



## Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee

**Date:** MONDAY, 9 JULY 2012  
**Time:** 7.00 pm  
**Venue:** EDUCATION CENTRE, THE LIDO, OFF GORDON HOUSE ROAD,  
HAMPSTEAD HEATH, NW5

9. **FLOOD MANAGEMENT AND WATER QUALITY PROJECT - COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY**

Report of the Superintendent of Hampstead Heath (copy attached).

Item received too late for circulation in conjunction with the Agenda.

**Chris Duffield**  
**Town Clerk and Chief Executive**

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# Agenda Item 9

<b>Committee(s):</b>	<b>Date(s):</b>
Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee	9 <sup>th</sup> July 2012
<b>Subject:</b> Flood Management and Water Quality Project – Communications Strategy	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Superintendent of Hampstead Heath	<b>For Discussion</b>
<b><u>Summary</u></b>	
<p>This report presents a Communication Strategy for managing all communications associated with the Flood Management and Water Quality project.</p>	
<b>Recommendations</b>	
<p>That Committee's views on the Communications Strategy which details the Vision, Aims and Key Messages for different audiences associated with the implementation of the Flood Management and Water Quality Project be received.</p>	

## **Main Report**

### **Background**

1. At the Court of Common Council on the 14<sup>th</sup> July 2011 approval was given to the upgrade of the pond embankments on the Hampstead and Highgate chains, at an estimated cost of £15.12m ± 20%. The works are required to reduce the risk of pond overtopping, embankment erosion and failure, to comply with the Reservoirs Act 1975 together with the emerging Flood and Water Management Act 2010. It will also provide design solutions that ensure that the City also meets its obligations under the Hampstead Heath Act 1871. The project also seeks to improve water quality so that the City meets its obligations under the EU Water Bathing Directive.
2. Given the complexity and risks associated with this project a Communications Strategy has been devised to ensure information about the project is available and understood by Heath users and the wider community.

### **Current Position**

3. One of the key risks identified by this project is the need to communicate and engage with heath users and the wider community during the detailed design stage and beyond. Communicating effectively with all stakeholders is critical to the success of this project. In January 2012 the City appointed

- a Water Management Communications Officer to lead on this aspect of the project.
4. The Communications Strategy (see copy appended to this report) is a document which will inform all communications throughout the duration of the project.
  5. The Strategy lays out the vision, aims and the key messages. It details the target audiences and then describes the communication tools that will be used to reach these audiences.
  6. The overall aims of the Strategy are:
    - Be clear and open about the project, why it is necessary and the scope of the project.
    - Manage communications in the public domain positively and effectively.
  7. A two-way flow of information is essential in this project and the Communications Strategy will sit alongside a consultation programme, which is in its development phase.

### **Water Management Stakeholder Group**

8. A key audience within the Communication Strategy is the Water Management Stakeholder Group. The overall aim of this Group is to provide:

*“a body of people with knowledge and interest in Hampstead Heath established as a group to provide views and advice to the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee in relation to the Flood and Water Management Project within the context of the Hampstead Heath Act 1871 and relevant reservoirs legislation”*

9. The Terms of Reference will be approved by the Management Committee but a copy is appended to this report. To keep the Group manageable representation is being kept to the following groups, who represent users and the communities north and south of the dams:

- Brookfield Mansions
- Dartmouth Park CAAC
- Fitzroy Park Residents' Association
- Hampstead Heath Anglers Society
- Heath & Hampstead Society
- Highgate Society
- Mansfield CAAC
- Men's Pond

- Kenwood Ladies Pond
- Mixed Pond
- Oak Village Residents' Association
- South End Green Association
- Vale of Health Society

10. As with other Stakeholder Groups/Forum, copies of the notes of this Group will be circulated to all Members of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee. The views of the Heath Consultative Committee being formally reported to the Management Committee.

### **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

11. The works link to the City Together Strategy themes of supporting our communities and protecting, promoting and enhancing our environment. The scheme will improve community facilities, conserve/enhance biodiversity and contribute to a reduction in water pollution. The Communications Strategy will further promote the Heath as a unique and historic open space. There are also links with the Corporate Plan strategic aims of providing excellent services for our communities and valued services for London and the nation as a whole.
12. Creating a Communications Strategy to help deliver the Flood Management and Water Quality Project supports the Heath's Management Plan (Towards a Plan for the Heath 2007 -2017) objective to manage the Heath's ponds and watercourses to enhance their nature conservation value, reduce flood risk and address water quality problems. The work proposed is required to ensure the risk to life is minimised, and comply with the City's existing and expected statutory obligations. The Strategy should help mitigate any risk to the reputation of the City throughout the duration of the project.

### **Implications**

13. As outlined, this Strategy supports all aspects of communication associated with this complex project. It recognises that there are many audiences that require different information about the project, why it is required and the potential benefits that will be derived, not least protection of communities south of the Heath and enhancement of ecological habitats. Implementation of the strategy will be led by the Flood Management Communication Officer whose post is funded as part of the detailed design costs.

### **Conclusion**

14. The Communications Strategy will allow the City to inform and educate stakeholders, residents and Heath users on the need for the project. It will

ensure that communications between the city and stakeholders are kept open and the project is positively publicised.

## **Appendices**

Communications Strategy – Hampstead Heath Flood Management and Water Quality Project

### **Contact:**

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# **Communications Strategy – Hampstead Heath Water Management Project**

## **Introduction**

Hampstead Heath is one of London's most popular open spaces, with seven million visitors per year.

An oasis of beautiful countryside in urban surroundings, the magic of Hampstead Heath lies not only in its rich wildlife and extensive sports and recreational opportunities, but also in its proximity and accessibility to millions of people. There is a zoo, an athletics track, an education centre, extensive children's facilities, three swimming ponds and a Lido.

The City of London Corporation has managed Hampstead Heath since 1989. The amount spent maintaining the Heath is £6.2 million pounds annually. This money comes from the City Corporation's private funds and not from the UK taxpayer.

In 2009 a study found that dams on some of the Heath's many ponds needed to be improved. They could fail if there was heavy or sustained rainfall. The dams need remodelling to avoid a failure and an inundation of water into residential areas such as Dartmouth Park and from Gospel Oak down to King's Cross. This work is required so the dams meet the existing requirements of the Reservoirs Act 1975 and future requirements set out in the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 but not yet brought into force.

In addition the project must preserve, as far as may be, the natural aspect of the Heath as laid out in the Hampstead Heath Act 1871. Conserving the wildlife and the need for a cost effective solution are two other essential elements.

Work has already begun surveying the ponds and once people who use the Heath and the surrounding community are consulted and planning permission is gained and the scheme could be completed by 2015.

## **Vision**

Conserving the natural aspect of the Heath while protecting public safety.

## **Aims**

The communications aims of the project are set out below:

Overall Aims:

- Be clear and open about the project, why it is necessary and the scope of the project
- Manage communications in the public domain positively and effectively.

## Specific Aims

- Inform and educate stakeholders, residents and Heath users on the need for the project. Ensure these key audiences are kept informed and are provided with information and understanding of the key issues as and when required
- Ensure communication channels with the stakeholders/residents are open; that they have sufficient information to understand the reason behind the project and are kept informed as to how they can become involved in the process. Update them on how their views/contributions are making a difference to the project.
- Ensure the wider public understand why the project is required and the benefits that will be derived, including educational benefits.
- Ensure that any concern or request for information is appropriately addressed.
- Ensure the press and media is informed and educated to promote balanced and accurate coverage. Provide regular updates and briefings and access to supporting information where possible, including any graphics, maps, photos and illustrations which may be of use.

## Key Messages

The messages we have chosen to communicate look to inform around the reasons for the project, progress of the project and the benefits it will bring. Many of these key messages will be applicable to more than one group. Some, or all, of these messages will be used in publicity material and support materials produced for the project. All groups will be made aware we want to hear from anyone who has an opinion on the project or just wants more information; communications around the project will be open and transparent.

### Primary

- The aim of the project is BOTH to preserve the natural landscape of the Heath AND ensure the safety of the dams

### Further key messages

- The conservation of the natural aspect of Hampstead Heath is a priority
- The design of the new dams must be sympathetic to the landscape
- This is essential work that needs to be done for the safety and protection of residents and businesses in the area
- It is in everyone's interest to carry out the project with minimal disruption but it is a major project which will require a significant amount of work



- Hampstead Heath will still be open to visitors with only the essential areas not accessible while the works take place
- The project will bring long lasting benefits to the Heath including improving water quality and creating new habitats for wildlife
- This project is led by legislation and the City is the responsible body and is following the advice of the statutory panel engineer
- The project will bring about educational opportunities
- The existing ponds on the Heath are all man made and all have existing dams, some of which are several metres high
- Wherever possible materials from the Heath will be used to strengthen existing dams, creating new habitats for wildlife and reducing traffic movements.

### **Target Audiences**

#### 1. Stakeholder group

This group is made up of representatives from key interest/community groups and will meet regularly to discuss the project. This group will be closely involved throughout all stages of the project providing advice and views to help influence the design and implementation of the scheme.

#### 2. Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee

Twenty-two representatives of local groups and Heath activities, briefed at least every two months. This group will be involved throughout the project and are the body that formally advise the Heath Management Committee.

#### 3. Staff

This includes staff from the Open Spaces division who will be involved in the project and other City of London staff. Staff who will be working closely to the project should be kept fully briefed should they need to respond to questions from the public. Other staff should be made aware of the project and why it is necessary and be briefed throughout the duration of the project.

#### 4. Visitors to Hampstead Heath

People who visit and enjoy the Heath should be made aware of the project and are informed why the work is necessary. They should be given the opportunity to give their points of view and input into the process.

#### 5. Local residents and wider community including schools

Make the community surrounding Hampstead Heath aware of the need to carry out this work. They should be given the opportunity to give their points of view and input into the process. Hard to reach groups need to be specifically targeted.

6. Business Community

Business on and around the Heath should be made aware of the project so they can measure the impact it may have on their businesses and also communicate information to their customers

7. Other Interest groups

This includes swimmers associations, sports clubs and other user groups. It also includes agencies such as English Heritage, the RSPB, the Environment Agency. These groups should be kept up to date throughout the duration of the project so they can measure the impact it has on their activity and communicate information to their members and customers. They should also be encouraged to input into the process.

8. Local Authorities which border the Heath

Ensure the relevant council officers at the LA's who border the Heath are fully aware of the project and the effect it might have on their own water management plans and emergency plans.

9. Members and Politicians

Provide all Members of the City of London Corporation and local politicians with information on the project. Lines of communication with the project team should remain open and all members/councillors should be aware they can contact the team at any time for updates/information.

10. Press and media

Gain balanced coverage of the progress of the project in the local and national press at key project milestones. Achieve coverage in the trade press which identifies the project as a significant one. Respond when appropriate to any wrong information printed.

11. Campaign Groups

Keep communication channels open between City of London and campaign/pressure groups to ensure they have the most accurate information on the project.

### **Media and Press enquiries**

Press enquiries on this project should all be directed through the Water Management Communications Officer who will liaise with the Public Relations Office and appropriate officers and members in formulating a response.

## Communication Tools

It is imperative that all information that goes into the public domain is controlled and effective.

To ensure this, the communications tools must be appropriate to the audience.

AUDIENCE	TOOLS
Stakeholder Group	Regular meetings Group presentations Site visits One to one meetings with members of the project team Email bulletins Website
Consultative Committee	Regular meetings Group presentations Site visits Email bulletins Website
Staff	Briefings through line managers Site visits Committees Email bulletins City of London internal publications Website (intranet and internet)

AUDIENCE	TOOLS
Visitors to Heath	Exhibitions Website Public events Press and media Advertising /posters in public areas Newsletters / comment cards Opinion pieces/letters to the press Social Networking sites
Surrounding community	Exhibitions Website Public events Press and media Advertising /posters in public areas Newsletters / comment cards Mail outs
Business community and other interest groups	Presentations Site visits One to one briefings Website
Local Authorities	Presentations Site visits One to one briefings

AUDIENCE	TOOLS
	Local Authority publications  Website
Members/Politicians	One to one meetings  Presentations  Briefing packs  Site visits  Newsletter  Website
Press and media	Briefing packs  Press releases  Regular columns  Interviews  One to one briefings  Site visits  Facility visits  Website  Social Networking sites
Campaign groups	Newsletters  Briefing packs  Site visits  Face-to-face meetings  Website

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# **HAMPSTEAD HEATH**

## **Water Management Stakeholder Group**

### **Draft Terms of Reference**

#### **Overall Aim**

The Water Management Stakeholder Group is a body of people with knowledge and interest in Hampstead Heath established as a group to provide views and advice to the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee in relation to the Flood and Water Management Project within the context of the Hampstead Heath Act 1871 and relevant reservoirs legislation.

#### **Constitution**

The Group shall consist of representatives of invited organisations, with no more than one named representative per organisation. A second named “alternate” may be nominated by an organisation, to attend in the absence of the first named representative.

The Chairman of the Group shall be appointed by the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen’s Park Management Committee. There will be two Deputy Chairmen: the Chairman of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen’s Park Management Committee and one appointed by the Chairman of the Water Management Stakeholder Group.

Secretarial support will be provided by the City of London Corporation and a summary of each meetings will be forwarded to the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee (and will also be publicly available).

#### **Objectives**

The Group will be a source of advice and influence to the City of London Corporation, Strategic Landscape Architect and the Design Team. (The Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee remains the committee that advises the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen’s Park Management Committee)

To inform and assist the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee:

- i. in developing a Vision and Principles for the Flood Management and Water Quality Project;
- ii. by providing views on the technical details and proposed designs and their long term impact on the landscape, use and management of the Heath ponds and environs effected by the Flood Management and Water Quality Project works; and
- iii. by providing views on the construction planning, timetable, logistics, communication strategy and implementation of the Flood Management and Water Quality Project works.

To spread information out to the groups represented by its members and as appropriate to the wider community on all aspects of the emerging designs and implications arising from the Flood Management and Water Quality works.

To hold regular (typically monthly) meetings. Additional meetings of the whole group may be called as necessary. These may need to be at short notice and it is recognised that not everyone will be able to, or need to be able to, attend.

The Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Management Committee will keep under review the constitution of the Group as from time to time may be required.

The City of London Corporation as the owner of the Heath are ultimately responsible as the competent authority for the implementation of the Project and decisions in relation to the ultimate design and construction.

30<sup>th</sup> May 2012