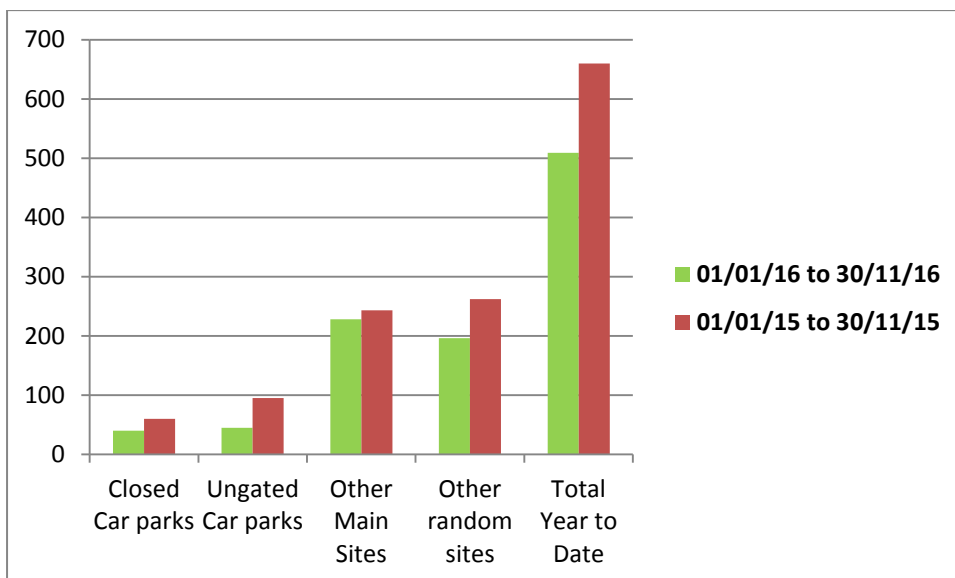
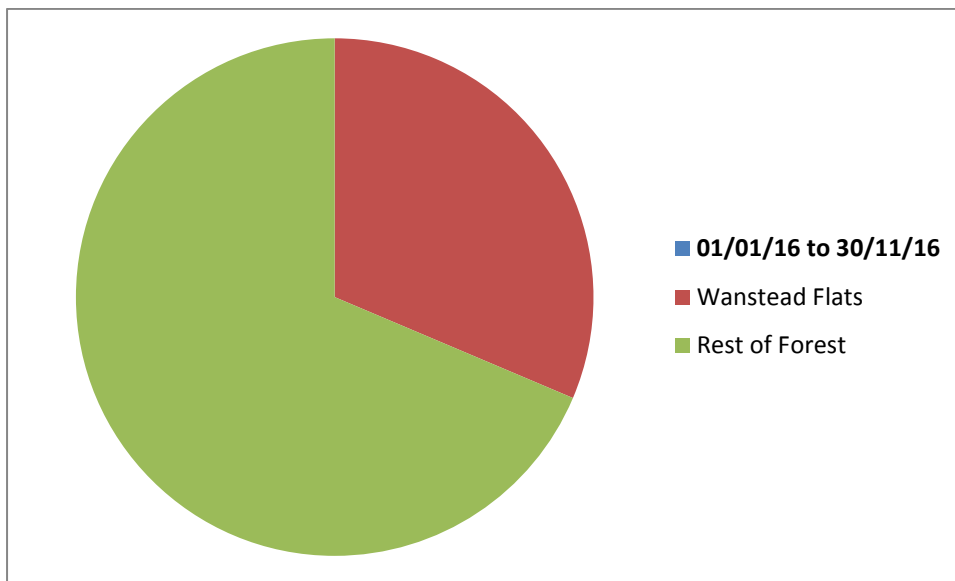
7. Following an unveiling ceremony performed by the Chairman and members of the Spradbery family, 29 of 31 threshold gateway and hub welcome signs were installed across the Forest by 17 November 2016, with the exception of two signs;
 - a) the 'mirror' threshold sign at Honey Lane, which being sited on privately held land requires a Wayleave agreement which is currently still being negotiated, and
 - b) at the location of the Mini Holland Road improvement scheme, Whipps Cross Roundabout is subject to extensive landscaping works. This sign will be erected when the works are completed by London Borough of Waltham Forest later in 2017, with the Highway Authority meeting the costs of installation.

8. The completion of key final documents to support the final draw down claim from the Heritage Lottery Fund are nearing completion including the project evaluation and project legacy documents.

Forest Services

Fly tipping

9. There have been 576 fly tips to the end of November compared to the previous year's figure of 706, representing a decrease of 18.4%. The 97 fly-tips reported during October-November 2016 V representing a decrease of 44.25% compared with 174 fly tips reported during October-November 2015.



10. The 97 fly-tips recorded in October and November are broadly comparable to other reporting periods for the year, and indeed is the same number as the average for the current 12 months reporting period:

Month	Reported Fly-tips	Reporting Period Totals	
December 15	48	106	
January 16	58		
February 16	22	73	
March 16	51		
April 16	53	96	
May 16	43		
June 16	42	102	
July 16	60		
August 16	58	110	
September 16	52		
October 16	49	97	
November 16	48		
Total	584	Average	97

11. The decrease in fly-tips over the corresponding period can be contrasted with the increase in opened investigations. In October/November 2015, only three investigations were opened. In 2016, some 14 investigations were opened for the same period. While not all will result in a prosecutable case, this still represents a 366% increase in investigatory activity.
12. An Information Sharing Agreement (ISA) has been drafted with the Forest Keeper prosecution lead counterpart in the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) at the London Borough of Redbridge. The ISA is currently being authorised at Inspector level before being sent to the MPS Information Sharing Support Unit (ISSU) for quality assurance. In future a named Forest Keeper will be the Epping Forest Single Point of Contract (SPOC) for environmental crime. Once the ISA has gone through the MPS ISSU, the same process will be applied with a MPS counterpart in Waltham Forest. This ISA will allow PNC checks under strict guidelines to support investigatory practice. A specific Data Protection Protocol related to data gathered as part of investigations is being drawn up to support that process. Work is also underway to establish a similar ISA with the Essex Police Service. This should help address the concerns expressed in the last report regarding access to Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) Keeper of a Vehicle at date of Event (KADOE) information when not related to a witnessed offence.
13. The development of better partnership working with the MPS now also extends to access to Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) intelligence through the MPS ANPR and Counter Terrorism (CT) Unit to support existing investigations.
14. Work is now taking place to establish a more formal charging process with regards to instances when an investigation may lead to potential summons. This process will be supported by a charging protocol and it is anticipated that

the first panel will be held in late January or early February, with 16 cases to be assessed for potential charges.

Rough Sleepers

15. This year to date 40 camps have been found in various parts of the Forest, concentrated around Leyton Flats, Wanstead Flats, Gilberts Slade, Canada Plain and Walthamstow Forest.
16. Working closely with the Police Service and Immigration Enforcement, as well as the local authority housing and homelessness officers has resulted in a series of outcomes including referrals to hostel accommodation and a number of arrests with some rough sleepers being repatriated to their countries of origin. In January 2017, there will be two operations with Redbridge and Waltham Forest Councils to deal with camps on the Forest in both these areas. Immigration Enforcement will be involved and there will be a total of five camps to visit. One of the main camps is behind the City of London Cemetery and there is a further large camp at the side of Forest School.

Enforcement Activity

17. Eleven prosecutions were heard during the period under report (see table 1).

Date of Court Hearing	Name of Defendant	Byelaw/EPA	Court Name	Outcome	Amount Awarded
20/10/2016 Hearing Date: 2 Dec 2016 Adjourned to 06/01/2017	Mohammed Waseem ZAKARIA	EPA 33 (5) Controlled waste carried and deposited from a motor vehicle	Thames Magistrates Court	WARRANT	n/a
20/10/2016 TRIAL 05/12/2016 09: 30	Billy MARTIN	EPA 34 1 (a) 2 (a) & 6 Duty of care regarding controlled waste	Thames Magistrates Court	ACQUITTED	n/a
20/10/2016	Muhamed AHID	EPA 33 1 (a) Deposit of controlled waste	Thames Magistrates Court	WARRANT	n/a
20/10/2016	Clement OKOYE	EPA 33 1 (a) Deposit of controlled waste	Thames Magistrates Court	GUILTY	Costs: £899 Fine: £1000
29/09/2016 TRIAL 21/10/2016	Mohammed Firoj ALAM	EPA 34 1 (a) 2 (a) & 6 Duty of care regarding controlled waste	Thames Magistrates Court	GULITY	Costs £100 Fine £150 V/S £30

24/10/2016	Harry FREESTONE	Bye-Law 3 (11b) Driving on the Forest	Chelmsford Magistrates Court	GUILTY	Costs: £150 Fine: £130 V/S: £30
24/10/2016	Ertan SALIH	EPA 34 1 (a) 2 (a) & 6 Duty of care regarding controlled waste	Chelmsford Magistrates	GUILTY	Costs: £600 Fine: £500 V/S £50
24/10/2016	Nicholas Edward Roland BUGGEY	EPA 33 1 (a) Deposit of controlled waste	Chelmsford Magistrates Court	GUILTY	Costs: £300 Fine: £140 V/S £30
20/10/2016 MENTION 17/11/2016 10am Ct 5:	U Altun: Guilty Plea A Altun: Warrant A Tulu: Not Guilty Plea JWV Witt: Not Guilty Plea T Teyrumoglu: Not Guilty Plea The Tanning Bay Ltd: Not Guilty Plea Elvan Food Ltd: Not Guilty Plea	EPA 34 1(a) & Section 157 Duty of care regarding controlled waste	Thames Magistrates Court	TRIAL 10/02/2017	n/a
24/10/2016 PC MH 21/11/2016 10:00	Gopalan SATHIYASEE LAN	EPA 33 (5) Controlled waste carried and deposited from a motor vehicle	Chelmsford Magistrates Court Trial at: Chelmsford Crown Court	TRIAL 15/05/2017	n/a
24/10/2016 PC MH 21/11/2016 10:00:	Anto SHANTHAKU MAR	EPA 33 1 (a) Deposit of controlled waste	Chelmsford Magistrates Court Trial at: Chelmsford Crown Court	TRIAL 15/05/2017	n/a

Licences

18. A total of 50 licences for events were issued during the two months being reported, which yielded an income of £10,621.17 plus VAT. In contrast, 47 licences were issued during the same period in 2015 with an income of £7,623.63, representing a 36.3% rise in income for 2016/17.

Bushcraft

19. Four Bushcraft Events have been delivered in the last two months; these include three Venison Butchery Events and one adult Bushcraft Course delivered by Woodlife Trails generating £1,800 of income.

20. Volunteers contributed 24 hours to the success of this project, 12 skilled hours and 12 professional volunteer hours totalling £720 which offsets the £1,056 of staff time required for these events as venison Butchery events require a higher staff to pupil ratio
21. Volunteer recruitment is still on-going with a new volunteer joining the team and up skilling from staff at every event.

Heritage; Landscape and Nature Conservation

Biodiversity

22. Ramorum disease (*Phytophthora ramorum*) was confirmed as being present in the Warren Plantation on Rhododendrons by the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) in early October. A full report on the outbreak and options was presented to Committee for decision at its November meeting. As reported to Committee in November this pathogen is a serious threat to beech trees and the beech forest, which is the primary feature for the Special Area of Conservation (SAC) designation. The SAC lies only about 100m away from Rhododendrons that were infected. Epping Forest holds the majority of the veteran beech pollards in the UK. The attached map (Appendix 1) shows the proximity of the outbreak to the veteran beech.
23. The Head of Conservation and the Biodiversity Officer have been working closely with the APHA and the Forestry Commission (FC) to decide on a course of action to minimise spread of the disease. The resulting action plan produced jointly by the Heads of Operations and Conservation will involve a mix of mechanical and manual work. Mulchers, tractor-mounted machinery and chainsaws will be employed depending on the topography and will be carried out by both contractors and in-house staff across different sites, including in different parts of The Warren Plantation (see Appendix 2 for proposed working areas).
24. The Heads of Visitor Services and Conservation have been working with the City of London Public Relation Office and other stakeholders to handle communications. The CoL web-site now has information about the disease and the rationale for our proposed actions and timetable for those actions. There are also links to the APHA and FC websites for Forest visitors who would like to know more about the national and international distribution of the disease (see web-site text attached at Appendix 3).
25. Working against considerable time constraints, the Environmental Stewardship Officer has secured a grant from FC which will assist financially with the clearance of the Rhododendrons within a 3km radius from The Warren Plantation outbreak. This clearance work will start on 9th January 2016.
26. In addition, tenders are being sought from contractors for the felling and removal of the larch trees also during winter 2016-17. The value of the timber should offset most if not all of the cost of the felling.
27. The Warren Plantation is part of Copped Hall Registered Park and Garden Grade II*. The Rhododendrons and a small number of the larch are historic plantings associated with the landscaping of this parkland. The

Rhododendrons down the driveway to Copped Hall have been surveyed by an expert. The remaining Rhododendrons will be surveyed in January 2016. In the meantime, a comprehensive map of the larch has been created from the Biodiversity Officer's detailed survey in December and is attached at Appendix 4.

28. The Head Forest Keeper organised a Biosecurity training day for staff in December with the Forestry Commission and the Animal and Plant Health Agency officers giving presentations and an exercise in which there was a disease outbreak scenario that had to be resolved by participants. The evaluations from staff participating in the day were very positive and the exercise was both stimulating and useful, highlighting a number of pertinent issues for the Forest.

Agri-environment Schemes

29. One contractor continues to deliver habitat works required under the Higher Level Stewardship scheme (HLS). During October and November Walthamstow Forest, Honey Lane and Pillow Mound Woodlands were worked.
30. To date, Epping Forest, Burnham Beeches and the remainder of The Commons had individual business identifiers with the Rural Payments Agency (RPA). The RPA have reviewed the business relationships between these three sites and have decided that they should have one business identifier as the City of London Corporation. This will result in one annual application being submitted for the Basic Payment Scheme for all three sites from now onwards. Furthermore, any RPA inspection will cover all three sites and any breaches of the rules will affect all three sites.

Grazing

31. Since the departing of Wildlife and Countryside Services (W&CS), Epping Forest has purchased 36 Longhorn cattle to increase the numbers for the forthcoming grazing season including a new bull "Uther". Of the original Longhorn cows 15 will be calving from the end of January onwards. Epping Forest's current head count is 74 animals.
32. Fencing work and a new collection area has been completed at Trueloves and Great Gregories concrete field. The new fencing at Great Gregories adjacent to the cattle buildings will allow the cattle to be more easily trained to the invisible fencing system and load them for turnout to the Forest.
33. Epping Forest has also purchased a new truck drawn livestock trailer to help with animal movements.

Land Management

Town & Country Planning

34. A full response was made to the EFDC Local Plan consultation and this was copied to members in December and is attached at Appendix 5 for reference.
35. Following on from this, The Head of Conservation attended a meeting with EFDC, ECC Highways and their consultants Jacobs on 20th December to

discuss the requirements for traffic and air pollution modelling now that the detailed proposals for housing locations are known. A detailed model is to be designed to cover the main Forest roads around the Wake Arms roundabout. Two weeks' of detailed traffic counts, including number plate recognition surveys, will collect data to inform the model and allow it to be calibrated to fit the Forest road traffic levels.

36. Officers commented on 10 planning applications during the period in question. Key points included:
- a) EFDC Garden Centre Crown Hill – the previous outline application for 21 residential houses has been refused. Two further outline applications submitted; one for 19 residential houses which remains outstanding while a further application for 4 detached houses as a self-build scheme has already been refused.
 - b) EFDC land south of Horseshoe Hill, Upshire (project known as Fisherman's Cove) - Removal of trees and existing structures on land to accommodate the development of a live/work unit which includes an artist's studio – land adjoins Gifford Wood and the proposal included the loss of 23 trees, 10 of which had preservation orders on them. This application has been subsequently refused.
37. The Millhouse Farm, Epping application for 7 dwellings for the over 55's before Epping Forest District Council has been refused as inappropriate development within the Green Belt.

Visitor Services

Communication and Information

38. As of 22 December 2016 our social media following is:
- Twitter followers: 5,303
 - Facebook likes: 533
 - Instagram followers: 205
39. The Winter 2016/2017 edition of Forest Focus has been produced. This edition features Sports Personality of the Year runner-up, Triathlete, Alistair Brownlee and his brother, Jonny Brownlee, on the front cover. The winter edition has been very well received and distributed widely in the local area.
40. A successful link established with local Estate Agent Stow Brothers who in addition to advertising in Forest Focus have agreed to print promotional literature for Epping Forest free of charge.

Museum Accreditation

41. As reported verbally to your previous Committee meeting Epping Forest achieved a successful award of Museum Accreditation from Arts Council England on 6 October 2016 for what is formally The View (Epping Forest Collection) of museum objects held at The View, Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge, High Beach Visitor Centre and in store. The award will hold for 3 years

with resubmission in 2019. It covers not only management of the collection from a documentation and conservation point of view but all aspects of how we engage with our visitors.

42. Epping Forest was also successful in applying for a museum grant 'Improve and Innovate' from Museum of London as museum hub for Arts Council England funding, value £5,000, for us to pilot a new audience segmentation framework from Audience Agency, and link this to new ways of promoting the Forest.
43. In addition the Forest was also successful in applying for a small grant of £500 'Digital Futures', also from Museum of London, to purchase a tripod, photographic lights and a background screen to enable us to take better quality object photographs for publicity and documentation.

Chingford Golf Course

44. As of 11th December (week 40) Chingford net income is £220,000 (77%) against an annual budget target of £283,000. Promotions developed through the Groupon® electronic coupon promotion website still continues to provide additional income.
45. The re-wiring of the Caddie House began during week commencing 12 December and should be completed prior to the Christmas Break.
46. Following interviews for the former Tee House Café within the Caddie House Building at Chingford Golf Course, an accompanying non-public report makes recommendations regarding the lease award. The Golf Manager has met with prospective tenants to involve them with the refurbishment work that is now scheduled to begin in January, with a deadline for completion on 28 February.
47. The Golf Team is currently awaiting a design for a proposed Foot Golf project which is expected in early January and will be brought to Committee for future consideration.

Visitor Services Events

48. The first ever Epping Forest Walking Festival was held from Wednesday 19 October to Wednesday 26 October: A total of 14 walks in the Forest were led by our Walking Festival partners, each reporting a successful event.
49. The latest temporary Exhibition at The View 'Shadowburb', featured local artist Edwin Aitken from Sunday 1 October to Wednesday 2 November, and covered a range of plant and animal motifs and semi-abstract art work.
50. Silver Sunday, 2 October, The View. A reminiscence event as part of the national Silver Sunday heritage for older people season. We invited people to drop by to write down their memories of the Forest, particularly from the 1950s and 1960s. This was a successful and new type of event which Visitor Services will replay in 2017.
51. As part of the Big Draw campaign Gothic Shadow Puppets and the Wanstead Story featured on Thursday, 13 October 6-8pm, at Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge. This event aimed at a family audience was a pilot to see whether a twilight weekday event would work for this market. Visitor Services wanted to take advantage of the marvellous candlelit atmosphere in the Hunting Lodge.

The event was greatly appreciated by attendees but low attendance suggests the time doesn't work for this target segment of the public.

52. Black History Month: Discover and Draw Tudors, Tuesday 15 October, 2-4pm, Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge. Visitor Services combined this family event with a reshewing of the 2015 Black Tudors exhibition telling the stories of known black Tudor people, some of them known to Henry VIII and Elizabeth I. The Museum and Heritage Manager was invited to speak about what we had been doing for Black History Month at a conference 'What's Happened in Black History' at Senate House, Museum of London, and has been asked to repeat this talk at London Metropolitan Archive for their Migration Festival in May 2017.
53. Pumpkin Carving held during the half term week was a sell-out success again and is always popular.
54. Redbridge Recorders Ensemble at the Hunting Lodge, Sunday 20 November. We played host to young Redbridge music service recorder consorts playing an afternoon of Tudor music to friends and relatives and our public. Heritage partnership working at no cost which brought in many a good audience of new visitors to the Forest, Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic (BAME) and 'hard to reach' teenagers among them.

Major incidents

55. A major emergency planning training exercise was hosted across two days with members of the emergency services and armed forces.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 - Ramorum Infection Site locations & SAC Beech populations
- Appendix 2 - Rhododendron clearance plan map
- Appendix 3 - Ramorum CoL Website text
- Appendix 4 - Larch map
- Appendix 5 - Conservators' Response to EFDC Local Plan Reg 18 consultation

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