

Committee	Dated:
Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queen's Park Committee	15 May 2017
Subject: Golders Hill Park Zoo Vision & Collection Plan	Public
Report of: Superintendent of Hampstead Heath	For Decision
Report author: Declan Gallagher, Open Spaces & Heritage Department	

Summary

The Golders Hill Park Zoo Vision has been developed to promote greater public engagement and to reflect the changing nature of 'Wildlife in Britain', particularly on Hampstead Heath, and telling the story of why some species have vanished while others have become established.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- Agree the Golders Hill Park Zoo Vision and the key themes of the 'Wildlife in Britain' Collection Plan.
- Provide feedback on the draft Enclosure Plan.

Main Report

Background

1. There have been animal enclosures in Golders Hill Park since the early part of the twentieth century. The current Animal Collection Plan was last reviewed in July 2011 and agreed by this Committee.

Current Position

2. The City must comply with the Zoo Licensing Act 1981 and the Secretary of State's Standards of Modern Zoo Practice. Inspection takes place every three years and the Zoo retained its license following the most recent inspection on 11 November 2016. It was acknowledged by the Inspectors that the Vision and Collection Plan were being reviewed.

Zoo Vision

3. An over-arching Vision has been developed, together with four key themes: Welfare, Welcoming, Engagement and Collection (see Appendix 1). This includes an Outcomes Framework with key indicators and performance measures.

Collection Plan

4. The aim of the Collection Plan is to develop a strong narrative thread that runs through all aspects of the Animal Collection. This will influence the choice of species, site aesthetics, learning opportunities and the overall message we aim to deliver to the public. So far as possible, we will also maintain a clear connection with wildlife found on the Heath, particularly through our interpretation and Learning Programme. The guiding story will be that of 'Wildlife in Britain'.
5. This focus encompasses past, present and future species inhabiting the British Isles, reaching back as far as the loss of the eagle owl as a native inhabitant, through the losses and gains coinciding with human history, and looking ahead to the future impact of species newly arrived on our shores. To this end, it is our intention that eventually, every species housed in the Collection will fit into at least one of the following overlapping categories: current native species, historic native species and introduced/invasive species.
6. **Current Native Species:** Those species that reside naturally in Britain today. Some such as the red squirrel and wild cat are often used as champions for native conservation efforts and are being considered as part of the Collection Plan. The number of native British mammals surviving today is greatly reduced from historical levels, leaving us with only around 30 terrestrial mammal species. The Collection will use some of these to highlight the degree to which wildlife in Britain has changed over the centuries, due to human impact and conflict with invasive and introduced species.
7. **Historical Native Species:** The British Isles were once home to a great many more mammal species than survive today. A combination of natural climate change, human intervention and habitat loss has meant that many species have been wiped out or have naturally receded from Britain, although most persist on the European mainland. These include the Eurasian eagle owl (one of our current visitor favourites), together with many unexpected species such as the grey wolf, brown bear, wild boar*, Eurasian beaver*, Eurasian lynx*, aurochs (wild cattle), elk, reindeer, European bison and even wolverine. Security concerns mean that many of these species are unsuitable for the Collection at Golders Hill Park, but they will form an important aspect of our interpretation and learning programme. (** have either been reintroduced or are currently proposed for reintroduction.*)
8. **Introduced/Invasive Species:** A significant number of species have only inhabited the British Isles in more recent times, forming successful breeding populations. These species arrive either by natural spread (little egrets since 1996), escapes (parakeets in the 1970s) or unauthorised releases (wild boar 1970-90s). In addition, some of our most commonly seen mammal species are

the result of unintentional releases. This includes both brown and black rats (spread from Asia with maritime travel) and the grey squirrel (introduced in the 1870s), which has had a catastrophic impact on our own native red squirrel population.

9. Other examples of introduced/invasive species currently living, breeding and competing for resources in the British Isles include red-necked wallaby, Reeves muntjac, Sika deer, water deer, fallow deer, common pheasant, edible dormouse, rabbit, hare, terrapins and the American mink. While some of these species are obvious outsiders, many visitors will be surprised by the presence of at least some of these names as being non-native. The impact and integration of this type of species are a significant part of the tale of the changing nature of 'Wildlife in Britain'.
10. The current Animal Collection at the Zoo is a mix of native and non-native species, compiled from what was available from surplus stock lists when any vacancies occurred.
11. A number of options will need to be considered for the disposal and replacement of the existing Animal Collection, some of which will be retained until they die of natural causes as they are unsuitable for rehoming.
12. The redevelopment of the Zoo will take between five and ten years to complete, and a series of tasks will be incorporated into the Golders Hill Park Annual Work Programme to deliver the Project.
13. Eventually, every species housed in the Collection will fit into at least one of the three 'Wildlife in Britain' overlapping categories detailed above.

Consultation

14. Members of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee visited the Zoo on 11 March, as part of their Committee walk. An update was presented to the Consultative Committee at their 13 March meeting, as part of the Superintendent's Update Report. Members of the Committee were supportive of the proposals.
15. On 12 April the Operational Services Manager and Zoo staff met with representatives of the Heath & Hampstead Society Heath Sub-Committee on-site to discuss the Zoo Vision and draft Enclosure Plan. The feedback received was supportive of the proposals.
16. A programme of public engagement will help shape the Project Plan and provide an important opportunity to develop the 'welcoming' and 'engagement' themes that form part of the Zoo Vision.

Proposals

17. The Superintendent is seeking Members' agreement to the Golders Hill Park Zoo Vision, the Outcomes Framework and the three overlapping categories of the 'Wildlife in Britain' Collection Plan (Appendix 1).
18. The draft Enclosure Plan has been prepared to illustrate how the Zoo layout could be reconfigured to improve the animal enclosures and to enhance visitors experience. The Superintendent would welcome feedback from Members on the draft Enclosure Plan (Appendix 2).

Corporate & Strategic Implications

19. The Zoo Vision and Collection Plan supports the Corporate Plan (2015 -2019) Core Value 2 '*Providing services in an efficient and sustainable manner that meet the needs of our varied communities, as established through dialogue and consultation*', the Open Spaces & Heritage Business Plan (2016-2020) '*Protect and conserve the ecology, biodiversity and heritage of our sites*', and the Hampstead Heath Management Plan (2007-17) objective E3 '*Increase outreach work to schools and community groups*'.

Implications

20. The costs associated with the Zoo Vision and Collection Plan will be met from the Superintendent's Local Risk Budget. In addition, the Zoo Team Leader is currently exploring external funding opportunities.

Conclusion

21. Implementing the Zoo Vision and Collection Plan with its three overlapping categories (Current Native Species, Historic Native Species and Introduced/Invasive Species) will enable the City of London to transform the Zoo Animal Collection into a well-structured, high-quality public resource, which reflects the changing nature of 'Wildlife in Britain' and promotes engagement with wildlife.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 –Golders Hill Park Zoo Vision
- Appendix 2 – Draft Enclosure Plan

Background Papers

- Zoo Licencing Act 1981

Declan Gallagher

Operational Services Manager, Open Spaces & Heritage Department

T: 020 7332 3772

E: declan.gallagher@cityoflondon.gov.uk]