

Committee(s)	Dated:
Epping Forest & Commons	20 11 2017
Subject: Epping Forest Consultative Committee – Selection of Organisations (SEF 28/17)	Public
Report of: Director of Open Spaces & Heritage	For Decision
Report author: Jo Hurst, Business Manager Epping Forest	

Summary

Agreement to establish an Epping Forest Consultative Committee was given in March 2016, with further agreement on the Terms of Reference in July 2017. Open invitations to express interest, under those terms have now closed. This report gives details of those expressions of interest and makes recommendations for the final composition of the Consultative Committee for the next three years.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Approve the selection as explained herein.

Main Report

Background

1. In March 2016 your Committee agreed to begin work on establishing an Epping Forest Consultative Committee, to provide a formal platform for public consultation on the management of the Forest.
2. The City of London Corporation (Open Spaces) Bill, which is currently at Committee Stage in the House of Lords, includes new requirements to consult publically, and this Consultative Committee will expand the City Corporation's considerable commitment to public engagement as established and detailed in the report to your Committee in July 2017.
3. Your Committee agreed Terms of Reference including schedule and selection criteria in July 2017. According to these terms, representation from approximately 16 groups was sought. Where interest is oversubscribed, your Committee may select according to membership numbers, geographic coverage and area of interest (not in order of importance).
4. The Terms of Reference state in paragraph 5 that the first meeting will be scheduled in Loughton (as far as is possible)... in autumn 2017.

Current Position

5. Expressions of interest were invited from 15th August 2017 with closing date 22nd September 2017. Letters and emails were sent to 38 known organisations both around the Forest and with a wider or national interest.
6. The City of London website was updated to include Terms of Reference and how to apply. This was also broadcast through social media and attracted satisfactory local and national press coverage.
7. These agreed Terms of Reference and associated communications gave the number of seats available to external organisations as sixteen.
8. Applicants were required to provide:
 - name and contact details of their organisation
 - name and contact details of nominated representative
 - membership numbers, plus details of further affiliations if appropriate
 - geographic area of interest (if only part of Epping Forest), plus subject interest (e.g. sports, heritage, conservation, etc.)
 - a copy of their organisation's constitution and details of legal status (e.g. registered charity)

9. A total of 19 applications were received by the closing date as follows:

Organisation	Members	Constitution
London Wildlife Trust	15000	Supplied
Open Spaces Society	1910	Supplied
Theydon Bois & District Rural Preservation Society	1700	Supplied
Epping Forest Heritage Trust	1463	Supplied
Loughton Residents Association	1216	Supplied
Highams Park Planning Group (inc Snedders)	1037	Supplied
Orion Harriers	795	Supplied
Buckhurst Hill Community Association	600	Supplied
London Parks and Gardens Trust	600	Supplied
Friends of Wanstead Parklands	565	Supplied
Bushwood Area Residents Association	500	Supplied
WREN Wildlife & Conservation Group	306	Supplied
Highams Residents Association	300	Supplied
EFRA	250	Supplied
Western Front Association (London East)	100	Supplied
Highams Park Forum	99	None
Epping Forest Conservation Volunteers	85	Supplied
Chingford Historical Society	60	None
Epping Forest Forum	34	Supplied
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	26,620	

Options

10. Option 1 – invite all 19 applicant organisations to attend. This number is above the stated optimum but should still be manageable. ***This option is not recommended.***
11. Option 2 – select 16 organisations by applying criteria as laid out in the terms of reference. ***This option is recommended***

Proposals

12. Of the nineteen submissions, two organisations (Chingford Historical Society and Highams Park Forum) were unable to provide a constitution, or other formal documentation such as Articles of Association. The requirement to be representative through being properly constituted was a stipulation of your Committee and as such these groups should not be allocated a place.

13. The London East Branch of the Western Front Association made no case as to their connection with the Forest or established interest in its management. Their constitution is summarised as follows:

- a) The Western Front Association ('the Association') was formed with the aim of furthering interest in the period 1914-1918, to perpetuate the memory, courage and comradeship of those of all sides who served their countries in France and Flanders and their own countries during the Great War .
- b) Although a respected institution, the relevance of their work to the broader management considerations of the Forest was not explained, and hence as places are oversubscribed this group should not be allocated a place on the basis of 'Theme of interest'.

14. The sixteen remaining applications are all formal, constituted organisations and fulfil criteria outlined in the application process.

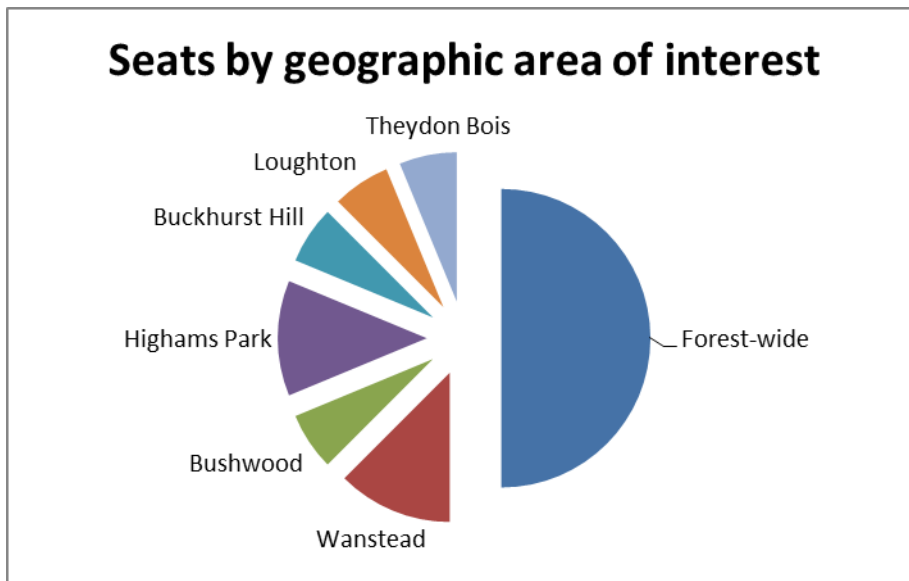
15. Analysis of these sixteen gives the following:

Buckhurst Hill Community Association	600	Buckhurst Hill	General
Bushwood Area Residents Association	500	Bushwood	General
EFRA	250	Forest-wide	Recreation
Epping Forest Conservation Volunteers	85	Forest-wide	Conservation
Epping Forest Forum	34	Forest-wide	General
Epping Forest Heritage Trust	1463	Forest-wide	Friends & Voluntary
Friends of Wanstead Parklands	565	Wanstead	Friends & Voluntary
Highams Park Planning Group (inc Snedders)	1037	Highams Park	General
Highams Residents Association	300	Highams Park	General
London Parks and Gardens Trust	600	Forest-wide	Heritage
London Wildlife Trust	15000	Forest-wide	Conservation
Loughton Residents Association	1216	Loughton	General
Open Spaces Society	1910	Forest-wide	Recreation
Orion Harriers	795	Forest-wide	Sports
Theydon Bois & District Rural Preservation Society	1700	Theydon Bois	Conservation
WREN Wildlife & Conservation Group	306	Wanstead	Conservation

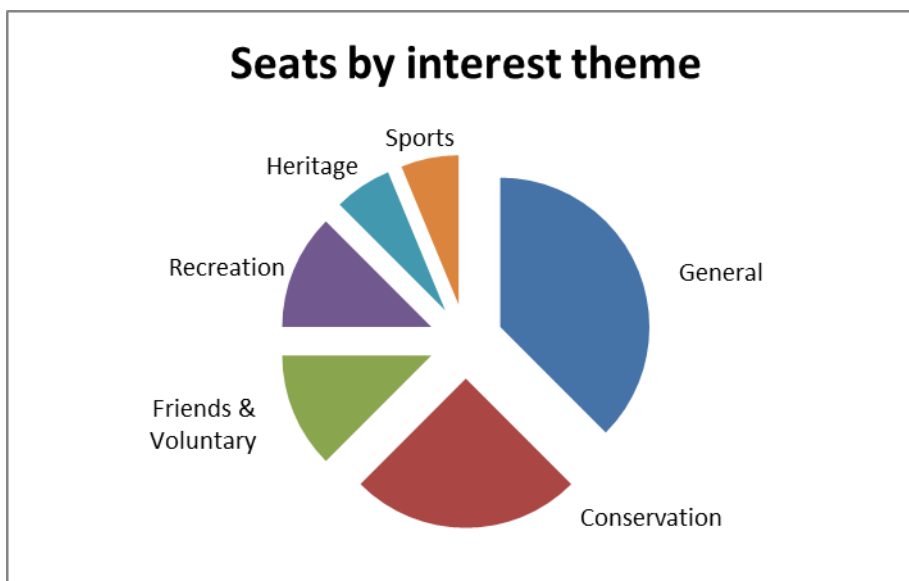
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- These organisations together represent over 26,000 members.

- Split over the geographic Forest areas is as follows.



- Split by theme of interest is as follows



16. Most areas seem to be well represented and balanced. However it is of concern that some themes may be underrepresented, in particular formal sports, where there is no specific representation for football or golf in particular; or cycling which also lacks specific representation. It is thought that other areas such as walking, rambling and dog walking are likely to be well represented by the organisations in the 'General' and 'Recreation' themes.

17. Should your Committee feel the need to address those underrepresented areas as mentioned in 16, paragraph 19 of the Terms of Reference allows appointment of further members or co-opted representatives to attend where it deems appropriate.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

18. The establishment of the Epping Forest Consultative Committee supports KPP5 of the Corporate Plan “Developing and improving the physical environment around our key cultural attractions; and providing safe, secure, and accessible Open Spaces” as well as “Working in partnership - Building strong and effective working relationships - both by acting in a joined-up and cohesive manner, and by developing external partnerships across the public, private and voluntary sectors – to achieve our shared objectives.”
19. The Open Spaces and Heritage Business Plan states:
Core Value 2 The right services at the right price - Providing services in an efficient and sustainable manner that meet the needs of our varied communities, as established through dialogue and consultation

Implications

20. A public commitment to establish such a Consultative Committee at Epping Forest has already been made. Visible progress on this is necessary to improve current arrangements for public consultation and decision-making at Epping Forest and will assist the progress of the Open Spaces Bill currently going through Parliament.”
21. The costs of providing the Consultative Committee in terms of Room Hire and Officer time for the publication of reports and meeting attendance will be met by the Epping Forest Local Risk Budgets. The resources required for the publication of agendas; reports and minutes will be provided by the Town Clerk’s Department.

Conclusion

22. Establishment of an Epping Forest Consultative Committee has already been approved by your Committee. Invitations to express interest have been carried out according to agreed terms and selection to achieve the required number is recommended herein.

Appendices

- None - Constitutions of the organisations mentioned can be supplied on request.

Background Papers

Epping Forest Consultative Committee, Report of the Remembrancer, March 2016.
Epping Forest Consultative Committee, Report of Superintendent of Epping Forest, July 2017

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