



West Ham Park Committee

INFORMATION PACK

NB: Certain matters for information have been marked * and will be taken without discussion, unless the Committee Clerk has been informed that a Member has questions or comments prior to the start of the meeting. These information items have been collated in a supplementary agenda pack and circulated separately.

Date: THURSDAY, 11 JULY 2024

Time: 9.30 am

Venue: COMMITTEE ROOM 2 – 2ND FLOOR WEST WING, GUILDHALL

5. *ASSISTANT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Report of the Executive Director for Environment.

For Information
(Pages 3 - 10)

7. *REVENUE OUTTURN 2023/24

Report of the Chamberlain.

For Information
(Pages 11 - 16)

8. *UPDATE REPORT ON 150TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Report of the Interim Executive Director of Environment.

For Information
(Pages 17 - 20)

10. REVIEW OF LEARNING AND HERITAGE ASSETS AND ACTIVITIES

Report of the Natural Environment Director.

For Information
(Pages 21 - 40)

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Agenda Item 5

Committee(s): West Ham Park Committee	Date(s): 11 July 2024
Subject: Assistant Director's update	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	Diverse engaged communities Leading sustainable environment Vibrant thriving destination Providing excellent services Flourishing public spaces
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Executive Director, Environment	For Information
Report author: Bill LoSasso, Assistant Director	

Summary

This report provides Members with an update on matters relating to West Ham Park since the last Committee meeting on 16 May 2024.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the content of the report.

Main Report

Grounds Maintenance

1. Work has been carried out in the grounds and gardens, which has included turf management, grass cutting, strimming, pruning, weeding and marking the sports pitches. The warmer, drier weather has resulted in increased numbers of visitors with lots of people having picnics and parties in the park. Carrying out grounds' maintenance work and duties can often be more challenging with the higher numbers of visitors. The gardening and ranger teams have been working hard with maintaining the gardens and borders and carrying out duties in preparation for the Green Flag judging, which took place on 10 June and for London in Bloom judging on 2 July 2024. The Green Flag judging on 10 June went very well, and the judge was impressed with the park. He was taken around the park, toured the gardens and was introduced to the Friends of West Ham Park volunteers working in the vegetable garden. He also met the learning team in the wildlife garden, as there were plenty of school groups using the park that day.
2. A new 10-year management plan is being developed this year, which will include all aspects including conservation and heritage. It will identify the short, medium and long-term objectives for the park, and this will be an ideal time to consider any new works, plans or projects for the park that fit those objectives. The new plan will need to be completed by December 2024, so it can be submitted with the next year of Green Flag and Green Heritage applications.

Sports and Recreation

3. Work has been undertaken to ensure the cricket pitch retains its excellent standard. The cricket season is now in full flow and the home teams are making the most of the warmer, drier and longer days. The cricket teams commented on how impressed they are with the pitch's condition, which is maintained by two site staff. Improvement works will be made to the pitch off season, which will include upgrading the post and chains that are used to keep the public off whilst the pitch is not in use. The 400m grass running track has been marked out for the summer and more bookings are expected from the local primary and secondary schools to hold their school sports days.
4. The Head of Operations and Parks met the Lawn Tennis Association again on 7 June at West Ham Park to discuss the tennis provision. Meetings are held regularly to ensure the tennis participation is developed and maximised, and more income is generated through coaching and court bookings, whilst reflecting the local neighbourhood and demographics within the London Borough of Newham. The tennis coaching arrangements with Tennis Come True are being formalised with a new licence. Each of the tennis coaches across the North London Open Spaces will be issued a new licence shortly until April 2025, so there is consistency across all four open spaces. Discussions were also held on

site with the Lawn Tennis Association on 7 June with regards to developing Padel at West Ham Park. The disused basketball court was highlighted as a potential location to support Padel.

5. As part of tennis and Padel discussions, the LTA produced a Periscope report for West Ham Park, which is a national mapping tool that contains demographic data relating to the named LTA Registered venue and its associated LTA members. The report breaks down the current UK tennis membership into six profiles and plots them by postcode, alongside the local population, showing where your undiscovered 'lookalike' members and players may be found. It's a tool that will be used to understand our competitors, our members and how we retain them, so we can understand what they want from their tennis experience at West Ham Park. This knowledge will also help us to create products and services to attract new customers in the future, provide valuable insight that can help us to create a retention plan to keep our existing members, create a marketing plan to recruit new members and support the development of any new facilities.
6. Two 'Swing Boxes – which are free app-operated weight benches – were installed in West Ham Park approximately six months ago, which were supported by Nuffield Health. We have received a lot of positive comments from users about this new equipment, and data from Swing Fitness which supports the comments received. The data has shown that 204 people have used the equipment with over 1,366 free sessions recorded, of which 23% have been group sessions. The median age is 34 with the youngest user being 16 and the oldest user being 72 years old. Most importantly, 94% of the users live within 2km of the park and 67% live within 1km, which highlights the importance of providing this free facility to local residents, its inclusivity and promotion of exercise, health and wellbeing.

Partnerships and volunteering

7. The Friends of West Ham Park have been carrying out four litter picks a week as the park has been getting busier. This work has supported the rangers and gardeners and allowed them more time to focus and prepare the park for the Green Flag and London in Bloom judging dates. Ten of the Friends will be running butterfly and insect identification training sessions in June. This will enable surveys to be carried out and to identify species using the park. The data will also be important, as we will be able to compare the numbers and species year on year, as more bulb planting and new hedges develop over the next few years. The training will be carried out by a local expert, Tim Harris, who works with the Wren Wildlife and Conservation Group. Friends of West Ham Park will

be leading two bat walks on 23 August and 20 September 2024. We remain grateful to the Friends for their support and value our strong partnership with this dedicated group.

8. West Ham Park charity continues to benefit from the extraordinary efforts of local volunteers, to whom we are grateful. In FY'2023-24 (1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024), we hosted 516 volunteers in the park. As of the date of this report, we have hosted 118 volunteers in the park this fiscal year (1 April 2024 – 31 March). Our Head of Development & Partnerships, once appointed, will support our continued development of volunteering efforts across North London Open Spaces.

Events

9. From Friday 17 to Sunday 19 May, the park hosted a funfair, which was run by George Irvin Leisure. There were 17 rides and stalls for all ages and the event was a huge success, as the weather was also very warm over the weekend. Many people attended the fair and there were queues to enter until the end of each day. The park was left clean and tidy once the fair had been broken down and demobilised. Many park users commented on how much they enjoyed having the funfair in the park.
10. The park hosted the Sustainable Newham Green Fair on Bank Holiday Monday (6 May 2024), which involved lots of planning with Sustainable Newham. Despite the heavy rainfall and wet weather conditions, the event ran smoothly, and a good number of people braved the elements and supported the event.
11. Eid Prayer and celebrations occurred on 16 June from 07.30 – 11.30am and were well attended.

Tree Management

12. On 23 May the Tree Team felled five small to medium dead trees. The five trees felled were two over-shadowed rowans in the garden, two sweet chestnuts and one robinia in the Linden Gate area due to suffering from root dysfunction due to localised water logging. There are five sycamores in the park (two mature and three young) which have suffered from recent drought years and are now infected by sooty bark disease, these trees will be felled later this summer. A weeping willow in the garden was scheduled for reduction due to trunk decay, but a live nest of great tits was noted in a cavity in the trunk, so the tree has been cordoned off until later in the year when the nest is no longer in use. The team is

examining the feasibility of replacing these trees, taking into consideration suitable species.

13. Tree inspections at West Ham Park will be coming in-house from summer 2024. We are fortunate to have three highly skilled Lantra-trained professional Tree Inspectors on our NLOS Tree Team, and they will undertake the annual tree inspections going forward.
14. This year's proactive Oak Processionary Moth (OPM) caterpillar surveillance by NLOS tree team has begun. On 30 May, a full inspection of the 93 oak trees in the park was undertaken. Five live processions were recorded in five trees, (mostly Turkey oaks), all at height in the canopies and out of influence on park users, and thus not requiring any further action. There will be a further inspection for OPM with a focus looking for low-situated nests before the 150 celebrations take place.

Learning Team Update

15. Between April and May, 360 school students and 62 family members participated in the Learning Programme at West Ham Park (April – May 2024). Their habitats workshop has been very popular, with school students able to learn from first-hand observation through activities such as pond dipping and comparison of habitats and minibeasts. Their community campfire programme for WHP 150 is thriving, and their programme for children with special education needs and disabilities is over-subscribed. Two new Learning Volunteers have been recruited, offering additional support for our programme whilst gaining new skills and experience in outdoor education.
16. The Learning and West Ham Park teams have worked together to create a new log circle in the South Meadow for both school and public use. The log circle will improve the visitor experience for groups using the park independently, helping groups to feel welcome and comfortable in the park.

150th anniversary celebration

17. This topic is the subject of a separate report provided as part of this agenda pack, entitled "Update on planning for the 150th anniversary for West Ham Park."

Financial Implications

18. As noted above, officers have sourced and been successful in obtaining £55,000 of additional funding for the West Ham Park charity 150th anniversary celebration.

Resource Implications

19. The anniversary celebration will require additional operational resource as noted within this report.

Climate Implications

20. Included within the annual plan for 2024-25 are a series of projects which contribute towards achieving the City of London's Climate Action Strategy, which was launched in October 2020. A key part of the strategy is conserving and enhancing biodiversity alongside reducing carbon emissions. The Climate Action Strategy will be embedded into future strategies which are currently being drafted within the Natural Environment Division.

Legal Implications

21. No implications.

Risk Implications

22. Risks are monitored and recorded through the Departmental Risk Register.

Equality Implications

23. No impact.

Charity Implications

24. West Ham Park is a registered charity. Charity Law obliges a trustee to ensure that the decisions taken in relation to the Charity are taken in the best interests of the Charity.

Security Implications

25. Security implications are monitored and recorded through the Departmental Risk register.

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Agenda Item 7

Committee(s)	Dated:
West Ham Park Committee	11 July 2024
Subject: Revenue Outturn 2023/24 – West Ham Park	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	n/a
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	n/a
What is the source of Funding?	n/a
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	n/a
Report of: Chamberlain Interim Executive Director Environment	For Information
Report author: Niranjan Shanmuganathan – Chamberlain’s Department	

Summary

This report compares the revenue outturn for the services overseen by your Committee in 2023/24 with the final budget for the year. In total, there was an unfavourable budget position of (£62k) for the services overseen by your Committee compared with the final budget for the year as set out below.

	Final Budget	Outturn	Variation Better/(Worse)
	£000	£000	£000
Local Risk			
Interim Executive Director Environment	(658)	(636)	22
City Surveyor	(109)	(146)	(37)
Total Local Risk	(767)	(782)	(15)
Central Risk	(25)	(33)	(8)
Recharges	(394)	(433)	(39)
Total	(1,186)	(1,248)	(62)

The Interim Executive Director Environment had an overall local risk underspend of £22k (excluding City Surveyor) for your Committee. The Interim Executive Director Environment also had a net local risk underspend totalling £15k on activities overseen by other Committees within his remit, after adjusting for unspent carry forwards from 2022/23. The Interim Executive Director Environment has requested a carry forward into 2024/25 of £37k, none of which relates to activities overseen by your Committee.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that the revenue outturn report for 2023/24 is noted.

Main Report

Budget Position for 2023/24

1. The 2023/24 original budget for services overseen by your Committee (received in December 2022) was (£1.133m) net expenditure. This budget was endorsed by the Court of Common Council in March 2023 and was subsequently updated for approved net increases of (£53k), resulting in a final budget of (£1.186m) net expenditure. These adjustments primarily consisted of the following:
 - (£53k) central funding to cover cost of living pay rises to staff effective from July 2023 as well as backdated agency costs;
 - (£44k) additional repairs and maintenance and cleaning costs following implementation of new Integrated Facilities Management contract managed by City Surveyor's;
 - (£25k) funding from the Natural Environment Directorate to meet the cost of extra casual staffing requirements;
 - (£16k) funding for centrally funded apprenticeships;
 - £78k net reductions to your Committee's local risk resource base following implementation of the new staffing structure within the Natural Environment Division; and £10k net decrease in Natural Environment Directorate and Learning Team recharges following changes to the division's Target Operating Model (TOM).
2. Movement of the original budget to the final budget is provided in Appendix A.

Revenue Outturn 2023/24

3. Actual net expenditure for your Committee's services during 2023/24 totalled (£1.248m), an unfavourable budget variance of (£62k) compared with the final budget of (£1.186m).
4. A summary comparison with the final budget for the year is tabulated below. In the tables, income, increases in income and reductions in expenditure are shown as positive balances, whereas brackets are used to denote expenditure, increases in expenditure, or shortfalls in income. Only significant variances (generally those greater than £50k) are commented on.

West Ham Park
Comparison of 2023/24 Revenue Outturn with Final Budget

	Original	Final	Revenue	Better/(Worse)	Reason
	£000	Budget	£000	£000	Para
		£000			
LOCAL RISK					
Interim Executive Director					
Environment					
West Ham Park	(639)	(658)	(636)	22	
City Surveyor					
City Surveyors Repairs and Maintenance	(65)	(109)	(115)	(6)	
Cyclical Works Programme	0	0	(31)	(31)	
Total City Surveyor Local Risk	(65)	(109)	(146)	(37)	5
TOTAL LOCAL RISK	(704)	(767)	(782)	(15)	
TOTAL CENTRAL RISK	(25)	(25)	(33)	(8)	
RECHARGES					
Insurance	(18)	(18)	(16)	2	
Support Services	(139)	(139)	(155)	(16)	
Surveyor's Employee Recharges	(39)	(39)	(38)	1	
IT Recharges	(29)	(29)	(49)	(20)	
Recharges Within Fund (Directorate, Democratic Core, Learning)	(179)	(169)	(175)	(6)	
TOTAL RECHARGES	(404)	(394)	(433)	(39)	6
OVERALL TOTAL NET EXP	(1,133)	(1,186)	(1,248)	(62)	

Reasons for Significant Variations

- The (£37k) overspend on budgets managed by the City Surveyor is largely explained by Cyclical Works Programme (CWP) expenditure being (£31k) higher than expected due to the rephasing of projects managed by the City Surveyor such as works at Park Cottage to carry out damp and ceiling repairs. The CWP is a three-year rolling programme reported to the Projects and Procurement Sub Committee quarterly, where the City Surveyor will report on financial performance and phasing of the projects. Under the governance of the programme, variances on budgets are adjusted for the life of the programme to allow for the completion of works which span multiple financial years.
- The net cost of recharges were overspent by (£39k) for 2023/24 compared with the final budget. This is largely explained by additional recharges from the IT Division (£20k) as well as recharges for the cost of other corporate departments (£16k) being higher than anticipated. Members should note that during 2023/24, a review of central support services recharges was carried out. This involved updating the

basis of apportionment for all recharges following the TOM and Governance Review along with trying to make them more transparent and fairer across all services. The updated basis has led to several variations to the original budget across committees, but overall total recharges have remained within the total original envelope: City Fund Original Budget (£29.9m) vs Outturn (£27.9m), and City's Estate Original Budget (£24.2m) vs Outturn (£22.9m). Consultation has been held with areas where recharges are funded from local reserves, i.e. HRA and Police, any variation/increase in costs across other services are met from the deficit funding and have no effect on front-line services. The full review has not yet been formally approved by Members as work is ongoing as to how the new basis will affect 2024/25 budgets. Once the review is fully adopted, the 2024/25 budget will be reviewed and updated where necessary and the paper on the review made available.

Local Risk Carry Forward to 2024/25

7. Chief Officers can generally request underspends of up to 10% or £500k (whichever is the lesser) of the final local risk budget to be carried forward, so long as the underspending is not fortuitous and the resources were for a planned purpose that was prevented from happening during the year. Such requests are subject to the approval of the Chamberlain in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of Resources Allocation Sub Committee. In accordance with financial regulations, any overall Departmental local risk overspends are carried forward in full and are met from the agreed 2024/25 budgets.
8. The Interim Executive Director Environment had a local risk underspend of £22k for 2023/24 on the activities overseen by your Committee. The Interim Executive Director Environment also had a net local risk underspend totalling £15k on activities overseen by other Committees within his remit, after adjusting for unspent carry forwards from 2022/23. The Interim Executive Director Environment is proposing that his maximum eligible underspend of £37k be carried forward, none of which relates to activities overseen by your Committee.

Conclusion

9. This report presents the revenue outturn position for 2023/24 for West Ham Park for Members to note.

Appendices

- Appendix A – Movement between 2023/24 Original Budget and 2023/24 Final Budget

Niranjan Shanmuganathan

Finance Business Partner (Natural Environment)

Chamberlain's Financial Services Division

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Appendix A

Movement between 2023/24 Original Budget and 2023/24 Final Budget

West Ham Park	£000
Original Budget (All Risks)	(1,133)
Original Net Local Risk Budget (Interim Executive Director Environment & City Surveyor)	(704)
Interim Executive Director Environment	
Adjustments to local risk resource base following implementation of TOM2 staffing structure	78
Central contingency funding for July 2023 Pay Award and backdated pay rises for agency staff	(53)
Funding from Natural Environment Directorate to meet casual staffing requirements	(25)
Uplift for centrally funded apprenticeships	(16)
Central budget uplift for increased energy costs	(3)
City Surveyor	
Additional Planned & Reactive Works following implementation of new Integrated Facilities Management contract	(44)
Final Net Local Risk Budget (Interim Executive Director Environment & City Surveyor)	(767)
Central Risk	
Original Central Risk Budget (Interim Executive Director Environment)	(25)
Final Central Risk Budget (Interim Executive Director Environment)	(25)
Recharges	
Original Recharges Budget	(404)
Reduction in Directorate recharges due to budget adjustments arising from TOM 2 staffing restructure	19
Additional recharges from Learning Team following staff pay rises and adjustments arising from staffing restructure	(9)
Final Recharges Budget	(394)
Final Budget (All Risks)	(1,186)

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Agenda Item 8

Committee(s): West Ham Park Committee	Date(s): 11 July 2024
Subject: Update on planning for the 150 th anniversary for West Ham Park	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan (2024-2029) does this proposal aim to impact directly?	Diverse engaged communities Leading sustainable environment Vibrant thriving destination Providing excellent services Flourishing public spaces
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	Yes
If so, how much?	£55,000
What is the source of Funding?	As discussed in paragraph 4
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	Yes
Report author: Bill LoSasso, Assistant Director (Superintendent) North London Open Spaces	For Information

Summary

This report provides Members with an update on matters relating to the 150th anniversary celebration of West Ham Park's transfer to the City of London Corporation since the last Committee meeting on 16 May 2024.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the content of the report.

Main Report

1. Since the last report from officers, the Events Manager has continued to work with the steering group of Members, officers, and local stakeholders to deliver

a diverse and varied programme of entertainment, workshops and sporting and wellbeing activities this spring and summer.

2. Several events have taken place this spring, including several successful activities and programmes hosted by the Learning Team in the Education Garden. The Green Fair, organised by Sustainable Newham and branded with the West Ham Park 150th logo, took place on 6 May and was well attended despite poor weather.
3. The programme of events for the large summer events on 20th and 21st July are nearing finalisation. An update is presented below.
 - a. 20 July: This flagship event will mark the anniversary of the official transfer date of West Ham Park 150th years ago. It will include a civic reception, managed by the Remembrancer's, with invited guests from the City of London Corporation and London Borough of Newham. The day will begin at 12.30pm with a specially curated music event on a main stage which will include high-profile artists and Bollywood-inspired dancing, followed by a high-quality community music event at 3.00pm hosted by the Friends of West Ham Park on the bandstand. In addition, the day will include nature arts and crafts, heritage tours, photography exhibitions, sustainability workshops, and a children's fair.
 - b. 21 July: This sports and health and wellbeing focused day will begin at 8.00am with the start of the 'London to Southend Bike Ride'. This will help us start our 'Give it a Go' event, which offers an opportunity for people to participate in a number of free activities, possibly for the first time. At 11.30am, we will have a medley of sports and health and wellbeing focused activities, featuring football activities sponsored by West Ham United Foundation, cricket workshops led by Capital Kids Cricket and the England and Wales Cricket Board, tennis coaching, tai chi, athletics, children's fun activities and meditation. We will finish at 4.30pm.
4. With the support of Members and executive leadership, officers have secured and allocated £55,000 to ensure sufficient resources for the celebration programme. This funding will be used to support added event and programming delivery costs, including first aid, security, and bespoke gazebos. This will also cover the costs of additional grounds maintenance and reinstatement supplies and materials, as well as the hiring of occasional casual staff required for additional tasks related to the increase in activities. Officers were successful in an application to City Bridge Foundation on an application for £20,000 to fund an outdoor interpretive exhibition to raise awareness and understanding of the park and the City Corporation's commitment. This will also include the history of the site and its historic

transfer to the City Corporation in 1874, similar to the successful and impactful exhibition displayed for Hampstead Heath's 150th anniversary.

5. Officers invite all Members of the West Ham Park Committee to join this celebration, and an invitation will follow shortly.

Financial Implications

6. As noted above, officers have sourced and been successful in obtaining £55,000 of additional funding for the West Ham Park charity 150th anniversary celebration.

Resource Implications

7. The anniversary celebration will require additional operational resource as noted within this report.

Climate Implications

8. Included within the annual plan for 2024-25 are a series of projects which contribute towards achieving the City of London's Climate Action Strategy, which was launched in October 2020. A key part of the strategy is conserving and enhancing biodiversity alongside reducing carbon emissions. The Climate Action Strategy will be embedded into future strategies which are currently being drafted within the Natural Environment Division.

Legal Implications

9. No implications.

Risk Implications

10. Risks are monitored and recorded through the Departmental Risk Register.

Equality Implications

11. No impact.

Charity Implications

12. West Ham Park is a registered charity. Charity Law obliges a trustee to ensure that the decisions taken in relation to the Charity are taken in the best interests of the Charity.

Security Implications

13. Security implications are monitored and recorded through the Departmental Risk register.

Bill LoSasso
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Committee(s): West Ham Park Committee	Dated: 11 July 2024
Subject: Review of Learning and Heritage Assets and Activities	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse Engaged Communities • Vibrant Thriving Destination • Flourishing Public Spaces, • Providing Excellent Services • Leading Sustainable Environment.
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	N/A
Report of: Emily Brennan, Natural Environment Director	For Information
Report authors: Abigail Tinkler, Rob Shakespeare, Simon Glynn	

Summary

This report provides Members with information on the range of learning and heritage activities that take place in West Ham Park, with details of the current organisation and funding models for the Natural Environment Division’s learning team and heritage team, within the new Culture and Projects Section. The report describes key heritage and learning assets and their value. The report bench-marks fees, charges and related offers of the City of London with other comparable and relevant, learning providers. Finally, it provides a summary of key findings and insights for Member discussion.

The Division’s learning and heritage activities are delivered in accordance with the recently adopted Culture, Heritage and Learning Strategy and the cost of delivering our learning activities is met by the department’s budget agreed by the Policy and Resources Committee in 2018. The Heritage Team was formed in May 2023, and follows a different operating and financial model to the Learning Team.

The information in this report forms part of a wider review of learning and heritage activities across the Natural Environment Division, bench-marking across the relevant sectors and comparison with third party providers, due to be completed in Autumn 2024 and reported to the relevant Committees.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to note the report.

Main Report

Background and Current Position

Background

1. Following the implementation of TOM2 within the Environment Department from May 2023, a new Culture & Projects Section was established to provide cross-divisional advice, support and services for learning, heritage and special projects across the Natural Environment Division. The section is headed by an Assistant Director, who reports directly to the Natural Environment Director, supported by a Head of Learning and Head of Heritage & Museums, with their respective teams. A Carbon Removals Project Manager, who started on 1 July 2024, completes this management team.
2. The Heritage Team aims to conserve and provide access to our shared culture and heritage, which includes built and natural assets and intangible cultural heritage, providing a consistent and collaborative approach to managing our unique and iconic cultural offer. They help to deliver an inclusive and engaging programme of exhibitions, events and special projects, and supporting activities.
3. The Learning Team provide opportunities to learn within our unique and inspiring green spaces. At a time of increasing disconnection from nature, a need to tackle the climate crisis, and a drive to tackle inequalities and enrich people's lives, our learning programme provides a means for the City of London to contribute to the health and wellbeing of residents of some of London's most deprived communities through connecting them more powerfully to their local green spaces. Benefits include increases in wellbeing, connection to nature, confidence and understanding.

Learning Team

4. The Learning Team is focused on delivering the new Culture, Heritage and Learning Strategy, reaching audiences in London's most deprived boroughs and enabling participants to develop a connection to nature, which is a

foundation for pro-environmental behaviours. The team facilitates learning through active engagement with our green spaces and heritage.

5. The Learning Team deliver a successful programme for school, youth and children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The Children and young people learn through active engagement with nature.
6. The Learning Team's programme at West Ham Park is a free programme for Newham schools, recognising the high levels of child poverty and limited access to gardens and green spaces in the borough.
7. Learning Team staff deliver sessions across the site, including within two enclosed teaching gardens provide safe and welcoming spaces for our audiences. The Learning Team manage a booking system to enable schools to use the teaching gardens independently, as well as leading sessions in the gardens as part of their programme.
8. The Learning Programme is oversubscribed, with waiting lists for the SEND programme and for use of the teaching gardens.
9. The Learning Team are working with North London Open Spaces to create a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU will clarify roles and responsibilities to enable collaborative working and the effective management of spaces and resources.

Heritage Team

10. Prior to May 2023, heritage activities were delivered by discrete officers and teams within each charity, for example, the Heritage and Museum Manager within Epping Forest. With the implementation of TOM2 and to achieve the savings required, a cross-divisional team was proposed, to provide advice, support and guidance across the charities. This structure included the potential for self-funded roles to be appointed to support projects informed by Corporate, Divisional and community priorities, subject to funding being identified for project delivery.
11. The establishment of a cross divisional Heritage Team builds upon the success and expertise of staff managing Keats House on behalf of Keats House charity. Examples of recent work includes delivery of outreach and creative learning programmes such as 'Culturally Speaking' and 'Poetry versus Colonialism', as well as projects such as the restoration of the Roman kiln and associated interpretation at Highgate Wood.
12. The Heritage team have been recently commissioned to research, design and deliver an exhibition for the 150th anniversary celebrations.

Funding Model

Learning Team

13. Since 2019, the funding for the Learning Team has come from an uplift to the then Open Spaces Department (now Natural Environment Division) resource base, which was agreed by Policy and Resources Committee. The Learning Team generates some income through fees (predominantly charged to school groups participating in its learning programme at Hampstead Heath and Epping Forest). Details of the budget for learning in the previous financial year (2023/24) are provided in Appendix 2.
14. The net cost of the Learning Team is recharged to the relevant charities at the end of each year. This is a standard accountancy practice at the City Corporation, with the City of London charities charged for all services provided by the Corporation, including HR, Finance, and IT, as well as Learning.
15. City's Estate Fund provides West Ham Park charity with an annual recharge budget, separate to the charity's local risk budget, which includes a specific budget which currently covers 20% of the direct operating costs of the Learning Team. Providing the Learning Team stay within their budget, there is no additional cost to the charity with any extra costs met through additional deficit funding for the charity from City's Estate. If the Learning Team either exceeds its income target or overspends against its budget, 20% of the additional income or costs are also applied through the annual recharge from the Learning Team. At present the Learning Team recharges to three charities; Hampstead Heath, Epping Forest and West Ham Park.

Heritage Team

16. In 2023/24, the newly established Heritage Team was predominantly funded through Keats House charity, where most of its capacity is employed. Post TOM2, one Heritage Officer post was created at Grade B initially, funded by the new Heritage Team's local risk budget (which itself was derived from savings made elsewhere in the Division following the implementation of TOM2). The new Heritage Team structure also includes the potential for self-funded heritage officers to be recruited once funding is identified and secured for priority projects. In October 2023, a full-time heritage officer was recruited, with 0.5FTE of their role funded through the National Lottery grant awarded to Friends of Highgate Roman Kiln to deliver the 'Firing London's Imagination' project in Highgate Wood, on behalf of North London Open Spaces and 0.5FTE funded by the Heritage Team's local risk budget.
17. From Summer 2024, it is proposed to recruit an additional heritage officer using the budget from the remaining 0.5FTE to provide capacity to: support ongoing heritage conservation, interpretation and projects; and identify new priority projects and secure funding for their delivery at other Natural Environment sites.

18. The funding model for the Heritage Team is therefore different to that of the Learning Team, as there is no dedicated annual heritage budget allocated from City’s Estates to each open space charity against which heritage services in support of the charities can be delivered. Instead, the ability to deliver a cross-divisional heritage service, beyond the single heritage officer post in the budget, relies upon successful internal and external grant funding applications for individual projects.

Activities and Assets

Learning Activities and Assets at West Ham Park

This section refers specifically to Learning activities and assets within West Ham Park.

19. The Learning Team run a successful primary school programme for Newham schools, delivering sessions for 3,570 students in 2023-24. The team also manage access to the teaching gardens for Newham Schools to use independently, increasing opportunities for learning.

20. The Learning Team have been awarded funding from the City of London Cultural and Creative Learning fund to deliver a learning programme for children with special educational needs (SEND). A part-time staff member has been in post since January 2024 to deliver this project.

21. The Learning Team runs a variety of informal learning activities for 13 – 25-year-olds who are struggling with education, employment, or mental health, including young carers and youth groups from local charity ‘Ambition Achieve Aspire’.

22. The Learning Team are running additional activities to celebrate WHP 150: a monthly ‘community campfire’ events for local families, a tree trail in collaboration with the adjacent Park Primary School, eco art workshops for families, and plant trail activity in the Ornamental Garden.

23. The Learning Team has nearly £12,000 worth of assets on site, which were acquired using the Learning Team budget. This includes a steel storage shed and activity equipment, however, the most important resource for learning is the park itself, which provides a rich and inspiring learning environment. The team also have access to a pond platform (an asset of WHP charity) which would cost around £14,000 to replace.

Natural Environment Learning Team Resource		Value
Learning Team Resource Shed	Large metal shed	£5000
Fire Sessions Equipment	Kindling, Logs, Fire Steels	£550

Orienteering Equipment	GPS & Compasses	£640
Transport	Trolleys (2 x £170)	£340
Gardening Tools	Garden forks, rakes, spades	£ 500
Observation Equipment	Binoculars, Telescopes, Tripods	£600
General activity equipment (measuring wheels, pond nets, trays, ID guides, clay, WW11 replica resources, tarpaulins, musical instruments)		£1,100
Cargo Bicycle		£3,000
TOTAL VALUE		£11,730

24. In addition to the activities run by the Learning Team at West Ham Park, learning activities are offered by third party learning providers directly managed by the West Ham Park operational team, including Tindersticks, Tennis Come True, Capital Cricket, Curious by Nature, and Friends of West Ham Park.
25. Programmes for families and adults are led by the Friends of West Ham Park, including bird watching, nature crafts and bat walks [Friends of West Ham Park –](#).
26. Coaching in tennis is provided by Tennis Come True. One-to-one coaching is provided for all ages (adults and children) and holiday tennis camps are available for children [Junior Tennis Program | East London \(tenniscometrue.com\)](#).
27. Coaching in cricket is provided by Capital Kids Cricket (CKC), a youth development charity that uses cricket to overcome societal challenges and empower young people. The charity is committed to using cricket to bring communities together. Initiatives include a cricket club for women and girls and a holiday club. 50 children participated in 2023-24. [Charity Cricket Organization \(ckc.london\)](#)
28. Tindersticks run an outdoor learning programme for children aged one to five years and their carers/parents. The programme targets underserved audiences in Newham and is funded by the City Bridge Foundation, enabling the programme to be free for participants. Six sessions will be run over the

year, each with capacity for 30 participants. [Tindersticks | Bushcraft events to remember.](#)

29. Curious by Nature are a grant funded community organisation who provide family forest school sessions. The group led two free family sessions during 2023-24. [About — Curious by Nature \(curiousbynaturelondon.co.uk\)](#)
30. Periodically, the NE Learning Team coordinates its activities with the other learning providers to create a complementary offer; for example, a recent collaboration with Tindersticks will result in a complementary learning offer for pre-school children, and the team collaborate with Capital Kids Cricket to enhance their summer holiday programme.
31. Our Learning Team provides unique primary school, youth, and SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) learning activities, distinct from those offered by other providers. No other learning providers offer comparable programmes. While the Learning Team is specialized in educational activities, it does not have the training to offer cricket or tennis coaching. These sports coaching activities are considered complementary and fall outside the remit of the Learning Team.
32. Though the learning programmes offered by Tindersticks and Curious by Nature could technically be handled by our Learning Team, we currently lack the capacity to expand into these areas. These programmes show some content and audience overlap with the Learning Team's Community Campfire Programme. However, the scale of these external programmes is limited, with Tindersticks planning just six sessions for 2023/24 and Curious by Nature running only two sessions in 2022/23.
33. To enhance our family-oriented offerings, the Learning Team is exploring grant funding opportunities to hire a new staff member. This addition will allow us to develop and expand programming and opportunities for families.

Heritage activities and assets in West Ham Park

34. West Ham Park was the first public park to be managed by the City of London Corporation, who took over its ownership from the Gurney family in 1874. Heritage assets principally comprise the park itself, which is a grade II listed park and garden. This status was first registered in 2004, in recognition of its 18th century botanic garden and layout as a Victorian public park.
35. Built structures within the park, some of which have heritage significance, are maintained by City Surveyor's. Two buildings in particular, East Lodge and Park Cottage, are named on the Heritage Estate Team's Heritage Assets database. A ten-year Conservation Management Plan for the park was last completed in 2009 therefore a new one needs to be produced.
36. Physical heritage assets of the WHP charity also comprise interpretation boards on the botanical history of the park under the ownership of Dr

Fothergill, which are located within the ornamental gardens. This exhibition was curated and funded with the support of the Friends of West Ham Park.

37. Coordination and provision of specialist heritage advice is being led by the Culture and Projects team in respect of the West Ham Park nursery site. This includes engagement with Historic England, Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service and other amenity groups.
38. For the West Ham Park 150th celebrations, the Heritage Team were commissioned to research, design and deliver an exhibition on the heritage of the park, which will be on display at the park over the weekend of 20th and 21st July and at two other sites, to promote the significance of the anniversary.
39. Heritage-themed learning is being delivered in the park by the Learning Team. This includes sessions focusing on plant explorers (highlighting the rich collection of trees from around the world) and local and living history in relation to heritage features in the park, such as the WW2 bomb crater and remains of WW2 allotments.
40. The Friends of West Ham Park occasionally provide heritage-related walks and tours, which are advertised on their website [Friends of West Ham Park –](#).

Bench-marking

41. Bench-marking our fees and charges across our learning and heritage offers is an important activity to ensure that these offers remain competitive across the relevant sectors and that we apply a consistent approach to fees and charges across our activities.

Learning

42. An overview of the costs associated with outdoor school sessions offered by other outdoor learning providers operating across London is given below:

Organisation	School session costs – one class / one session	Location	Notes
NE Learning at West Ham Park	Free	West Ham Park	Sessions are free at WHP as it is an area of high deprivation where children have limited access to green spaces.
NE Learning at Hampstead Heath and Epping Forest	£99 state schools £129 private schools	Hampstead Heath Highgate Wood Golders Hill Park Epping Forest	Private schools are charged more than state schools as parents at state schools are more likely to be able to contribute to the costs.
Kew Gardens	£70 entry fee £76 per session = £146 total	Kew Gardens	
Royal Parks	£120	Hyde Park	FSC run programmes at Regents Park, Greenwich Park and Bushy Park.
Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, London	£255, including free admission to site	Barnes	Class admission without learning session is £225
London Wildlife Trust	£120 state schools; reduced rate of £84 Nov – Feb	Various sites across London	
National Trust	No facilitated school sessions, online resources available. Schools can pay to become Education Group Members – fee ranges from £58 to £175 depending on size of school – groups from the school can then visit for free.	Ham House	

Heritage

43. The Heritage team has bench-marked its fees and charges to visitor attractions, such as Keats House. In West Ham Park, there is no paid visitor attraction comparable to Keats House and therefore this bench-marking data is not directly relevant to West Ham Park charity.

Key Findings & Insights

44. A range of key findings and insights are provided below for discussion.

Learning

45. West Ham Park learning providers have distinct areas of focus, with the Natural Environment Learning Team leading on outdoor nature learning for primary schools, SEND groups and young people; specialist groups delivering sports coaching; and Tindersticks providing opportunities for young children and their parents.
46. The fees charged for facilitated school workshops run by comparable outdoor learning providers in London vary from £99 to £255. We do not currently charge for participation in our WHP Learning Programme, as it is a key method for the City of London to enrich lives and enhance wellbeing in one of London's most deprived boroughs. Should we review this decision in future, this benchmarking exercise will provide useful price point guidance.
47. The Learning Team's local risk net expenditure budget forms part of the Interim Executive Director Environment's local risk budget to meet corporate outcomes for learning. This allocation forms part of an annual recharge budget for learning provided within the West Ham Park charity's annual budget. Additional income (or costs) accrued by the Learning Team above its target, is distributed proportionately using this annual recharge.

Heritage

48. Heritage assets and activities are currently being managed and delivered by a range of individuals and teams across Natural Environment, the wider Corporation and external providers, but without sufficient capacity in the Heritage Team to coordinate these activities. This can result in an inconsistent and fragmented approach to managing and promoting these valuable assets.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Strategic implications: All learning and heritage activities led by the Natural Environment Division on behalf of West Ham Park charity support the recently adopted Natural Environment Division strategies, which includes the Culture, Heritage and Learning Strategy's themes of:

1. Developing nature connection and pro-environmental behaviours
2. Developing well-being through spending time in nature or through our heritage
3. Providing more opportunities through education and employment
4. Developing greater engagement, confidence and enjoyment
5. Ensuring the effective care, management and promotion of our offer.

The Culture, Heritage and Learning Strategy supports 5 of the 6 outcomes in the Corporate Plan 2024-29. These are:

- Outcome 1: Diverse engaged communities
- Outcome 3: Vibrant thriving destination
- Outcome 4: Flourishing public spaces
- Outcome 5: Providing excellent services
- Outcome 6: Leading sustainable environment.

Financial implications: None at present

Resource implications: None at present

Legal implications: None at present

Risk implications: None at present

Equalities implications: All learning and heritage activities led by or licenced by the City of London Corporation or its open spaces charities are required to demonstrate how these activities comply with our Public Sector Equality Duty 2010.

Climate implications: None at present

Security implications: None at present

Conclusion

This report provides Members with information on the range of learning and heritage activities that take place at West Ham Park, with details of the funding models for the Natural Environment Division's learning team and heritage team, within the Culture and Projects Section. The report bench-marks fees, charges and related offers of the City of London with other comparable and relevant learning providers. Finally, it provides a summary of key findings and insights for Member discussion.

The information in this report forms part of a wider review of learning and heritage activities across the Natural Environment Division due to be completed in Autumn 2024 and reported to the relevant Committees.

Appendices

- **Appendix 1:** Summary of activities and the associated Natural Environment strategies
- **Appendix 2:** Background information on the Natural Environment Learning Team.

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Appendix One: Summary of activities and the associated Natural Environment strategies

Learning Provider	Learning Activity	Audience	Natural Environment Strategy
Learning Team	School Programme	Primary schools	Culture, Heritage and Learning Community Engagement Access and Recreation Nature Conservation and Resilience
Learning Team	Youth Programme	13 – 25 year olds struggling with mental health, education and/or employment	Culture, Heritage and Learning Community Engagement Access and Recreation Nature Conservation and Resilience
Learning Team	SEND Programme	Primary school children with SEND	Culture, Heritage and Learning Community Engagement Access and Recreation
Learning Team	WHP 150 Programme	Families and primary schools	Culture, Heritage and Learning Community Engagement Access and Recreation
Tindersticks		Pre-school children and their parents/carers	Culture, Heritage and Learning Community Engagement Access and Recreation
Curious by Nature		Families	Culture, Heritage and Learning Community Engagement Access and Recreation
Friends of West Ham Park		Families and adults	Culture, Heritage and Learning Community Engagement Access and Recreation Nature Conservation and Resilience
Tennis Come True		Adults and children	Culture, Heritage and Learning

			Community Engagement Access and Recreation
Capital Cricket		Children	Culture, Heritage and Learning Community Engagement Access and Recreation

Appendix Two: Background information on the Natural Environment Learning Team

Vision

To facilitate learning through active engagement with our green spaces, reduce inequalities in education and wellbeing, and develop nature connection as a foundation for pro-environmental behaviours.

Background

The learning programme was developed in response to a growing consensus that spending time in nature is beneficial to health and wellbeing, and a concern over health and wellbeing inequalities as people in deprived areas of London face more barriers than most to accessing nature. The programme provides a key method for the City of London to contribute to the health and wellbeing of residents of some of London's most deprived communities through connecting them more powerfully to their local green spaces. Audiences include school children growing up in poverty and young people excluded from mainstream schooling.

The current learning programme engages schools and communities in three sites: Hampstead Heath, Epping Forest (including Wanstead Flats) and West Ham Park. The programme consists of the following workstreams:

- a. Schools service at Hampstead Heath, Epping Forest, West Ham Park
- b. Youth programme working with 13 – 25-year-olds struggling in education, employment or mental health
- c. Play activities at Hampstead Heath (two play centres) engaging children, parents and carers
- d. Programmes for children with autism and other special educational needs and disabilities

The learning programmes have a positive impact on wellbeing, nature connection, confidence and understanding, as noted in the Environmental Education Journal (2020, peer-reviewed) [Development and implementation of evaluation resources for a green outdoor educational program: The Journal of Environmental Education: Vol 52 , No 1 - Get Access \(tandfonline.com\)](#)

Natural Environment Learning at West Ham Park

3,570 students participated in the programme (2023-24).

Sessions are delivered to support the National Curriculum and promote awe, wonder and inspiration as children learned through active engagement with nature.

Based on the unique features of the sites and the needs of schools, the programme provided rich opportunities to:

- Learn through first hand observation e.g. exploring habitats, life cycles, seasons

- Stimulate the imagination e.g. creating artwork using natural materials
- Give children an active role e.g. pond dipping, orienteering
- Develop team working skills e.g. team den building and orienteering.

Staffing:

- Learning Officer for primary schools, 5 days per week, term time only.
- Learning Officer for SEND, 3 days per week, term time only. Funded through City of London Cultural and Creative Learning Fund.
- Learning Manager, full time post covering West Ham Park and some Hampstead Heath programmes
- Learning Officer for Youth: full time post, working cross-sites at West Ham Park, Hampstead Heath and Epping Forest.
- Head of Learning: full time post with cross-site responsibility.

Reaching disadvantaged school students

There is a wide recognition and concern over the attainment gap between disadvantaged school students and their peers (see [Little progress on attainment gap could have lifelong impact on disadvantaged children - Nuffield Foundation](#)). The West Ham Park learning programme has engages schools in Newham, one of London’s most deprived boroughs where 49% of children are living in poverty (Trust for London).

Children living in areas of deprivation suffered the greatest loss of learning during lockdown, and our programme is one of the ways in which opportunities for these young people can be increased, enriching their learning. (see [Children in most deprived areas suffered greatest loss of learning during lockdowns – ONS | Schools | The Guardian](#))

25 schools engage with the Learning Programme at West Ham Park, with schools visiting multiple times throughout the year. The table below lists all schools and their level of pupil premium. Pupil premium is an indicator of disadvantage, with 30% or more considered high level of disadvantage.

Schools participating in Learning Team programmes at West Ham Park	Percentage Pupil Premium
Stratford Manor	46
Rosetta Primary	41
Bobby Moore Academy	41
North Beckton Primary	40
Earlham Primary	39
William Davies Primary	37

St Francis Catholic Primary	37
West Ham Church of England Primary	36
Colegrave Primary	36
Maryland Primary	36
School 21	36
Portway Primary	34
Selwyn Primary	33
Lathom Junior	33
Gallions Primary	31
Plaistow Primary	30
Vicarage Primary	30
New City Primary	28
Tollgate Primary	27
Elmhurst Primary	27
Godwin Junior	26
Sandringham Primary	25
Park Primary	25
St Edwards Catholic Primary	24
Upton Cross Primary	24

Whilst the Learning Team teach sessions across the park, the space also provides two enclosed teaching gardens which provide school groups with a defined learning space, boosting teacher confidence to take classes outdoors and supporting the inclusion of children with additional needs. The Learning Team run sessions in these gardens and also manage a timetable of booking for local schools to use the gardens independently, thus increasing access to learning in the park. The Learning Team agree expectations around garden use with participating schools. Eight local primary schools use the spaces, taking students for regular weekly sessions. There is a waiting list of additional schools who would like to book space in the teaching gardens, which currently exceeds the capacity available.

Schools using WHP teaching gardens independently	Pupil premium percentage
Ranelagh Primary	40
Langdon Academy	40
Vicarage Primary	30
Curwen Primary	29
Ellen Wilkinson Primary	26

Park Primary	25
Sir John Heron Primary (SEND group)	21
Odessa (SEND group)	20

The benefits of outdoor learning

The West Ham Park learning programme has had a positive impact on participants' sense of wellbeing, nature connection and confidence to explore. (An evaluation toolkit developed with researchers at Derby Uni is used to evaluate the programme's impact in these areas.)

Social return on investment studies have valued high confidence at £13,080 per year and relief from depression or anxiety at £43,453 per person (see [Wellbeing Introduction to Social return on investment \(tnlcommunityfund.org.uk\)](#)). In addition, Play England have reported a correlation between opportunities to explore and play outside in childhood with significantly lower psychological distress scores as adults (see [Street Play Report July 2023 Final \(squarespace.com\)](#)).

A report from Natural England shows that students were more engaged with learning when outdoors; the majority of children thought they learned better and achieved more when learning outside, and 90 per cent feeling happier and healthier as a result, see [England's largest outdoor learning project reveals children more motivated to learn when outside - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

The Learning Team lead a cross-departmental City of London Climate Education Action Group, working with colleagues in Education Strategy, Environmental Resilience, and Climate Action, and has a leadership role in Climate Action Pathways in Education (CAPE), - an alliance of researchers, educators, schools, and partners across the UK who are working to change today's education for tomorrow's climate. Their work was showcased in the latest CAPE report (2024) [CAPE+Report+2024-web_2.pdf \(squarespace.com\)](#).

Looking ahead

The Learning Programme successful in building nature connection, which is the foundation for pro-environmental behaviours (see [Nature Connectedness Research Group - Research centres and groups - University of Derby](#)). This work will continue as vital contribution to future pro-environmental attitudes. In addition, the learning team are leading a new 'Climate Action Pathways in Education' (CAPE) alliance, bringing together teachers and researchers to develop best practice in climate education. The alliance will work together to change today's education for tomorrow's

climate, equipping people with the knowledge and skills to take climate action and protect the environment.

City's Estate Fund (formerly City's Cash) allocation for Learning to West Ham Park charity.

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT DIVISION LEARNING PROGRAMME (DKD10)	Actual 2023/24 £
Direct Employees	410,470
Indirect Employees	5,831
Premises	4,766
Supplies and Services	53,834
Income (Tuition Fees and Grants)	-56,565
Central Support Services Recharges	54,039
Total Net Expenditure	472,375
West Ham Park Annual Recharge Budget for Learning Team	94,475
Learning Team recharge of 20% of net expenditure to West Ham Park charity	-94,475

