



Open Spaces and City Gardens

Date: MONDAY, 7 OCTOBER 2013
Time: 11.30am
Venue: COMMITTEE ROOM - 2ND FLOOR WEST WING, GUILDHALL

Members: Alderman Ian Luder (Chairman)
Alderman Robert Hall (Deputy Chairman)
Wendy Mead
Deputy Michael Welbank
Deputy Alex Deane
Deputy Robert Howard
Barbara Newman
Jeremy Simons
Alderman Gordon Haines (Ex-Officio Member)
Deputy Stanley Ginsburg (Ex-Officio Member)
Virginia Rounding (Ex-Officio Member)
Verderer Peter Adams
Tony Ghilchik
Catherine Bickmore

Enquiries: Alistair MacLellan
alistair.maclellan@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Lunch will be served in the Guildhall Club at 1pm

John Barradell
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

AGENDA

Part 1 - Public Agenda

1. **APOLOGIES**
2. **DECLARATIONS BY MEMBERS OF ANY PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA**
3. **ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIRMAN**
To elect a Deputy Chairman in accordance with Standing Order 30.
For Decision
4. **MINUTES**
To agree the public minutes and summary of the meeting held on 22 July 2013 (copy attached).
For Decision
(Pages 1 - 8)

Part A - Open Spaces

5. **PLANNING COMMITMENTS FOR OPEN SPACES**
A report of the Director of Open Spaces (copy attached).
For Decision
(Pages 9 - 16)
6. **OPEN SPACES POLICY REVIEW**
A report of the Director of Open Spaces (copy attached).
For Decision
(Pages 17 - 20)
7. **OPEN SPACES ADVERSE WEATHER CANCELLATION REPORT**
A report of the Director of Open Spaces (copy attached).
For Decision
(Pages 21 - 32)
8. **GREEN SPACES: THE BENEFITS FOR LONDONERS**
A report of the Director of Open Spaces (copy attached).
For Information
(Pages 33 - 64)

9. **GREEN FLAG AWARDS 2013**
A report of the Director of Open Spaces (copy attached).

For Decision
(Pages 65 - 70)

Part B - City Gardens

10. **SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**
The Superintendent of City Gardens to be heard.

For Information

11. **RESULTS OF A FACE-TO-FACE SURVEY OF USERS AND NON-USERS OF THE CITY'S OPEN SPACES**
A report of the Director of Open Spaces (copy attached).

For Information
(Pages 71 - 86)

12. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**
13. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

Part 2 - Non-Public Agenda

14. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**
MOTION: That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

For Decision

15. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**
To agree the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 22 July 2013 (copy attached).

For Decision
(Pages 87 - 88)

16. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**
17. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

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**OPEN SPACES AND CITY GARDENS
Monday, 22 July 2013**

Minutes of the meeting of the Open Spaces and City Gardens held at Committee Room - 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Monday, 22 July 2013 at 2.30 pm

Present

Members:

Alderman Robert Hall (Chairman)
Alderman Ian Luder (Deputy Chairman)
Wendy Mead
Deputy Michael Welbank
Deputy Alex Deane
Deputy Robert Howard
Barbara Newman
Jeremy Simons
Deputy Stanley Ginsburg (Ex-Officio Member)
Virginia Rounding (Ex-Officio Member)

Observers:

Verderer Peter Adams
Tony Ghilchik
Catherine Bickmore

Officers:

Esther Sumner	- Policy Officer, Town Clerk's Department
Sue Ireland	- Director of Open Spaces
Louisa Allen	- City Gardens Manager
Martin Rodman	- Superintendent, West Ham Park and City Gardens
Alison Elam	- Group Accountant, Chamberlain's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Alderman Gordon Haines.

2. DECLARATIONS BY MEMBERS OF ANY PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA

There were no declarations.

3. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Following the resignation of Alderman Robert Hall, the Committee proceeded to elect a Chairman in accordance with Standing Order 29. Deputy Stanley Ginsburg moved that Mrs Barbara Newman take the Chair whilst the election was conducted, which was agreed. The Town Clerk read out a list of Members who were eligible to stand and Alderman Ian Luder, being the only Member

expressing his willingness to serve, was declared duly elected Chairman of the Committee for the ensuing year.

In taking the Chair, Alderman Luder thanked the committee for their support and thanked the outgoing Chairman Alderman Hall for his work. A formal vote of thanks will be moved at the next meeting.

The Committee was then advised that Alderman Robert Hall was exercising his right as immediate past Chairman to assume the role of Deputy Chairman for the ensuing year in accordance with Standing Order 30 (3) (a).

Following the resignation of Alderman Robert Hall as the Committee's nominee to the Streets and Walkways Sub (Planning) Committee, an election was held as per the wishes of the Chairman. The Town Clerk read out a list of Members eligible to serve and Mrs Barbara Newman CBE, being the only Member expressing her wish to serve, was declared the Committee's nominee to the Streets and Walkways Sub (Planning) Committee for the ensuing year.

4. **MINUTES**

The public minutes of the meeting held on Monday 10 June 2013 were approved as an accurate record.

APPROVED

Matters Arising

The Value of Green Spaces to London and Londoners

In response to a set of questions from a Member the Director of Open Spaces informed the Committee that the recent report on the value of Green Spaces to London and Londoners had not yet been submitted to the Health and Wellbeing Board, but that she had discussed the report with the Director of Community and Children's Services recently and confirmed her intention that the report will be submitted to the Board shortly.

Volunteer Supervisor Training

The Director reported that the training of Open Spaces volunteers to allow them to assume supervisory roles was progressing, but that nonetheless it was a long-term project.

Committee Agenda Content

The Director confirmed that it was intended to submit more reports for decision-making to the Committee, once senior staff time was no longer absorbed by current one-off operational pressures due to an HR issue.

Grass

In response to a question from a Member on the new type of grass in St Paul's Walk, the Superintendent confirmed that it was performing well, was proving more resilient in the recent hot weather, and also had the ability to regenerate more effectively, compared to other types of grasses.

Cleary Gardens Repair Works

In response to a question from a Member on the repair works in Cleary Gardens the City Gardens Manager confirmed that remedial repair works had been completed, and that she would revert to him regarding any recompense from the contractor over the original flawed repair works.

5. REVENUE OUTTURN 2012-13 - OPEN SPACES AND CITY GARDENS

The Chamberlain introduced the Revenue Outturn 2012/13 for Open Spaces and City Gardens to the Committee, noting that there was an underspend in the local risk budget that had been amalgamated with other areas in the overall Open Spaces budget to produce a £39,000 negative figure. Furthermore it was noted that officers had agreed to provide an improved format for the report in future to provide more detail on areas of the Additional Works Programme (AWP).

The Director of Open Spaces concluded by noting that she had asked the Superintendent of Epping Forest to identify £39,000 of savings from the current year to address the shortfall.

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6. CONSOLIDATED REVENUE OUTTURN 2012-13

The Chairman introduced the Outturn report to the Committee, noting that Members of the Committee had been sent a copy of Alderman Hall's e-mail of 14 July 2013 (raising concerns with respect to an apparent significant underspend in the Additional Works Programme in 2012/13) and of the reply of the City Surveyor dated 17 July 2013 (which explained, inter alia, that over half the apparent underspend was at the reporting date committed spend which will feature in the 2013/14 report to the Committee).

The Deputy Chairman thanked the City Surveyor for his additional note on the AWP and welcomed the fact that the format of subsequent reports on the AWP will include more detail. The Committee proceeded to discuss the £39,000 overspend, and the following questions, comments and remarks were made:

- In response to concerns raised by a Member over the finances of the Chingford Golf Course the Director assured the Committee that their colleagues on the Epping Forest Committee were aware of these issues and that the matter had been referred to the Audit and Risk Management Committee.
- The Chairman noted that the issue in question was not of the subsidising of the Chingford Golf Course by the City of London Corporation, but the budget overspend itself.
- The Director of Open Spaces noted that the overspend represented 0.2% of the overall budget of the Open Spaces Directorate, but that nevertheless due to financial pressures it would be increasingly difficult to meet budgets over the next couple of years.

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7. **GREEN SPACES - THE BENEFITS FOR LONDONERS**

The Open Spaces Business Manager introduced the report on the *Green Spaces: The Benefits for London* publication of the City of London Economic Development Office (EDO) and Public Relations Office (PRO) on 8 July. It was noted that the PRO would be monitoring the impact of the report over the coming weeks and that the publication had already been referenced by the Education Strategy Working Group.

In response to a question from an Observer the Director confirmed that Members would have the opportunity to comment on the report at the next Committee in September.

In response to a query from an Observer the Chairman agreed that the publication would not be included on the agenda of the West Ham Park Committee as it would be considered as a strategic matter.

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8. **BUSINESS PLAN - QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE UPDATE**

The Open Spaces Business Manager introduced a Quarterly Performance Update on the Open Spaces Business Plan, noting that KPI13 *Efficient receipting of invoices* was currently classed as 'red' due to the fact that a dedicated member of the Chamberlain's staff was no longer focusing exclusively on this role. She reported that mitigating action was already underway to ensure that this Key Performance Indicator (KPI) improved as soon as possible.

The Committee proceeded to discuss the update, during which the following questions and remarks were made:

- In response to a question from a Member the Business Manager confirmed that the KPI on the number of accidents includes those reported by both staff and members of the public.
- During a general discussion on the benchmarks used when measuring KPIs, the Director noted that it was difficult to assign meaningful benchmarks across the whole spectrum of KPIs, and a Member noted that nonetheless it was important to ensure a consistent pattern of continuous improvement.
- In response to a positive comment from a Member on the increased use of the Open Spaces website the Director reported that the webpages on Open Spaces, were the second most visited part of the City of London website.
- A Member commented that he was pleased that overall there was only one 'red' KPI.
- In response to a question from a Member over what efforts were being made across the Open Spaces Directorate to match the commitment to sustainability

demonstrated by the installation of photovoltaic cells on the Highgate Wood Machine Shed, the Director replied that a number of projects were in train, including the use of electric quad bikes to cut down on fuel consumption.

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9. IDENTITY PROJECT - ESTABLISHMENT OF A WORKING PARTY

The Business Manager introduced a report for decision on the establishment of an Identity Working Party whose remit would be to consider proposals for the creation of a portfolio of identities for the various City of London Open Spaces before these were submitted to the Committee in November.

The Committee welcomed the proposal for the establishment and noted that it would be useful to include where relevant external members to ensure relevant expertise was utilised to best effect.

RESOLVED, that:

- A Working Party be convened to consider the development of a new visual identity for Open Spaces, to report back to the Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee
- That the Working Party membership consist of:
 - The Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee
 - The Chairman of each of the other Open Spaces Committees
 - A nominee (at the discretion of the relevant Committee Chairman) from each of the other Open Spaces Committees
 - Deputy Alex Deane
- That the Working Party sit on Tuesday 17 September at 1600hrs and Friday 8 November at 1000hrs.

10. SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

The City Gardens Manager provided an update to the Committee on a variety of operational issues:

Finance

The City Gardens budget is in line with agreed profiles.

Staff

The City Gardens currently has a full complement of staff.

Projects

A specialist conservation company have recently completed restoration works to grave stones and memorials in Bunhill Fields and are due shortly to inspect

the remainder of headstones and memorials to prioritise future works based on safety and conservation need.

Blue Trees and Launch of new Tree Trail

Following the installation of the Trees for Cities Blue Trees project, the first City Gardens Tree Walk and leaflet have been designed by Trees for Cities and is due to be launched during the City Festival period.

Friends of City Gardens and Volunteer Activities

The Aldgate Experiments project has been implemented which saw school children from Sir John Cass primary school plant a series of red flower pots, in conjunction with the installation of a viewing platform with red seats. In response to a question from a Member the City Gardens Manager confirmed that this was a temporary project.

Visits

Recent visits to City Gardens included the British Association of Landscape Industries (BALI) (9 July), the Worshipful Company of Gardeners (17 July) Royal Horticultural Students (28 June) and the Open Spaces Committee Tour (12 July). It was noted that a parchment had been presented by the Worshipful Company of Gardeners that would be displayed in the entrance to the Irish Chambers.

Growing Localities Apprenticeship Scheme

It was noted that interviews for apprenticeship places were due to take place on 7 August. Three places were available for the six candidates that had been working across City Gardens, West Ham Park and The Royal Parks sites since May. The successful candidates will be employed for three years part funded by the City Bridge Trust. The remaining three candidates will receive advice and signposting to other opportunities within the industry.

10.1 Blue Trees Project Extension

The Business Manager introduced a report for decision on the extension of the current Blue Trees art installation at three gardens within the City of London. It was proposed that the project be extended from 26 July until 27 September.

In response to a question from a Member, the Superintendent confirmed that the colourant would last until September provided the weather remained fine, and that in the event of bad weather impacting negatively on the appearance of the trees it would be possible to remove the colourant overnight.

RESOLVED, that:

- The extension of the Trees for Cities' Blue Trees project is extended from 26 July 2013 to 27 September 2013.

11. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

Contingency Planning

In response to a question from a Member the Director confirmed that emergency contingency plans and risk assessments existed for each of the Open Spaces and City Gardens sites, and that these were subject to regular review.

12. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

City Arts Initiative - Endless Stair

The Superintendent informed the Committee that an opportunity existed for the installation of a City Arts Initiative called *Endless Stair* but that it required both planning permission and the approval of both the Culture, Heritage and Libraries and the Open Spaces and City Gardens Committees. Given the timescales involved it was requested that the Committee grant delegated authority to officers to progress the project in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman.

The installation would consist of a series of interlocking stairs and would be around 10m in height. It was proposed to install it in Castle Lane Gardens in September 2013. Construction and dismantling would take around three weeks in total, and the artwork would be in situ for one week. There were issues over the effect the installation would have on views on St Paul's and the Firefighters Memorial, at which an annual ceremony is held each September.

Members noted that approval has already been granted for the project by the Culture Heritage and Libraries Committee, and that they were happy to grant delegated authority to officers for the approval of the project provided it did not impede the annual ceremony at the Firefighters Memorial.

RESOLVED, that:

- Delegated authority be granted to officers to progress the *Endless Stairs* arts project in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, provided that the project did not impact negatively on the annual ceremony at the Firefighters Memorial.

Barking-Gospel Oak Rail User Group

The Director noted a proposal from the Barking-Gospel Oak Rail User Group for an officer and Member to attend a Local Authority liaison group, and for the Corporation to contribute an annual sum of £100 to the group's running costs. After discussing the proposal the Committee agreed that any issues regarding the line be dealt with via the usual channels, including the Department of Built Environment and Transport for London.

RESOLVED, that:

- The Open Spaces Directorate decline the offer from the Barking-Gospel Oak Rail User Group to nominate an officer to their proposed local

authority liaison group, and their request for an annual £100 contribution to the group's running costs

13. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

RESOLVED: That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act as follows:-

<u>Item No.</u>	<u>Paragraphs in Schedule 12A</u>
14	3

14. **DEBT ARREARS - INVOICED INCOME FOR PERIOD ENDING 31 MARCH 2013**

The Committee received a report of the Chamberlain and Director of Open Spaces.

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15. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

There were no questions.

16. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

There was no other business.

The meeting ended at 3.34 pm

Chairman

Contact Officer: Alistair MacLellan
alistair.maclellan@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Agenda Item 5

Committee(s):	Date(s):
Open Spaces and City Gardens Policy and Resources	7 th October 2013 10 th October 2013
Subject: Planning Commitments for City of London Open Spaces	Public
Report of: Director of Open Spaces	For Decision

Summary

The City of London's Open Spaces are currently affected by a number of developments in planning policy. Increased housing demand has led to development pressure on land adjacent to, or otherwise affecting, the City's Open Spaces.

Planning authorities are also developing Local Plans, which require significant input from a range of local residents and landowners, including the Open Spaces. Additionally, many authorities are reviewing their Local Development Frameworks.

Officers at the Open Spaces are required to engage extensively with planning authorities in order to protect Open Spaces and ensure plans recognise the impacts of development on the quality of visitor services, heritage and biodiversity and the risk of fragmentation of landscapes and habitat.

Recommendation(s)

Members of the Policy and Resources Committee are asked to agree:

- Option Two outlined in this report: to allocate an additional £50,000 to be charged to City's Cash and met from the Policy and Resources Committee's contingency 2013/14 and 2014/15, split into two annual contributions of £25,000 for planning consultancy to aid the protection of the Open Spaces from development pressures through working with Planning Authorities to shape Local Plans.

Main Report

Background

1. Many of the local planning authorities that affect the City's Open Spaces are now developing the 'local element' of their core strategies and plans. These Local Plans will set out how developments will be delivered over the next decade and beyond, on land in close proximity to the Open Spaces. While the

City of London does not oppose new housing and development in general, it is important that development in the vicinity of the Open Spaces is appropriate and does not negatively impact on the sites. There exists an opportunity for the City of London to influence these Local Plans so that harm to the open spaces is minimised and/or mitigated. This will require input from local officers and require use of local risk budgets to seek specialist advice and to fund research.

2. Most of the City of London's Public Open Spaces are founded by legislation which pre-dates the Town and Country Planning system introduced in 1947, and therefore the sites do not enjoy the statutory protections in planning extended to National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBS) and World Heritage Sites (WHS) which were all designated after 1949. Engagement with local planning authorities is therefore essential to protecting the City of London's open spaces.

Current Position

3. Many of the Open Spaces are already addressing a variety of planning issues in their local areas and there have been consequential impacts on local resources. There is also a shortage of specialist planning skills within the Open Spaces Department.
4. Whilst some of the cost of planning work has been reduced by partnership working and resource sharing between the City of London and the various Planning Authorities, it is evident that there is a requirement for additional resources in the short term to meet this unexpected demand.
5. A particular area where activity is required is ensuring Planning Authorities take into account the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (The Habitats Regulations). This sets out a legal requirement to protect SACs (Special Areas of Conservation) from harm. This includes the control of development that may be having a detrimental impact on the SAC 'either alone or in combination with other developments'.
6. The Regulations make it clear that Planning Authorities, as the controlling influence on development, are the Competent Authority and as such can be held responsible by law for causing harm to the site.
7. Given the range of Planning Authorities with which sites engage, the differing conservation requirements and the different site designations, the demands on officers in each area differ. These are outlined below:

Burnham Beeches

8. Burnham Beeches is a highly protected Open Space being a Site of Special Scientific Interest, National Nature Reserve and Special Area of Conservation – the latter providing responsibility for its protection under EU law both to the landowner and any other organisation or individual who is developing a plan that is likely to have a significant likely effect upon the SAC. As such, the

decisions of four local planning authorities have the potential to have a direct or indirect impact on the Beeches SAC. These are:

- South Bucks District Council (SBDC),
 - Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM),
 - Slough Borough Council (SBC),
 - Wycombe District Council (WDC).
9. In recent years, the Superintendent has been involved in the development of the local Core Planning Strategies. Each authority has an understanding of the relevant EU Habitats Directives and the potential each planning application has to cause harm to the Beeches.
 10. The Superintendent of Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common is actively working with SBDC to progress their Development Management Local Plan (DMLP) to prevent significant harm to the site (alone or in combination with all other local developments). It is the Superintendent's view that the final version of the DMLP should set limits to the type and amount of development in the vicinity of the Beeches and to ensure that those that do go ahead contribute to the long term care and maintenance of the site (as mitigation).
 11. This approach demands evidence of 'likely significant impact upon the SAC'. Unfortunately, the science is largely absent and resources are required to fund work that will help justify the case. As such the Superintendent is working in partnership with SBDC to establish baseline data to support the case to protect the site. To date in 2013/14 this has cost £20,000 and is providing basic demographic and hydrological data. An additional £5000 cost has been accrued in staff time. South Bucks District Council has contributed a similar amount (although the ratio of funding of research and staff time is different).
 12. To ensure appropriate development in the long-term it is clear that additional evidence will be required. It is very likely that research costs will grow over the next two years or so.
 13. There is also a need to seek specialist counsel if we are to be content that the final version of the DMLP is sufficiently robust in its defence of the Open Space. It is unlikely that this expertise exists in house and additional costs are foreseen.
 14. It is likely that the process will commence with the remaining named local authorities and whilst the research costs should diminish over time the impact on the Superintendent and his senior team in terms of time dedicated to the issue is likely to grow.

City Commons

15. The diverse landscapes and habitats of the seven City Commons represent some of the finest open spaces in the Surrey and South London area. Ashtead Common, Farthing Downs, Coulsdon Common, Kenley Common, Riddlesdown, Spring Park and West Wickham Common comprise an invaluable resource of 479 hectares (1,185 acres) of countryside in a largely suburban area.
16. Between them the Commons are covered by a number of designations that reflect their special characteristics. Ashtead Common is designated as a National Nature Reserve and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Farthing Downs and Riddlesdown are also designated as SSSIs. Six of the Commons (excluding Ashtead) are classed as Sites of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation and four of the Commons contain Scheduled Monuments.

17. The Superintendent works closely with the neighbouring authorities which includes three London Boroughs, two Surrey District Councils, Surrey County Council and the Environment Agency in relation to land drainage. In addition, local residents and Friends Groups help to monitor planning applications that might impact upon the Commons.
18. Currently, the Superintendent is actively seeking to protect Kenley Common in relation to the proposed development of the former Officers Mess and NAAFI. These developments could have a significant impact on Kenley Common as well as providing an opportunity to improve access around the perimeter of the airfield. The sub division and subsequent sale of Greenbelt land around Riddlesdown has increased the risk of development and consequently the amount of Officer time to monitor and comment on planning applications.
19. In addition to this the Superintendent and his team are sometimes required to get proactively involved in schemes associated with highway development to ensure that plans are shaped appropriately. The recent example of the pedestrian crossing at Riddlesdown and the proposed crossing at West Wickham demonstrate how time consuming and politically charged such schemes can be.

Epping Forest

20. In addition to the protection afforded by its founding legislation, some 1,728 hectares of Epping Forest is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, and some 1,605 hectares are assigned as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) under the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC). Epping Forest and its associated Buffer Land also contains a number of additional protected areas including Scheduled Ancient Monuments (3); Local Geological Sites (8); Grade II* Parks on the English Heritage Register of Historic Parks and Gardens (2) and Grade II and II* Listed Buildings (7). Similarly, Epping Forest also coincides with Conservation Areas (17); Archaeological Protection Areas (2); Groundwater Protection Areas (1) and Special Wildlife Sites/Sites of Metropolitan Interest for nature Conservation declared by Local Planning Authorities and other agencies. The latter designation provides responsibility for its protection under EU law both to the landowner and any other organisation or individual who is developing a plan that is likely to have a significant likely effect upon the SAC. Much of Epping Forest and its Buffer Land either forms part of the Metropolitan Green Belt (MGB) or is subject to Public Open Space planning designation.
21. The decisions of four Local Planning Authorities (LPAs), particularly, but not exclusively, with regard to the SAC have the potential to have a direct or indirect impact on the Epping Forest. These are:
 - Epping Forest District Council (EFDC)
 - London Borough of Redbridge (LBR)

- London Borough of Waltham Forest (LBWF)
 - London Borough of Newham (LBN)
22. In addition, Essex County Council is the Local Planning Authority for County waste and mineral matters and its own property consents, while the London Plan is the Greater London Authority's Spatial Development Framework which sets out the overall strategic plan for London, including its Open Spaces.
23. For some considerable time, Epping Forest members of staff have been involved in comment on individual planning matters together with detailed contributions to the local Core Planning Strategies which highlight both the conservation value of Epping Forest and the important contribution made by Epping Forest to the overall Local Authority provision of Public Open Space.

Hampstead Heath and Highgate Wood

24. Hampstead Heath is one of London's most popular open spaces, well known for its spectacular panoramas across Central London from Parliament Hill, the architectural quality of the listed Kenwood House, and the unique bathing ponds. At 275 hectares, Hampstead Heath is one of London's largest open spaces. It provides a valuable recreational and environmental resource, and attracts visitors from across London, as well as further afield. The Heath has a semi-rural character, with elements of designed landscape including Golders Hill Park, Kenwood House and the Hill Garden; it is home to a mosaic of habitats, including ancient and recent woodland; and it supports a range of formal and informal recreational and sporting activities, including the Lido and the Athletics Track.
25. Whilst the Heath falls within the boroughs of Camden and Barnet, the City of London has assumed responsibility as the custodian of the Heath following the abolition of the Greater London Council in 1986. As such, the City has a statutory duty to protect and conserve the natural aspect of the Heath. This includes understanding and preserving the special interplay between the Heath and its surroundings.
26. There are growing pressures on the Heath, its surroundings and views. This is the result of a combination of factors, including the government's current agenda to make the best use of land, a renewed interest in taller buildings; trends in residential land values, mixed use developments and the social housing sector; and the inflow of capital into London's residential property market, particularly in high value areas.
27. The formal designation of two Neighbourhood Renewal Areas (Highgate and Dartmouth Park) that have incorporated parts of the eastern side of the Heath, including the Highgate chain of ponds and Parliament Hill triangle, provide further opportunities to influence planning policies at a very local level.
28. As a result of these pressures and opportunities there is a real need for a collaborative approach between the City of London and the boroughs neighbouring the Heath to ensure that the special qualities of the Heath are appropriately protected and conserved.
29. As such, the City of London has an interest in all those planning applications that could potentially impact on the qualities of the Heath. It is recognised, however, that this interest has to be proportionate both to the scale and

- nature of the application in question, and restricted to applications that are closely relevant to the character and qualities of the Heath.
30. A series of criteria for the referral of applications from boroughs neighbouring the Heath to the City of London have been identified. These are spatial criteria, within which there are development parameters providing further guidance on the types of application to be referred. These spatial criteria are as follows:
- The immediate fringes of the Heath;
 - Sensitive viewing corridors;
 - Areas with the potential for change; and
 - Key approaches to the Heath.
31. It must be noted that these criteria are indicative only, in other words they will not catch all planning applications that could impact on the character or qualities of the Heath.
32. The City of London has developed a proactive, as well as a reactive, approach to shaping development. This means taking an active role in appropriate applications at the earliest stage, this includes concept design stages, as well as early discussions about section 106 agreements. Given the complexity and size of many applications the Superintendent increasingly has to rely on support of specialist planning and engineering consultants to support objections.
33. The Superintendent and his staff respond to some 60 applications a year with 30 requiring significant time, in the order of 50 days, at a value of £10,000.
34. The number of high profile applications is considerable; £10 - £15,000 a year is spent on consultant's fees and if applications go to appeal then it has been necessary to appoint expert witnesses and counsel to support these procedures.

Options

35. There are two options to address the forthcoming increase in planning related work.

Option One: Do nothing. This would require each open space to reprioritise its existing local risk budget to fund research and other works to protect that site. Open Spaces incurred a small deficit on its budget in the previous financial year and so any transfer of budget to fund this work is likely to have an impact on the sufficiency and quality of local services. One example at Burnham Beeches would be the project to improve presentation standards and visitor safety at the main entrance to the site (£21,000) which could be delayed until 2016/17.

Option Two: Provide additional resources of £25,000 in financial year 2013/14 and £25,000 in financial year 2014/15 with any unspent funds to be returned. This would alleviate the financial burden in its entirety and consequently not impact on the level of service provision.

Proposals

36. The second option is recommended, with a proposed additional budget of £50,000 being made available for procurement of planning consultancy services. This would allow for the acquisition of expert advice, in particular relating to local or neighbourhood plans and the EU Habitats Directive.

Strategic Implications

37. The provision and preservation of the Open Spaces fulfils several elements of the City Together Strategy and delivers a range of benefits to Great London. These benefits rely on the quality of the Open Spaces and the prevention of encroaching development is central to this quality.
38. The Acts of Parliament which relate to the Open Spaces allow the City of London to use all lawful means to resist encroachments and preserve the landscape of the Open Spaces.

Financial and Risk Implications

39. The Committee is requested to provide funding for planning consultancy at a cost of £50,000, split over two financial years and met from the Policy and Resources Committee's contingencies 2013/14 and 2014/15 and charged to City's Cash. The current uncommitted balance for 2013/14 is £541,000 prior to any allowances being made for any proposals on today's agenda. Substantial funds currently remain in the contingency for 2014/15.
40. Inappropriate development around the open spaces would carry with it increased visitor numbers and the potential for the sites to need more intensive and expensive management. Increased vehicle use in developed areas could lead to reduced air quality, localised pollution and impacts on hydrology. A further significant risk follows, in terms of the impact of more intensive development on the wildlife, biodiversity and heritage of the sites.
41. There is no legal risk through failure to engage with the local planning authorities. The EU Habitats Directive does not include provisions relating to the role of the City as landowner, but with the planning authority.

Conclusion

42. The Open Spaces are facing considerable demand for input into the shaping of Local Plans. In order to protect the Open Spaces, it is important that Local Plans do not allow for intense development of areas around the sites. Providing effective input into the work of Planning Authorities in the short term requires significant resources. This challenge could be met by providing additional resource for the provision of planning consultancy.

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Agenda Item 6

Committee(s): Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee	Date(s): 7 th October 2013	Item no.
Subject: Open Spaces Policy Review	Public	
Report of: Director of Open Spaces	For Decision	
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Summary</u></p> <p>A review of all Department Policy is being carried out to ensure that appropriate policies are in place and well communicated to staff at all sites. The intention of the review is to ensure that policies are in place to effectively mitigate or minimise the risks faced in our operations.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>That the Committee note the report.</p>		

Main Report

Background

1. Open Space Departmental policies exist in a number of areas. These policies provide guidance for staff as to how various activities should be carried out across the Open Spaces sites. They are of particular importance in ensuring the minimisation and mitigation of risk across sites.
2. It is some time since Departmental policies were reviewed and an assurance exercise was carried out, to ensure they are successfully communicated to members of staff and used during day-to-day site operations.
3. A policy review will be undertaken to complete this work.

Current position

4. The Policy Review is being led by the Departmental Business Manager. Currently an exercise is being carried out to identify all existing departmental policies and to identify areas where site-specific policies have been introduced which could be used at all other sites.
5. This exercise will be followed by a review of all departmental policies. Policies will be reviewed at Senior Management Team meetings and through the Departmental Improvement Groups, which draw together staff from across the Open Spaces.
6. Where policies have significant strategic implications, or seek to mitigate serious risks, these policies will be presented to the Open Spaces Committee for consideration.
7. It is intended that the majority of policies are reviewed within the next year. A schedule at Appendix One lists the policies to be considered by Open Spaces Committee.

Finance and Risk Implications

8. The policy review aims to minimise and mitigate risks across the department. By reviewing and amending existing policy
9. There are no financial implications to the policy review beyond the officer time involved.

Corporate and Strategic Implications

10. Departmental policies are used to support the delivery of various elements of the Departmental Business Plan.

Conclusion

11. The Committee is asked to note the on-going Policy Review and the forward plan for policies to be considered by this Committee.

APPENDIX ONE: Policies for Approval and Review by Open Spaces Committee

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OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE – POLICIES FOR APPROVAL AND REVIEW

Sep 2013

Outdoor Events Cancellation Policy

Nov 2013

Communications policies (Review of the Filming and Photography policies, adoption of the Social Media Policy)

Feb 2014

Education policies (Education Strategy, adoption of the Safeguarding Policy)

Apr 2014

Emergency policies (Review Emergency Plan, review Pandemic Plan, review Fire Action Plans, adoption of Extreme Weather Working Policy)

Jul 2014

Health and Safety policies (general review and adoption of Tree Safety Policy)

Sep 2014

Events policies (Adoption of Outdoor Events Policy, adoption of Event Toolkit/Guide for Organisers)

Agenda Item 7

Committee(s):	Date(s):	Item no.
Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee	7 th October 2013	
Subject:	Public	
Large events adverse weather cancellation policy		
Report of:	For Decision	
Director of Open Spaces		
<u>Summary</u>		
<p>The Open Space sites host a number of large events. In the event of adverse weather it is sometimes necessary to cancel an event in order to protect the safety of those attending and members of staff. A standard procedure for cancelling events has been developed and a policy for the cancellation of events has been written.</p>		
Recommendation		
That the committee adopt the policy.		

Main Report

Background

1. All Open Spaces on occasion play host to externally organised events. In the event of adverse weather, large events may sometimes need to be cancelled. The cancellation of an event due to adverse weather may lead to dispute between the Open Space and the event organiser.

Current position

2. The policy at Appendix 1 describes a standard procedure to be followed at all sites in order to make the decision to cancel an event. This policy creates uniformity in decision making at all sites, which is important given some commercial event organisers may hold events at a number of our sites.

Finance and Risk Implications

3. The policy has been prepared to minimise the risks to which the City of London is exposed in the event of a cancellation of a large event due to adverse weather. In particular the policy seeks to minimise the risk of legal redress being sought by external event organisers in the event of cancellation. The standard documentation included in the policy seeks to ensure a good audit trail is in place to explain the decision to cancel events.

Corporate and Strategic Implications

4. There are no corporate or strategic implications.

Conclusion

5. While in the past individual sites followed similar procedures regarding the cancellation of large events due to adverse weather, this policy ensures commercial organisations managing events on our sites have clarity as to how decisions are made regarding cancellation.

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Large Events Adverse Weather Cancellation Policy and Procedure

Open Spaces Department

Adopted: ENTER DATE

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Definitions

The **External Event Organiser** referred to in this policy is the named representative of the organisation responsible for the provision and management of the event.

The **OS Event Coordinator** is the officer in Open Spaces who has coordinated the event and liaises with the City's External Event Organiser.

Large Events are those held on Open Space sites which require significant management and coordination with the local authority, emergency services or similar external agency. They include but are not limited to:

- Large sponsored runs and walks
- Sports festivals and sporting events
- Exhibitions/Fairs
- Outdoor concerts
- Large performing arts events

Adverse weather conditions are those which might have implications for:

- The health and safety of visitors, participants, and members of staff involved in the event
- The potential lasting impact on the site landscape and ecological habitats if the event were to proceed
- Any relevant accessibility issues regarding visitors reaching and leaving the site
- Potential reputational damage to the external event provider and the City of London Corporation

Scope of this Policy

This policy does not cover cancellation due to circumstances other than adverse weather conditions. It does not apply to adverse weather incidents which occur immediately prior or during an event when emergency cancellation and evacuation is required.

Rationale for this Policy

Large events are regularly held at Open Spaces sites. In the event of adverse weather, it is important that the safety of those attending the event, and members of staff involved in arranging and managing the event, is ensured.

In the event of adverse weather conditions a decision must be taken as to whether the event is to be cancelled. It is important that the process by which the decision is taken should allow for consideration of all known risks and involves all relevant parties.

This policy describes the process which should be followed to make a decision regarding cancellation and how the decision should be communicated. This policy provides clarity for external event providers as to how decisions to cancel are taken. Before confirming a booking for a large event, the OS Event Coordinator must ensure the External Event Organiser has read a copy of this policy and signed the form at Appendix 1, stating they have read and understood the contents of this policy.

The cancellation procedure

In the event of new information becoming available regarding adverse weather conditions during, before or directly after the event, the External Event Organiser and OS Event Coordinator must meet to discuss the event. The OS Event Coordinator must regularly monitor weather forecasts provided by the UK Meteorological Office (Met Office) before the event.

The meeting must be held as soon as reasonably possible after information about adverse weather conditions becomes available and must be held on site wherever possible.

The meeting must include consideration of the following issues:

- The health and safety of visitors, participants, and members of staff involved in the event
- The potential lasting impact on the site landscape and ecological habitats if the event were to proceed
- Any relevant accessibility issues regarding visitors reaching and leaving the site
- Potential reputational damage to the external event provider and the City of London Corporation

A template agenda for the meeting is included at Appendix Two.

The OS Event Coordinator should at the conclusion of the meeting make a decision regarding cancellation, and notify the External Event Organiser of the decision. If a decision is taken to cancel, the OS Event Coordinator must immediately escalate the decision for confirmation to the site Superintendent, or in the absence of that Superintendent a named authorised officer.

The Superintendent, or named authorised site officer, must aim to review the decision within an hour of notification, where practicable. If the decision to cancel is confirmed, the Superintendent, or named authorised officer, must inform the following of the decision by email:

- The Chairman of the relevant City of London Management Committee
- The External Event Organiser
- The OS Event Coordinator

If the confirmed decision is disputed by any of the parties listed above, the Director of Open Spaces in consultation with the Chairman of the relevant Management Committee must make the final decision.

Notwithstanding the above procedure, if the OS Event Coordinator is, owing to the unavailability or uncontactability of the External Event Organiser at the relevant time, unable to hold the initial meeting with the External Event Organiser referred to above, the OS Event Coordinator shall be entitled, without consultation with the External Event Organiser, to make a decision regarding cancellation and, in the case of a decision to cancel, to escalate that decision for confirmation to the site Superintendents or named authorised site officer.

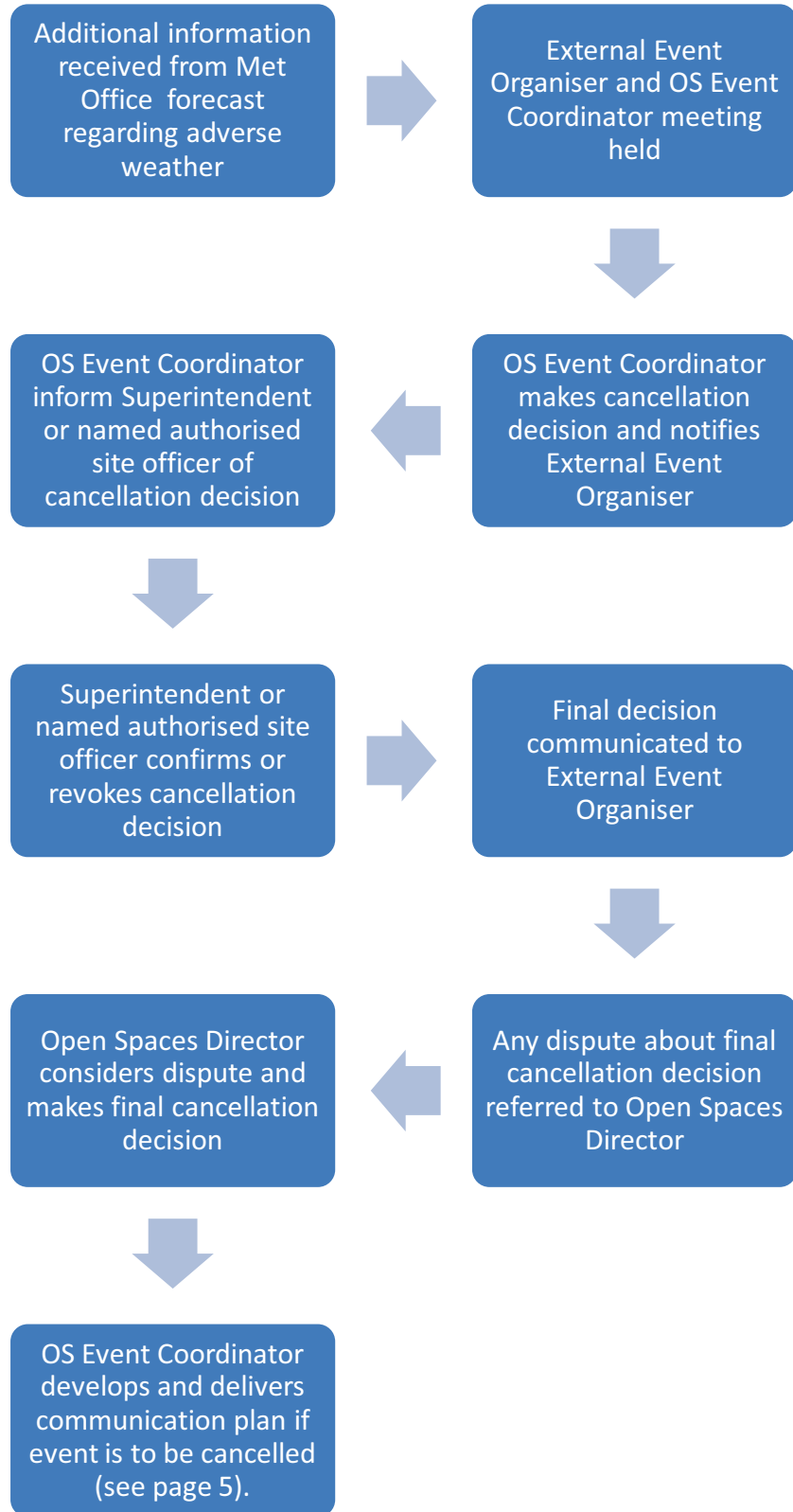
Any decision to cancel taken by any of:

- The site Superintendent
- The named authorised site officer
(in either case, unless the disputed decision is referred to the Director of Open Spaces)
- The Director of Open Spaces

shall be final, conclusion and binding for all purposes upon the external event provider and its representatives.

The City of London Corporate will not accept liability for any costs or contingent liabilities associated with cancellations due to forecast or actual adverse weather conditions.

Cancellation decision flow diagram



Communication

If a decision is taken to cancel the event then the OS Event Coordinator, in consultation with the External Event Organiser (if practicable) and the Superintendent or authorised site officer will as soon as practicable develop an appropriate Communication Plan ensuring that event stakeholders are advised and the reasons for cancellation clearly explained. A template Communication Plan is included at Appendix Three.

The OS Event Coordinator should lead in the implementation of the agreed communication plan and following issues need to be considered:

- Could an alternative date for the event be set?
- What are the key reasons for cancellation?
- What are the most appropriate communication channels to use to those who would be planning to attend the event?
- What are the most appropriate channels to use given the timeframes involved (for example, notice in local paper for an event a week away, local radio if event scheduled for next twenty-four hours).

Consideration must be given to use of the following communications channels:

- Participants/Spectators – Facebook/Twitter/e-mail/newspapers
- Stewards/Support staff/Contractors – telephone/e-mail
- City of London Corporation staff - e-mail/radio/constabulary
- Communications Officer within the Division
- Public Relations Department of the City of London Corporation

Appendix One: Pro-forma Agreement of Policy on Booking

Agreement in respect of the Large Events Adverse Weather Cancellation Policy and Procedure

I confirm I have read and agree that my organisation will abide by the City of London Open Spaces Large Events Adverse Weather Cancellation Policy and Procedure

Name:

Position/Title:

Signature:

External Event Provider:

Date:

Name and contact details of the External Event Organiser:

Appendix Two: Template Agenda for Cancellation Meeting

MEETING TO CONSIDER CANCELLATION OF EVENT DUE TO ADVERSE WEATHER

NAME OF EVENT	
DATE OF EVENT	
DATE OF MEETING	
ATTENDANCE	OS EVENT COORDINATOR EXTERNAL EVENT ORGANISER

- (1) Content of Met Office Weather Forecast
- (2) Health and safety implications of adverse weather event for visitors/participants/members of staff
- (3) Potential lasting impact on the site landscape and ecological habitats if the event were to proceed
- (4) Accessibility issues for visitors to reaching and leaving the site (ease of arrival and departure, impact of weather on local transport)
- (5) Potential reputational damage to external event provider and City of London Corporation
- (6) Decision on cancellation
- (7) Consideration of next steps

Appendix Three: Draft Communication Plan

Background

Details of event
Details of adverse weather event
Details of potential impact
Details of decision to cancel

Key Messages

Consider audience
Ensure clear explanation of why cancellation must take place

Audiences

Participants/ potential visitors
Stewards/support staff/contractors
City of London Corporation Staff
Media

Communication Channels

Telephone
Face to face
Email
Social Media
Local Press
National Press
Radio/Television
Constabulary/Rangers/Other staff

Timing

Responsibilities for communication

Agenda Item 8

Committee(s):	Date(s):	Item no.
Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee	7 th October 2013	
Subject: Green Spaces: The Benefits for London	Public	
Report of: Director of Open Spaces	For Information	
<u>Summary</u>		
<p>A report entitled ‘Green Spaces: The Benefits for London’ was published by the City of London Economic Development Office and Public Relations Office on the 8th of July. The report was presented to Committee on the 22nd July 2013. At the Committee it was agreed that the report should be presented for further discussion to the Open Spaces Committee.</p>		
Recommendation		
That this report is received for information.		

Main Report

Background

1. The Economic Development Office commissioned BOP Consulting to carry out a literature review of the research relating to the benefits to residents, workers, businesses and visitor of green spaces. The full report is included at Appendix One.
2. The report found compelling evidence for the benefits of green spaces. These were classified as environmental benefits, physical and mental health benefits, economic value and social benefits.

Current Position

3. At the Open Spaces Committee held on the 7th July 2013 the report was received, and Members of the committee requested that further time was made available to the discussion of the content and implications of the report. The following areas are suggested for discussion.

The role of the City of London in providing green space for Londoners

4. The City of London has, since the nineteenth century, played a key role in conserving green spaces in Greater London and beyond. In the short term, work is being carried out to promote the role of the City of London in protecting and managing green spaces through the Identity Project, which is being overseen by a Members Working Group.
5. The Committee could consider the medium and long term role of the City of London in providing green space in London. In the past acquisition of land, for example Stoke Common, bought from South Buckinghamshire District Council in 2007. The London Green Grid, using the methodology laid out in the London Plan identified green space deficiencies in several areas of Greater London and opportunities for the development of new green spaces in the south-east and north-west of the city. How could a long term strategic plan for the City of London's role in green space be developed?

The threats to green spaces in London

6. The Committee regularly considers the risks faced in the management of existing green spaces. However, green spaces in London face several long term threats including the impact of pests and diseases, the impact of increased development in the vicinity of green spaces and the impact of changes to the climate. Consideration could be given to how the strategic management of the City of London's green spaces should address these risks.

How Open Spaces can promote specific benefits

7. The report highlights several specific groups which benefit from access to green spaces in urban areas, particular children and the mentally ill. The Committee may wish to consider how the Open Spaces can maximise use of their sites by these groups. How could our activities in these areas be developed in a strategic and sustainable way?

Conclusion

8. The report provides useful evidence to demonstrate the crucial role the open spaces maintained by the City of London play in provide a range of benefits to London and the surrounding areas.

APPENDIX ONE: Green Spaces: The Benefits for London

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Report prepared for the City of London Corporation
by BOP Consulting
Published July 2013

Green Spaces: The Benefits for London





TOPICAL INTEREST PAPER



Report prepared for the City of London Corporation
by BOP Consulting
Published July 2013

Green Spaces: The Benefits for London

City of London Economic Development
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July 2013

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Foreword

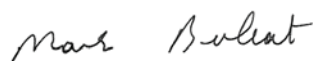
London has 35,000 acres of public green spaces – equivalent to 40% of its surface area – making it one of the greenest cities of its size in the world. The City of London Corporation is proud to be the custodian of almost 11,000 acres of green spaces, in and around London. This ranges from 200 'small' spaces, such as the parks, squares and gardens within the Square Mile, to 14 'large' spaces outside of the City boundaries, including Epping Forest, Hampstead Heath, Burnham Beeches, Ashted Common and Highgate Wood, among others.

London's green spaces help to improve the lives of its residents and workers, as well as providing a significant draw for visitors. This report looks in detail at the range of benefits these spaces provide for the community; some apparent, others perhaps more subtle. The report highlights four headline areas in which green spaces have been shown to provide benefits – the environment, physical and mental health and well-being, social interaction, and the economy – drawing on a comprehensive range of both academic and wider 'grey' literature, and applying these findings to London. Together, the benefits these green spaces provide, contribute towards London's competitiveness as a world city.


It is therefore vital that these spaces are effectively and continuously maintained. As one of the largest providers of green spaces in London, the City Corporation plays its full part in this, through its involvement in a number of initiatives;

- Projects to improve facilities for millions of visitors. For example the Branching Out Heritage Lottery Funded project at Epping Forest to improve access to the landscape, and a new visitor centre, The View, which tells the story of this 600 acre Forest;
- A sustainable grazing strategy which involves projects across City Corporation sites – including the City Commons, Epping Forest and Burnham Beeches. Using cattle and sheep grazing, as opposed to machine mowing; for improved biodiversity and wildlife habitats. The work includes the trial installation of "invisible" fences at two sites;
- A strong volunteering programme across City Corporation green spaces, with over 46,000 hours contributed in 2012/13;
- The creation of a new sustainable Wood at Epping Forest – Gifford Wood – part of the Lord Mayor's Appeal; and
- Tackling the tree diseases which threaten London's green spaces, as detailed in the City Corporation's June report.

We commend this report for clearly evidencing the breadth and depth of the benefits that London's green spaces provide for those who reside, visit and work in the capital, and which underpin London's offer as a world class city.



Mark Boleat
Chairman of Policy & Resources
Committee
City of London



Alderman Robert Hall
Chairman of Open Spaces &
City Gardens Committee
City of London

Introduction

Green spaces and big cities

More so than ever before, people across the world are living in urban areas. Indeed, as of 2010, more than half of the world's population lives in cities¹. These cities are growing both in size and number: while the world was home to two "mega-cities" – New York and Tokyo – in 1950², this number is predicted to increase to 22 by 2015³. Inevitably, this brings huge challenges around how to develop a sustainable infrastructure for these global cities.

Green spaces within cities – publicly accessible parks, gardens, squares and cemeteries – are an often overlooked component of this, and international comparisons indicate a huge variation in how much area is given over to green spaces by world cities. As Table 1 shows, London is the third greenest world city, with nearly 40% of its surface area consisting of public green spaces.

Table 1: World cities' public green spaces (parks and gardens), by proportion of surface area, 2012

City	Figure (%)
Singapore	47
Sydney	46
London	38.4
Johannesburg-Gauteng	24
Berlin	14.4
New York	14
Paris	9.4
Tokyo	3.44
Shanghai	2.6
Mumbai	2.5
Istanbul	1.5

Source: World Cities Culture Report, BOP 2012

¹ Cities Alliance (2010).

² Cities with 10 million inhabitants or more.

³ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2006).

This poses the question: what benefits do green spaces bring to London? This is harder to answer than, say, what are the benefits of housing or transport. However, in a context where pressure on land use is only going to intensify and people live increasingly removed from nature, it is nevertheless a question that needs to be answered.

London has 35,000 acres of green spaces, of which the City of London Corporation (referred to as "the City Corporation" in this report) owns and manages 3,684 acres. A further 7,245 acres of green spaces belonging to the City Corporation sit on the London 'fringe': that is, areas immediately surrounding London, including green spaces such as Epping Forest.

This report therefore sets out to investigate the question "What have green spaces ever done for London?" In particular, it aims to identify the benefits that residents, workers, businesses and visitors in Greater London and within the City of London, derive from green spaces in and around London, including those spaces belonging to the City Corporation. It also considers the role green spaces play in maintaining London's international competitiveness as a world city.



Queens Park

The City of London Corporation's green spaces

The City of London Corporation owns and manages almost 11,000 acres of public green spaces in and around London. This includes wildlife habitats, nature reserves, sites of special scientific or historic interest, and outdoor spaces for sport, recreation and enjoyment.

Loosely defined, the City Corporation's green spaces can be divided into around 200 'small' spaces within the City boundaries i.e. the 'Square Mile', and 14 'large' spaces outside of the City boundaries, in and around London. Within the Square Mile, these green spaces include squares, disused churchyards and other landscaped areas, many of which came into being as the result of The Great Fire of London in 1666 and The Blitz in 1940/41. The Square Mile is also home to the oldest public park in London – Finsbury Circus Garden, dating back to 1606. Overall, these spaces are home to over 2,800 trees and thousands of plants, and have a number of Green Flag Awards (14 granted in 2012)⁴ and Green Heritage Site Status (awarded to eight sites in 2012/13)⁵ to their name.

Some of the green spaces beyond the City boundaries of the Square Mile lie partly outside of Greater London. The largest of these is Epping Forest, which accounts for slightly more than half of all of the City Corporation's green spaces by area. Others include Hampstead Heath, Queens Park and Highgate Wood, as well as spaces perhaps less known to be owned and managed by the City Corporation, such as Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common in Buckinghamshire, West Ham Park, and the seven City

Commons on the borders of South London and Surrey (see Figure 1).

Green spaces are considered a vital resource for the London's residents, workers and visitors. This is reflected, for example, by the number of visitors they regularly attract. For example, in 2012/13, annual visits to green spaces in and beyond the Square Mile were estimated at 23 million⁶. Polling in 2009 indicated that the green spaces within the Square Mile are used by 74% of residents, and results also reflected high satisfaction rates: 77% of businesses, 69% of City executives and 84% of residents reported satisfaction with the spaces.

A City Corporation Gardens Customer Survey in 2012 revealed that most visitors to Square Mile green spaces seek "relaxation and passive recreation", followed by "passing through and meeting friends". Most visit on weekdays at lunchtime (42%) and stay for relatively short periods of time, indicating frequent use by City workers. However, across London's green spaces, there is also plenty of scope for, and evidence of, more 'active' recreation. For instance, in 2012/13 alone, over 46,000 volunteer hours were contributed by local residents in helping to tend and maintain the green spaces supported by the City Corporation⁷.

Recognising these and other benefits, the City Corporation strives to protect its green spaces for the future, and encourages local communities to enjoy them. For example, the City Corporation's green spaces are already home to a number of special initiatives. Most prominent among these is the annual City of London Festival. In 2012, the 'Green to Gold' campaign was launched as part of the celebrations for the London 2012 Olympics – to further engage and inspire communities to use London's green spaces.

⁴ <http://greenflag.keepbritainidy.org/>

⁵ <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/advice/advice-by-topic/parks-and-gardens/public-parks-and-open-spaces/green-flag-awards-and-green-heritage-site-scheme/>

⁶ City of London Corporation (2013).

⁷ Ibid.

Figure 1: The City of London Corporation's green spaces



The value of green spaces to London and Londoners

How did we do the research?

To answer the question of what benefits London's green spaces provide, including consideration of green spaces belonging to the City Corporation, this report considers a number of areas in which green spaces are commonly said to provide benefits. These include the environment, physical and mental health and well-being, social benefits, and economic impacts.

The report is based on a literature review of the latest international evidence in these four areas of research, including academic literature, 'grey' literature (i.e. non-academic publications by policy bodies, foundations, trusts and charities), comparative city-based indices and studies, as well as existing data that the City Corporation has on its own green spaces.

Through this literature review, we identified the main ways (or 'mechanisms') by which these four

benefits are most consistently credited as being delivered. Each of these 'mechanisms' is presented in brief sections below, which include information on:

- The hypothesis behind the mechanism, i.e. what issue(s) is it addressing and how? Are these issues increasing or decreasing in salience?
- The findings of the main studies;
- The strength of the evidence to date.

Each section concludes with an overview table that links the mechanisms by which benefits occur to London overall and specifically to the City of London.

These tables first illustrate the level of evidence found for the main mechanisms with regards to both smaller and larger green spaces. This distinction is not scientific – it is intended instead to be indicative, to be used as a guide. 'Large' green spaces are therefore understood as those "where you don't see the boundaries once inside" – spaces the size of Hyde Park or Regents Park, or the City Corporation's own Hampstead Heath. In turn, 'small parks' are those with boundaries clearly visible from all angles, such as squares and City gardens.

Based on the strength of the evidence found, the tables then consider the impacts of the mechanisms on residents, workers and businesses in Greater London more widely and within the City of London. In order to avoid double-counting benefits for workers, impacts on businesses should be understood here as strictly those benefits which have an immediate impact on businesses' bottom line, rather than indirect impacts, such as on employees' health.

Literature reviewed

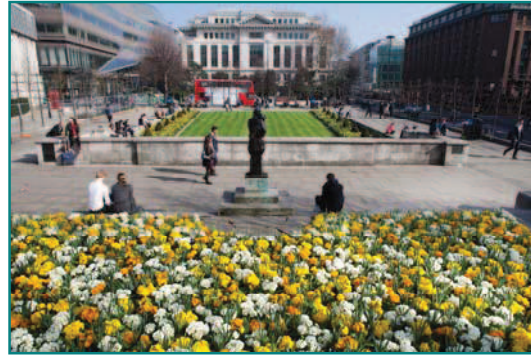
There exists a large body of international academic literature on the various potential benefits of green spaces. Studies cited in this report include literature from Europe, the United States, Australia and Asia. For example, a large proportion of the studies on the environmental impact of green spaces come from Asia. Studies cited within this report date back to the mid-1980s.

The volume of existing research is reflected in the fact that there already exists a large number of both systematic and narrative literature reviews. In part, this report is therefore a meta-review of these studies.

Finally, much of the relevant 'grey literature' reviewed for this report consists of primarily re-framing academic literature. This means that, unusually, both academic and grey literature fundamentally rests on the same research evidence.

Both literature reviews and individual studies frequently point out the need for further systematic research in all areas to increase the evidence base (a common feature of all research). Quality issues related to the literature that are raised most frequently include the 'case study-type' approach of studies (i.e. focusing on specific parks or species), or studies being based on a 'modelling' simulation approach rather than on actual empirical research, both of which may make drawing more general conclusions difficult.

Nevertheless, much international cross-citing among academic studies can be found, indicating a certain level of consensus on various findings across continents and societies. A number of key studies and authors are mentioned particularly frequently.



Gardens by St Paul's Cathedral

1. Environmental benefits

1.1 Cooler air through shade and ground cover with less heat retention

Hypothesis

Across the world, metropolitan areas are significantly warmer than their surrounding areas. The main causes for this are urban land surfaces, which use materials which retain heat, as well as waste heat generated by the high level of energy usage in cities. This effect may be intensified in the context of global warming. Through creating a break in a city's heat-retaining surfaces and providing shade during the day, green spaces mitigate this effect.

A systematic review in 2010 of a range of studies investigating temperatures within and outside urban parks, found that studies were generally consistent in finding lower surface temperatures in green spaces than in built-up spaces. An analysis of the temperature reductions put forward by the various studies showed that average temperature reductions in green spaces were just below 1°C during the day and 1.15°C at night. The authors of the review thus concluded that research clearly points towards the potential of green spaces to reduce urban air temperature⁸.

A wide-ranging study in 2007 of 61 city parks in Taipei came to the same conclusion – urban parks were on average cooler than their surroundings. The researchers also found that larger parks were on average cooler than smaller ones (though the relationship was non-linear). Park characteristics such as the size of natural, as opposed to built-up areas (e.g. paths), and the type of vegetation used, were also found to influence the level of impact⁹.

⁸ Bowler et al (2010).

⁹ Chang et al (2007).

Considering the geographical extent of this cooling effect, a 2005 study of two parks in Singapore again came to the same conclusion as the two studies cited above, adding that average temperatures were lower inside parks, and became warmer with increasing distance from the park. The authors thus concluded that research has overall confirmed the importance of large city green spaces on urban heat¹⁰.

1.2 Less rainwater run-off through water infiltration, storage and pollutant removal

Hypothesis

Due to their impermeable quality, urban surface materials are more prone to causing flooding than natural surface material. This problem is exacerbated by the fact that urban flooding is frequently polluted. Again, climate change is predicted to increase the risk of flooding in the future – a tendency which already seems visible¹¹. Through providing natural drainage, water interception, infiltration and storage, as well as pollutant removal from soil and water, green infrastructure contributes to surface flow reduction, resulting in flood alleviation and better water quality.

Researchers in China in 2012 claimed that only a few studies so far have explored the benefits of rainwater run-off reduction by urban green spaces.

However, one study from 1999 that is frequently cited concluded that Stockholm's lawns, parks, urban forests, cultivated land and wetland provide an important contribution to the city's drainage system¹². As the study explained, this is due to the soft ground

¹⁰ Yu and Hien (2005).

¹¹ Indeed, much of the 2000 flooding is said to have been caused by failing urban drainage systems unable to cope with the floods caused by urban surfaces - Forest Research (2010).

¹² Bolund and Hunhammar (1999), cited in Forest Research (2010).

allowing water to seep through rather than run-off, as well as vegetation storing and releasing water through evapotranspiration¹³.

Supporting this, the above mentioned 2012 Chinese study went on to analyse the rainwater run-off potential of all green spaces in Beijing. It estimated that together, they stored a total volume of 154 million cubic meters of rainwater, reducing potential run-off by 2,494 cubic meters per hectare of green area¹⁴.

Similarly, researchers in the UK who developed a 2080 surface run-off model for Greater Manchester have suggested that by increasing green ground cover in residential areas by 10%, run-off could be reduced in these areas by 4.9%, and that increasing tree cover by the same amount could cause a further reduction of 5.7%¹⁵.

Looking in particular at the quality of water collected in green spaces, other research in Beijing also found that the water stored in green areas was superior in quality to the run-off from roofs and roads, thus reducing purification costs¹⁶.



Walled garden in the Square Mile

1.3 Better air quality through pollutant absorption

Hypothesis

Due to the increased concentration of vehicle emissions, power production and industrial activity and aviation, cities are 'pollution hotspots'. In addition to causing damage to a city's built and natural environment, this aggravates cardiovascular and respiratory diseases among the urban population. Through its ability to absorb pollutants, urban green infrastructure helps to improve air quality.

A systematic review in 2013 concluded that, as most existing studies looking at the contribution that urban green spaces make to air quality rely on modelling rather than empirical research, there is currently only relatively weak evidence that urban parks improve air quality by capturing pollutants and particles¹⁷.

Forest Research in its 2010 review of the benefits of green infrastructure was, however, considerably more unequivocal. It concluded that air quality can indeed be directly altered by trees through their capacity to absorb gaseous pollutants, intercept particles at leaf surface, and produce oxygen during photosynthesis¹⁸.

The review cites a number of studies which appear to provide evidence of this effect. One study in 1994 found that trees in Chicago were estimated to remove 6,190 tonnes of pollution per year, equating to an average improvement in air quality of approximately 0.3%, with the possibility of further improvements to air quality of 5% to 10% through increased tree cover¹⁹. Closer to home, researchers in London in 2009, who based their research on a 10km by 10km area of

¹³ Bolund and Hunhammar (1999), cited in Zhang et al (2012).

¹⁴ Zhang et al (2012).

¹⁵ Gill et al (2007).

¹⁶ Hou (2006), cited in Zhang et al (2012).

¹⁷ Konijnendijk et al (2013).

¹⁸ Forest Research (2010).

¹⁹ Nowak (1994), cited in Forest Research (2010).

the East London Green Grid, demonstrated the potential for green space to reduce particulate pollution (PM10)²⁰. Research completed in China has provided similar results: assessing the impact of urban vegetation on air pollution in Guangzhou, researchers found results indicating a removal of sulphur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide and total suspended particulates of about 312.03mg annually²¹.

While the strength of the evidence base for this mechanism is contested, many authors nevertheless conclude their reports by suggesting tree planting as a cost-effective measure to reduce different types of air pollution²². This is an indication that there is certainly some consensus with regard to the role green spaces can play in contributing to pollution reduction.

1.4 Climate change mitigation through carbon capture

Hypothesis

Carbon emissions, again a particular problem in big cities, have been linked to increasing global warming. Similar to pollution, urban green infrastructure, and in particular trees, enable carbon capture and sequestration, thereby mitigating emissions and their negative effects.

To date, little high-profile research exists specifically on the effects of urban green spaces on carbon capture. However, studies looking at the link between green spaces and pollution more generally often list carbon capture alongside green spaces' capacity for pollution and particle absorption.

One study that looked more specifically at carbon capture was the 2009 'Read Report' for the National Assessment of

UK Forestry and Climate Change Steering Group, which concluded that UK forests and trees have a significant role to play in the country's response to the challenges posed by climate change. Indeed, the report claims that a 4% increase in woodland in the UK could deliver annual emissions abatement equivalent to 10% of total greenhouse gas emissions (GHG)²³. While it does not specifically mention urban vegetation (although it includes trees generally), Forest Research in turn drew on this study to conclude that urban green infrastructure, too, contributes to carbon capture by, for example, building up soil carbon reserves over time²⁴.

1.5 Better bio-diversity/eco-system health by providing natural habitats

Hypothesis

A city's built-up urban area of houses, roads and offices provides only very limited space for any sort of wildlife. In contrast, a city's green infrastructure, by creating a 'green network', offers a home to various species and provides opportunities for animals and insects to move, spread and colonise new habitats.

A number of research reviews claim that, while sound in theory, there is little evidence of the overall value of green spaces for *all* species. While many studies have researched wildlife within urban areas, they frequently consider only a particular species' use of urban green spaces. Forest Research, for example, lists studies that looked specifically at the number of deer, badgers and foxes in urban areas (by counting vehicle collisions), at insect populations in urban roundabouts, and at birds' use of urban green infrastructure²⁵.

²⁰ Tiwary et al (2009), cited in Forest Research (2010).

²¹ Jim and Chen (2007).

²² For example in Jim and Chen (2007), as well as in Tiwary et al (2009), cited in Forest Research (2010).

²³ Read et al (2009).

²⁴ Forest Research (2010).

²⁵ Forest Research (2010).

While such studies provide evidence that urban green spaces are used by certain types of animals or insects, they are more limited in providing evidence of the value of urban green networks on wildlife as a whole (and, as such, on biodiversity). However, as one study pointed out, action to provide urban green networks as “conduits for wildlife” nevertheless often takes place due to an absence of alternatives, and ‘ecological networks’ have thus become a popular element of urban planning²⁶.

1.6 Summary

The existing evidence points to a clear advantage of large spaces compared to small spaces with regard to their air cooling capacity. However, small spaces such as those in the Square Mile are able to deliver crucial environmental benefits through a variety of other mechanisms. Impacts are most likely to be felt by London residents and workers, followed by City of London residents and workers. Direct benefits for businesses are less significant – only reducing rainwater run-off can convincingly be argued to have a direct impact on businesses’ bottom line; a reflection of the potential costs of flood damage, which they may be faced with.

Table 2: Environmental benefits and mechanisms linked to the City of London portfolio

Key: CoL = City of London, R+W = residents & workers, Bus = businesses, in this and all following tables

	Evidence		Impact			
	Large spaces	Small spaces	CoL R+W	CoL Bus.	London R+W	London Bus.
Air cooling	√√√				√√√	
Reducing rainwater run-off	√√	√√	√√	√√	√√	√√
Pollutant absorption	√√	√√	√√		√√	
Carbon capture	√	√	√		√	
Supporting biodiversity	√				√	

²⁶ Haddad and Tewsbury (2005) and Jongman and Pungetti (2004), cited in Tzoulas et al (2007).

2. Physical, mental health and well-being benefits

2.1 Lower obesity and better cardiovascular and respiratory health through space for exercise

Hypothesis

Poor air quality, urban heat and an increasingly 'sedentary lifestyle' among today's urban population²⁷ are frequently linked to problems of ill health. In particular, they have been found to contribute to cardiovascular and respiratory diseases and increasing levels of obesity in adults and children. By providing spaces for physical exercise and contributing to better air quality, green spaces help to counteract such health problems.

A 2011 literature review for NHS Ashton Leigh and Wigan cites a number of studies from the past ten years which have reported finding links between urban green spaces and better physical health among the local population. Studies in the review focused on indications of reduced obesity, reduced risk of coronary heart disease and strokes, decreased blood pressure and lower cholesterol, as well as better overall perceived health²⁸.

Such findings are supported by a large-scale UK study of patient records in 2008, which found that income deprivation-related health inequalities in mortality from circulatory diseases were lower among populations resident in the greenest areas. Having controlled for other factors that may be associated with mortality as well as for certain area characteristics, the authors concluded that access to green spaces helps to reduce health inequalities in regard to circulatory diseases²⁹.

Studies most commonly link such health benefits to green spaces' capacity to promote physical activity. Reviews looking at links between the two vary in their assertiveness. One study, for example, concluded that the amount of green spaces in peoples' living environment is *not* related to their meeting health recommendations for physical activity³⁰. Similarly, another claimed that while based on strong theory and supported by a large amount of observational evidence, the existence of a causal relationship between green spaces and physical activity was still uncertain³¹.

Other studies are more assertive. A 2010 meta-review of the evidence for the health benefits of urban green spaces³², for instance, concluded that several existing reviews support the view that green spaces offer opportunities for exercise. Similarly, another study that year concluded that landscapes indeed do appear to be able to promote physical well-being through encouraging higher levels of physical activity³³.

Such claims are further supported by an analysis of survey data in Bristol, which found that respondents who lived closest to a park were more likely to achieve recommended levels of physical activity, and less likely to be overweight or obese³⁴. Similarly, a 2005 study based on a secondary analysis of a number of surveys estimated that the likelihood of being physically active is more than three times as high for respondents living in residential environments with high levels of greenery, and the likelihood of being overweight or obese about 40% less. While conceding limitations to the analysis, the authors suggested that more attention should be paid to

²⁷ Shah and Peck (2005).

²⁸ Richardson and Parker (2011).

²⁹ Mitchell and Popham (2008).

³⁰ Maas et al (2008), cited in Richardson and Parker (2011).

³¹ Mytton et al (2012).

³² Lee and Maheswaran (2010).

³³ Abraham et al (2010).

³⁴ Coombs et al (2010).

environmental facilitators and barriers in order to promote physical activity and reduce weight³⁵.

2.2 Reduced stress, mental fatigue and attention deficit through the aesthetic experience

Hypothesis

The aesthetic experience of looking at or being in green spaces can have a positive “psychosomatic” effect on people by reducing stress, lowering blood pressure, and alleviating cognitive disorders and attention deficit disorder. The potential not only to relax, but also to exercise outdoors in green areas, contributes to better mental health and well-being.

Several recent literature reviews have concluded that green spaces have the potential to benefit people's mental health and well-being. Developing a theory of how natural environments may have a “restorative effect”, Kaplan and Kaplan, influential researchers in this field, ascribed a combination of attributes to green spaces, among which they included “aesthetically pleasing stimuli, which promote ‘soft fascination’”³⁶.

In its 2010 review, Forest Research concluded that there is a strong body of evidence which suggests that physical activity in green spaces has stronger mental health benefits than physical activity in non-green spaces, and that “more passive forms of usage” can also have a beneficial impact on mental well-being and cognitive function. In some studies, this is even related simply to the ability to view green spaces from afar³⁷. A 2010 scoping study similarly concluded that by helping to reduce stress, evoke positive emotions and restore attention,

landscapes have the potential to promote mental well-being³⁸. This is also supported by a 2007 literature review, which cited experimental studies which looked at the effects of green spaces on attention fatigue, psycho-physiological stress, blood pressure, mental fatigue and attention deficit³⁹.

Studies looking at links between the environment and mental health and well-being are frequently based on self-reporting by respondents, which has been shown to correlate closely to actual health. For example, a Swedish study in 2003 found statistically significant relationships between the use of urban green spaces and self-reported levels of stress, regardless of respondents' age, sex or socio-economic status⁴⁰. Dutch researchers in 2010 established that the “restorative quality” of nature is corroborated by surveys in several countries, which show that people consider contact with nature as “one of the most powerful ways to obtain relief from stress”⁴¹.

Two UK studies, each taking a very different approach, also support this conclusion. The first, a 2002 study by researchers at the University of Sheffield, was based on a number of focus groups⁴² across the UK. The researchers found that across all focus groups, participants pointed out “psychological reasons” for visiting urban green spaces. In particular, participants highlighted their use of green spaces to escape from the city, from pollution and from people⁴³.

The second is a long-term study based on an analysis of data from the annual British Household Panel Survey responses from 1991 to 2008. This allowed researchers to trace self-reported psychological health from over 10,000

³⁵ Ellaway et al (2005).

³⁶ Kaplan (1985), Kaplan (1995) and Kaplan and Kaplan (1989), cited in Forest Research (2010).

³⁷ Forest Research (2010).

³⁸ Abraham et al (2010).

³⁹ Tzoulas et al (2007).

⁴⁰ Grahn and Stigsdotter (2003).

⁴¹ van den Berg et al (2010).

⁴² With users and non-users of urban green spaces.

⁴³ Dunnett et al (2002).

participants across an 18 year period. The researchers found that respondents were happier when living in urban areas with large amounts of green spaces, showing significantly lower mental distress levels and higher well-being (life satisfaction) levels. Importantly, the longitudinal approach made it possible for the researchers to control for other impacts on respondents' lives, such as income, employment status, marital status, health and housing type⁴⁴.



2.3 Summary

The evidence that green spaces contribute to people's physical and mental health and well-being is more relevant to large green spaces in and around London, than small spaces in London, and is therefore more pronounced for Greater London as a whole, than for the City of London specifically.

This is particularly due to the capacity of large spaces to offer room for physical exercise (sometimes promoted through sport facilities, for example in Hampstead Heath). Physical health benefits through better air quality are also likely to be more pronounced for Greater London (as, again, they accrue mainly from large spaces). This means for example, that the benefits to air quality of spaces such as Epping Forest can be considered as distributed across the whole of London.

The research does however provide some evidence of the benefits of small spaces for mental health – through their 'restorative' capacity – which means that this is likely to impact residents and workers across London, including within the City of London.

Table 3: Physical, mental health and well-being benefits and mechanisms linked to the City of London portfolio

	Evidence		Impact			
	Large spaces	Small spaces	CoL R+W	CoL Bus.	London R+W	London Bus.
Space for exercise	√√				√√	
Better air quality	√√		√		√√	
Aesthetic experience/ 'restorative' power	√√	√√	√√		√√	

⁴⁴ White et al (2013).

3. Social benefits

3.1 Enhanced cognitive and motor skills and socialisation for children via spaces for play and challenge

Hypothesis

Urban green spaces offer children a space for unrestricted, versatile and 'challenging' play in a social environment. In doing so, they help to improve children's creativity, cognitive and motor skills, emotional resilience and socialisation.

Two studies cited frequently with regard to the impact of urban green spaces on child development researched the play behaviour of children in inner-city Chicago. Both found that children playing in green spaces displayed higher levels of creative play, played for longer, and more collaboratively than children playing in built-up spaces⁴⁵.

These findings are supported by a 2000 Norwegian study, which found that playing in woodland provided a more stimulating and varied play environment for children, and noticeably improved their motor fitness⁴⁶.

Such impacts are visible to, and valued by, parents and children's carers, as shown by the University of Sheffield focus groups. Taking children to green spaces was one of the most frequently mentioned reasons for adults to visit such areas. Respondents widely held the view that green environments provided important spaces where children could explore and "let off steam", and where they could come into contact with nature as well as meet other children and adults – a valuable aspect to children's social development⁴⁷. This is corroborated by

⁴⁵ USDA Forest Service (2001), cited in Land Use Consultants (2004) and in Shah and Peck (2005) & Taylor et al (1998), cited in Forest Research (2010).

⁴⁶ Fjortoft and Sageie (2000).

⁴⁷ Dunnett et al (2002).

the 2009/12 Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment Survey, which showed that 15% of the total visits taken by the English adult population were driven by motivations to 'entertain' or 'play' with children⁴⁸.

Alongside providing potential for more 'free', unplanned play, parks also provide important space for beneficial planned activities (i.e. in an education environment). A 2008 study for the then Department for Children, Schools and Families found that children that were engaged in 'learning outside the classroom' activities, including in parks and other natural environments, achieved higher class test scores, high levels of physical fitness and motor skills, as well as increased confidence, self-esteem and social competences⁴⁹.

3.2 Greater social interaction and community cohesion through inclusive, free space

Hypothesis

Urban areas are often associated with promoting anonymity or loneliness. Green spaces, by being publicly accessible and free, as well as by providing space for events, offer a natural meeting point for the local population. This contributes to community cohesion and social integration, and supports an increased sense of belonging to an area as well as closer neighbourhood ties.

Green spaces' role in promoting social interaction and community cohesion is certainly a concept which has found interest in the academic world. However, conflicting research results mean that there is a lack of consensus on the strength of the existing evidence.

A 2012 study by the Heritage Lottery Fund concluded that there is currently little evidence of how culture and

⁴⁸ TNS (2012).

⁴⁹ Malone (2008).

heritage (including parks and green spaces) can contribute to concepts such as social capital, community cohesion, social inclusion and civic society, when compared with evidence of benefits experienced by individuals⁵⁰. More recently, authors conducting a systematic literature review for the International Federation of Parks and Recreation Administration concluded that while there are indications across studies that parks promote social cohesion, the small number and varying quality of studies mean the current evidence is weak⁵¹.

Other literature reviews have come to more positive conclusions. A wide-ranging literature review in 2010, for example, concluded that existing research certainly suggests that landscapes have the potential to promote social well-being through social integration, engagement, participation and support⁵². Forest Research, meanwhile, cited two studies that each looked at particular demographic groups and the benefits they gain from access to green spaces. One, a Chicago-based study, looked specifically at older adults in deprived areas, and found clear indications of links between access to green spaces and social integration⁵³. The second, a Swiss-based study on opportunities for young people to interact with other young people from different cultural backgrounds, found that the city's urban forests and parks were a particularly conducive place for socialising and interaction⁵⁴. Based on such studies, Forest Research concluded that evidence suggests that green spaces can offer opportunities to promote interaction between people who may not normally interact, which

helps to develop social ties and community cohesion⁵⁵.

This particular aspect of stronger community ties was also the focus of a 2004 study by Kim and Kaplan, which suggested that natural features and open spaces in residential areas play an important role both in residents' interaction with each other, and their feelings of attachment towards their local community⁵⁶. Similarly, a more recent Belgian study found that people's perception of the "greenness" of their neighbourhood was the most important predictor of neighbourhood satisfaction⁵⁷.

Such studies are further supported by the findings of a 2007 survey of 20,000 members of the UK public, which found that 83% of respondents believed that parks and green spaces provided a focal point for their communities⁵⁸. The University of Sheffield research similarly revealed that many of the focus group participants identified green spaces as "the hub or the spirit of their community". This benefit may well transcend differences in background, as focus groups with women, people from ethnic minorities and disabled people particularly suggested that such spaces are "important for whole families"⁵⁹.

3.3 Summary

There is evidence that large green spaces, which generally include more wild, untamed and woodland-type elements, with more room to run around, explore and 'let off steam', than small spaces, can play a significant role in child development. Of those spaces supported by the City Corporation, Epping Forest and Hampstead Heath are prime examples

⁵⁰ Maer et al (2012).

⁵¹ Konijnendijk et al (2013).

⁵² Abraham et al (2010).

⁵³ Kweon et al (1998), cited in Forest Research (2010).

⁵⁴ Seeland et al (2009), cited in Forest Research (2010).

⁵⁵ Forest Research (2010).

⁵⁶ Kim and Kaplan (2004), cited in Tzoulas et al (2007).

⁵⁷ Van Herzele and de Vries (2011).

⁵⁸ Greenspace (2007).

⁵⁹ Dunnett et al (2002).

of such areas. Due to the lack of room for these elements in smaller spaces, it may be assumed that this benefit is less pronounced for small inner-city, green spaces such as those in the Square Mile.

With regard to general space for social interaction, the evidence suggests that the smallest scale at which positive social benefits arise is likely to be neighbourhood park level. This is so because (i) there needs to be a certain level of space/amenity provided - enough to hold small community events, room to walk dogs, space for a playground, etc. - but equally (ii) there has to be a 'community' that can interact in these spaces.

Though small green spaces such as those within the Square Mile generally do not meet these requirements, larger green spaces, such as the City Corporation's spaces that lie outside of the Square Mile - Queen's Park or West Ham Park for example - clearly do, and are therefore very likely to support the forms of community interaction discussed in the research.



Table 4: Social benefits and mechanisms linked to the City of London portfolio

	Evidence		Impact			
	Large spaces	Small spaces	CoL R+W	CoL Bus.	London R+W	London Bus.
Space for play & challenge (children)	√√				√√	
Space for social interaction and meeting	√	√			√	
Space for social interaction and meeting	√	√			√	

4. Economic benefits

This section explores studies that have sought to demonstrate how economically valuable a part of, or all of, the amenity provided by green spaces is for different stakeholders. These studies are essentially concerned with how the direct environmental, health and social benefits of green spaces also have secondary positive economic impacts that can be measured financially.

4.1 Cost savings for government related to environment and health expenditures

Hypothesis

By providing a range of environmental, health and social benefits (as outlined in previous sections), green spaces contribute to reducing the costs incurred by government in addressing these challenges. Green spaces are thus able to provide a number of indirect economic benefits to society.

There are few studies that focus on establishing the monetary value that governments and related bodies might derive from the various benefits of green spaces⁶⁰. However, those that do exist provide positive indications of the likely indirect economic impacts of green spaces.

Two such studies looked in particular at the financial value of environmental benefits. The previously mentioned 2012 study of rainwater run-off reduction through Beijing's green spaces valued this effect at 21.77 renminbi per hectare of open space, calculating that the total economic benefit was equivalent to three quarters of the green spaces' maintenance cost⁶¹. An earlier study of the potential of urban trees to act as

pollutant removers in Chicago estimated the annual value of this benefit in the city at US\$9.2million⁶².

Natural England followed up a claim in another study that people in the UK are 24% more likely to be physically active if they have easy access to green spaces. They estimated that if the whole English population had equally easy access to green spaces, and consequently all were 24% more likely to be physically active, the life-cost averted saving to the NHS would be around £2.1 billion per annum⁶³.

Such estimates highlight the difficulties of providing any conclusive financial calculations for these benefits. Rather than attempting to calculate cost savings, many studies therefore instead highlight the current costs to government in meeting socio-economic and environmental challenges in areas in which green spaces have a positive effect; thereby implying the ability of green spaces to reduce these costs.

Forest Research, for example, cites research which has estimated that the current economic impact of urban flooding in England and Wales lies at £270 million per year and may increase to £1 billion and £10 billion per year in the future if no action is taken⁶⁴.

Both Forest Research and the new economics foundation (nef) cite works that estimate the costs of ill health to government. The DCMS Strategy Unit, cited by nef, in 2002 for example estimated the cost of physical inactivity and obesity, risk factors in chronic conditions such as heart disease, at £8.2 billion for England alone⁶⁵. Other studies have tried to value the cost to

⁶² Nowak (1994) and McPherson et al (1997), cited in Jim and Chen (2007).

⁶³ Coombs et al (2010) and Natural England (2009), cited in Richardson and Parker (2011).

⁶⁴ Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (2007) and Evans et al (2004), cited in Forest Research (2010).

⁶⁵ Department of Culture, Media and Sport Strategy Unit (2002), cited in Esteban (2012).

⁶⁰ Esteban (2012) makes this point in particular with regard to studies considering the monetary value of the benefit of green spaces on well-being.

⁶¹ Zhang et al (2012).

government of mental illness, and while figures vary significantly, there is consensus that costs range in the tens of billions of pounds⁶⁶.

4.2 Increasing property and land value for home owners

Hypothesis

Urban residents are willing to pay a premium on house or rent levels in order to live in areas close to green spaces. This results in local increases of property and land value, linked directly to their proximity to green spaces.

Studies considering the links between property value and location are most commonly based on the 'hedonic pricing' method, which suggests that the value of a good is based on a combination of its various attributes⁶⁷. Based on this model, many international studies have found strong indications of a correlation between property value and proximity to (urban or semi-urban) green spaces.

In an assessment of London house prices in 2010, GLA Economics found that house prices were boosted by the total green spaces area within a distance of one kilometre from the property. Based on a model which included green spaces, built environment and other location factors (but not socio-economic attributes), the study estimated that location within 600 metres of an urban park added between 1.9% and 2.9% to the total house value⁶⁸.

Research by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors in Aberdeen similarly found that location on the edge of a park had the potential to

attract a premium of up to 19% on house prices. Larger parks with facilities were found to have a more significant impact⁶⁹. CABE Space in turn calculated an uplift of typically around 3% to 5% for properties within the presence of a "high quality park"⁷⁰.

Similar findings are also reported outside the UK: a report commissioned by CABE cites a Dutch study which concluded that having a park nearby could raise house prices by 6% and a view of a park by 8%⁷¹. A study in Dallas in turn found that for many property owners, proximity to public green spaces was a major factor in their decision to move to the area⁷².

In short, there is general agreement that properties in proximity to green spaces do command a premium price, but the precise value of this uplift will depend on exactly how close the property is, how large the green spaces are, and what facilities they contain.

4.3 Promoting tourism by motivating visits

Hypothesis

Green spaces are not only attractive to a local population, but also to national and international tourists. Some urban parks – in particular large, well-known 'statement' parks such as Regents Park, or Hyde Park in London, Park Güell in Barcelona or the Jardin du Luxembourg in Paris – even contribute to motivating tourists to visit a city. Based on their capacity to make cities more attractive, green spaces play a beneficial role in cities' approaches to marketing themselves.

The topic of how urban parks benefit tourism has been somewhat neglected

⁶⁶ See for example Sustainable Development Commission (2008), cited in Forest Research (2010), which estimates care costs at £12 billion and costs to the wider economy at £64 per annum, and The Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health (2002), cited in Esteban (2012), which estimated costs at £23.1 billion.

⁶⁷ Smith (2010).

⁶⁸ Smith (2010).

⁶⁹ Dunse et al (2007), cited in Maer et al (2012).

⁷⁰ CABE Space (2005), cited in Maer et al (2012).

⁷¹ Luttkik (2000), cited in Woolley and Rose (undated).

⁷² Peiser and Schwann (1993), cited in Woolley and Rose (undated).

in academic literature in recent years⁷³. Similarly, many visitor surveys conducted in green spaces focus largely on visitor origin and spend, without considering the role that these spaces play in triggering people's decision to visit a city in the first place.

One recent survey, the London Visitor Survey, conducted annually between 2006 and 2010 across London, does however provide strong evidence of the role that London's green spaces play in *attracting* both UK and overseas tourists to London.

Data collected from 4,587 visitors to London in 2008 showed that 80% of overseas tourists, 74% of UK staying visitors, 70% of UK day visitors and 77% of London residents ranked "parks and gardens" as "important" or "very important" in their decision to visit or take a day trip to London. Indeed, visitors frequently ranked "parks and gardens" as more important than other options such as "theatre/music/ arts performances" or "shopping/markets"⁷⁴. Satisfaction rates were also generally high, with an average across all groups of 3.92 (with five equalling 'excellent')⁷⁵.

While one may assume that such potential also translates into place marketing efforts by cities such as London (for example, this is certainly visible on the Visit London website), no studies were found to support this.

4.4 Attracting businesses to locate

Hypothesis

In addition to attracting leisure visitors to a city, green spaces play a role in businesses' decisions to locate in a certain area. This is driven by green

spaces' attractiveness for workers as well as their ability to increase customer footfall (due to the areas' general attractiveness for residents and visitors).

Some publications point towards a positive correlation between green spaces and businesses' location decisions, particularly small (consumer-facing) businesses⁷⁶. nef cites research by the US-based Trust for Public Land in 1999, which concluded that small businesses rate non-built up green spaces as their highest priority when choosing their location⁷⁷.

Overall, however, there is little evidence of the effect of green spaces on businesses' decision to locate in a certain area. Forest Research, for example, concluded that there is very little strong or reliable evidence of the impact of green spaces on economic growth and investments⁷⁸. The Trust for Public Land in a 2009 report looking at seven measurable attributes of city park systems that provide economic value did not include business location as a factor⁷⁹.

Perhaps tellingly, existing city monitors such as Mercer's Quality of Living worldwide city ranking⁸⁰ or Cushman and Wakefield's European Cities Monitor⁸¹, which rank cities in order to aid businesses in their location decision-making or to inform salary levels, also do not explicitly include green spaces as indicators.

Another strong indication of the apparent limited importance that businesses place on their proximity to green spaces is provided by the City of London Corporation's own polls among the Square Mile's businesses (both consumer-focused and offices without

⁷³ Forest Research (2010).

⁷⁴ The authors however point out that the surveys were taken during the day, perhaps skewing the research by missing out on evening visitors.

⁷⁵ TNS Travel and Tourism (2008).

⁷⁶ Publications such as Woolley and Rose (undated) for CABE or Shah and Peck (2005) for nef.

⁷⁷ The Trust for Public Land (1999), cited in Shah and Peck (2005).

⁷⁸ Forest Research (2010).

⁷⁹ Hamik and Welle (2009).

⁸⁰ Mercer (2012).

⁸¹ Cushman and Wakefield (2011).

direct consumer focus), and their employees. Survey results from 2009 show that only 4% of businesses and 3% of City executives agreed that “more parks, open space, gardens” are a way to improve the City as a place to do business, and only 13% of workers identified “more parks, open space, gardens” as a priority to improve the City as a place to work.

These findings stand in stark contrast to the 2007 Greenstat survey, which revealed that 82% of people believe that high quality green parks and spaces encourage people and businesses to locate in a town⁸². While surprising at first glance, the results may suggest that a differentiation needs to be drawn between the benefits that people attribute to having green space close to where employees live, as opposed to close to where they work.

4.6 Summary

The evidence on the economic benefits of green spaces is, at present, relatively weak. In particular, the hypothesis that green spaces play a role in businesses’ location decisions cannot be substantiated. Where the evidence is strongest is the premium that green spaces bring to property values (principally home owners). This is an important consideration across London and for those green spaces belonging to the City Corporation and which lie outside the Square Mile.

One substantial economic benefit to society that is not accounted for in this table is the indirect economic benefit that government appears to gain from cost savings linked to the various benefits of green spaces discussed in this report.

Table 5: Economic benefits and mechanisms linked to the City of London portfolio

	Evidence		Impact			
	Large spaces	Small spaces	CoL R+W	CoL Bus.	London R+W	London Bus.
Cost savings for government (capture of environment & health benefits)	√	√				
Enhancing land & property value (capture of environment & health benefits by residents)	√√	√√			√√	
Driving tourism & place marketing	√					√
Promoting business locations						

⁸² Greenspace (2007)

Conclusion

Returning to the question “*What have green spaces ever done for London?*” the strongest evidence currently points to the positive impact they have on the environment and on people’s health and well-being. In addition to helping to counteract major urban sustainability challenges such as atmospheric heating, they provide space for exercise, play, events and “getting away from it all”. This is particularly pronounced in larger green spaces. As such, the strongest evidence base is particularly applicable to large green spaces outside the Square Mile, such as Epping Forest and Hampstead Heath.

The benefits of smaller green spaces in London, such as those within the Square Mile, should also not be underestimated. Collectively, they contribute to rainwater storage and pollutant capture, and can provide important space for relaxation, restoration and social events.

It is also important to note that the far-reaching environmental and health benefits created by large green spaces in and around London can be enjoyed by all of London’s residents and workers as they are public goods⁸³, and ones that contribute to London’s overall ecosystem.

However there is currently only little evidence for the importance of green spaces to London’s businesses and its international competitiveness. The one exception is the potentially significant contribution that London’s green spaces make to its overall appeal as the world’s foremost city destination for international tourists. The evidence that does exist is encouraging, but it is very limited.

Figure 2 summarises the key benefits that green spaces deliver for cities. The strength of the current evidence base is indicated by the size of each of the labels. As it shows, the environmental benefits are to the fore, with the health, social and economic benefits being dependent upon the underlying physical characteristics and environmental benefits of green spaces.

London’s green spaces, then, play a vital role in the capital’s struggle to meet major environmental and health challenges. To tackle these, London currently has ambitious targets on emissions reductions⁸⁴, and (as part of the UK) needs to comply with EU air quality laws – both of which are currently being missed. Green spaces in London provide a hugely important service to London and its capital – and as one of the largest owners of green spaces assets in London, the City of London Corporation plays a key role in contributing to this service.

Scope for further research

The literature review undertaken for this report also helped identify several potential benefits of green spaces which to date have received little attention from the academic world. These provide scope for areas for further research by academia and in grey literature.

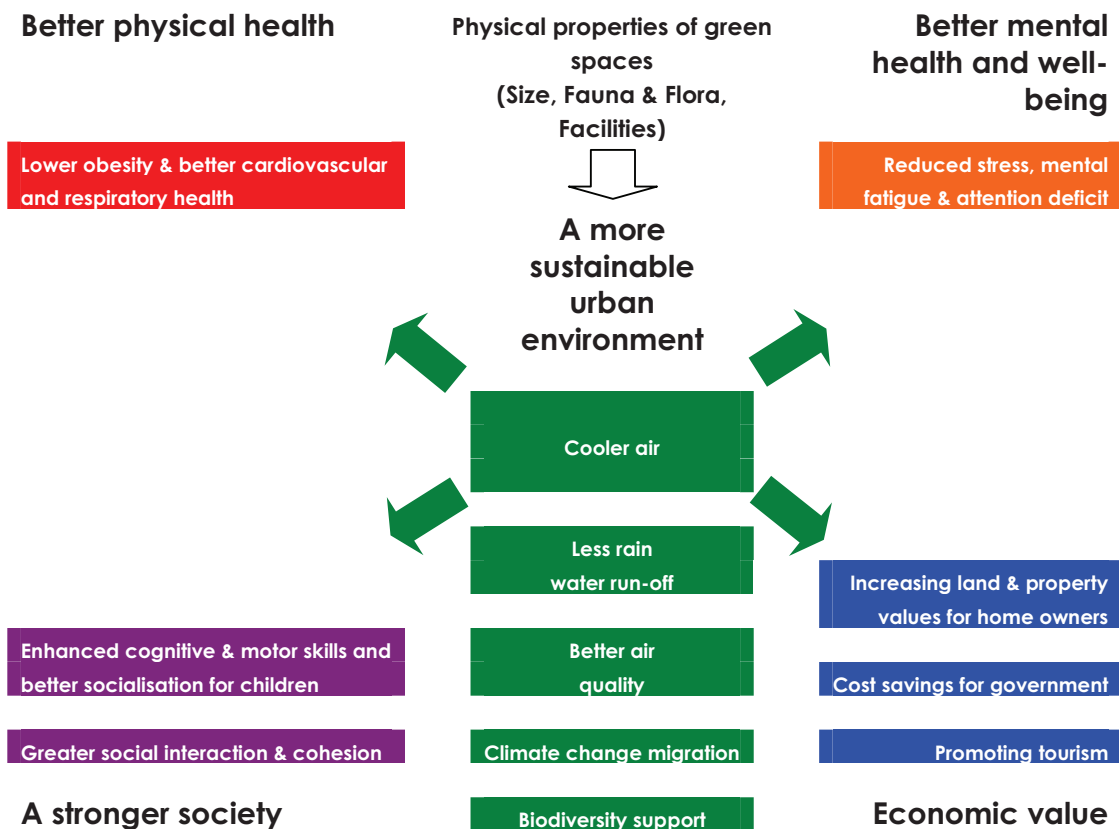
- **Small spaces:** While many studies may reference both smaller and larger green spaces, there is no research specifically into the benefits derived by small, inner-city green spaces. Do they provide specific benefits which may ‘go under the radar’ in more general studies?

⁸³ In economics, this means that they are ‘non excludable’ but also ‘non rivalrous’ (i.e. consumption by one person does not prevent consumption by another).

⁸⁴ London has the most stringent emissions reduction targets of all of the world’s global financial centres, aiming for a 60% reduction by 2025 (Tapley et al, 2008).

- Economic impact:** Little academic attention has been paid thus far to the benefits of green spaces in driving tourism. This is a potentially useful area of research for London, given its role as a tourism hub.
- City comparisons:** Despite the benefits they bring to an urban population, there are currently no comparative studies between cities, which look in particular at the provision of green spaces. Given a) the importance of green spaces for an urban population's health, well-being and enjoyment, and b) the role green spaces can play in cities' move towards a more environmentally sustainable future (not least, the need to fulfil international agreements), it could be useful to explore cities' different approaches to green spaces in more detail.
- Blue spaces:** One comparatively new field of research, which is growing out of the study of green spaces, is the assessment of the benefits of "blue spaces" – rivers, lakes and ponds. Many of London's green spaces also include water, not to mention the Thames - what benefits might these bring to London and its inhabitants?

Figure 2: Overview of the evidence of the benefits provided by green spaces



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Agenda Item 9

Committee(s):	Date(s):	Item no.
Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee	7 th October 2013	
West Ham Park Committee	7 th October 2013	
Epping Forest and Commons Committee	9 th September 2013	
Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee	23 rd September 2013	
Subject: Green Flag Awards 2013		Public
Report of: Director of Open Spaces		For Decision
<u>Summary</u>		
<p>Once again the City of London Open Spaces have been successful in the Green Flag and London in Bloom award schemes. This report provides information about the process and the value of these awards.</p>		
Recommendation		
<p>(i) That the great success achieved by the City of London's Open Spaces in the Green Flag and London in Bloom Awards is noted and reported to the Court of Common Council on the 24th October 2013.</p>		
<p>(ii) That the members of staff and volunteers at all the Open Spaces are congratulated on their contribution to the success in the awards.</p>		

Main Report

Background

1. The Green Flag Awards are designed to recognise the best green spaces in the country. The Green Flag Scheme is owned by the Department of Communities and Local Government, who license the management of the scheme to a consortium led by Keep Britain Tidy.

2. Since 1997 the Awards have set the standard for the management of parks and green spaces. Awards are made on an annual basis, and sites must re-apply each year to maintain their status.
3. Parks and green spaces are judged against the following eight criteria:
 - **That it is a welcoming place** (judges will look for good access and good signage)
 - **That it is healthy, safe and secure** (for example equipment and facilities are safe, dog fouling is addressed, adequate health and safety policies are in place)
 - **That it is clean and well maintained** (policies on litter, vandalism and maintenance are in place and in practice)
 - **Sustainability** (that environmentally sound techniques are used in the management)
 - **Conservation and heritage** (natural features, landscapes, building and structural features are appropriately managed.)
 - **Community involvement** (the site should actively pursue the involvement of members of the community and have knowledge of the patterns of use of the site)
 - **Marketing** (a marketing strategy should be in place and the space should be promoted as a community resource)
 - **Management** (a management plan should be in place, actively implement and regularly reviewed)

2013/14 Green Flag Awards

4. All of the City of London's Open Spaces were successful in retaining their Green Flag status. Nine sites received additional Green Heritage Awards: Epping Forest, Ashted Common, Kenley Common, Burnham Beeches, Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood, West Ham Park, Bunhill Fields and the Cemetery and Crematorium.
5. Feedback reports from judges have been received for a majority of the sites for the green flag awards. A summary of the feedback received is attached as an appendix.

Other Awards

6. Open Spaces sites have once again taken part in London in Bloom. City of London was also nominated by London in Bloom to be a finalist in Britain in Bloom for 2013. Results of both these competition were not

available at the time the report was prepared, but will be available at the time of the committee meeting.

Corporate and Strategic Implications

7. The achievement of Green Flag Awards supports many of the themes of the City Together Strategy relating to supporting communities, protecting, promoting and enhancing the environment and ensuring that the City is vibrant and culturally rich.

Conclusion

8. The achievement of these awards provided independent recognition of the successful work of volunteers, members of staff and elected members in ensuring the Open Spaces are well managed. The Green Flag Award Scheme provides the impetus for on-going improvement at each site and provides a good benchmark against which the quality of our sites can be measured.
9. The Open Spaces' success in winning these awards will be reported to the Court of Common Council on the 24th October 2013.

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Appendix One

Summary of feedback received from Green Flag Award Judges Highlights

I really enjoyed visiting this little gem of a site [**Bunhill Fields**]. Happy to have scored it high because I couldn't help but be fascinated by its slight unusual public open space that delivers far more than it perhaps should for such a small site.

Epping Forrest is simply the 'Jewel in a suburban Crown'. The site offers the visitor a wealth of historical and leisure activities in an area of outstanding natural beauty. The site has in the past and continues now and I feel confident in saying into the future, been maintained and preserved by the City of London to a very high standard for everyone to enjoy. It was evident during the tour that this historical site is being managed by a very professional Team of 'Curators' and volunteers of different skills and expertise who work together to protect and enhance this site for the benefit of everyone.

Considering the scale of **Heath**, the maintenance is excellent, little evidence of litter and the standards of maintenance of the grassland, turf, trees, shrubs and ornamental plantings is very good.

The [**Coulsdon Common**] based teams and all other staff members who apply their skills to maintaining the site along with the volunteers should be duly congratulated on their efforts of maintaining this fascinating and diverse common.

Riddlesdown A good site and well managed. A dedicated group of staff who take pride in their work and are willing to share their knowledge with others.

Simon and the Team at the **Heath** are doing a great job. The scale of the Heath with all its complexities is being managed well and delivering good quality results on the ground. New ideas are being introduced and exciting features are being developed thereby maximising the visitor experience alongside the conservation of the natural and built environments.

The [**Highgate Wood**] Conservation Management Plan is a pleasure to read. It demonstrates good management of the site and provides a clear understanding of aims and objectives. A lot of thought has gone into managing the site in a sensitive way, addressing the needs of site users, whilst mitigating the impact on the natural environment.

[**Burnham Beeches** is a] well managed site with high quality facilities much used by the local community as well as people from further a field. The dedication of the management team and park staff shows through in the pride in the site.

The **Queens Park** residents association seems to have a big impact on the running of the Park along with the Queens Park Joint Consultative group.

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Committee:	Date:
Open Spaces & City Gardens Committee	7 th October 2013
Subject: Results of a face-to-face survey of users and non-users of the City's open spaces	Public
Report of: Director of Open Spaces	For Information
<p>Summary</p> <p>To ensure that satisfaction levels remain consistently high and to gather information to inform the review of the City of London Open Space Strategy planned for autumn of this year; City Gardens commissioned over 1000 face to face user questionnaires, at a variety of locations around the City, during November and early December 2012.</p> <p>The findings from the user survey were very positive, with 79.4% of users rating the City Gardens service as good or very good.</p> <p>This report follows on from the initial findings reported to this Committee earlier this year and further analyses the results of the survey.</p> <p>Recommendation</p> <p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note the report. 	

Main Report

Background

1. With responsibility for over 200 widely differing gardens, churchyards and areas of open space within the Square Mile, it is important for the City Gardens service to ensure that each of these best serves the City's community according to its individual location and potential.
2. City Gardens last undertook a user survey in 2009, as a direct response to the Government's "*Place Survey*" and as a follow up to a user survey in 2004; the former had identified some areas for improvement. Findings evidenced that the main dissatisfaction from respondents was due to lack of green space rather than to City Gardens' services.

Current Position

3. To ensure that the City Gardens service continues to maintain high levels of satisfaction from current users and to ascertain any current dissatisfaction that needs to be addressed; research consultant "*Ask for Research*" was commissioned

to undertake a consultation exercise throughout November and /early December of last year. In the main, the questions asked were the same as in 2009. However, two additional questions were posed; to ascertain whether there was interest in people taking part in volunteering and green gym activities within the open spaces in City Gardens.

4. The exercise captured data from over 1000 members of the City's core community groups including residents, workers and visitors from outside the City, both from Britain and overseas. "Ask for Research" were also tasked with evaluating any differences that were found between the 2009 survey and the current 2012 findings. A report on the immediate findings was brought to this Committee at its meeting on 15 April 2013.

Methodology

5. Based on the success of the survey conducted in 2009, it was vital to ensure that the results produced were thorough, representative and robust. In order to do this, it was agreed in consultation with "Ask for Research" at the start of the project that:
 - i. The most comprehensive survey method was face-to-face field-based interview;
 - ii. Both users and non-users of the City's gardens would be targeted;
 - iii. Minimum quotas would be set for respondent type of 300 visitors, 500 workers and 200 residents, being broadly representative of the City daytime population;
 - iv. The catchment area would be the boundaries of the Square Mile, and interviews for each sample group spread geographically across this area;
 - v. Interviews would take place during weekdays, weekends, morning and evening shifts;
 - vi. "Ask for Research" would use interviewers who spoke a variety of languages, so that it was possible to capture non-English speakers comments.
6. Between November and early December, 1015 interviews were conducted. Interviewers used a simplified map of the City Gardens for reference, and the questionnaire included a self-completion equal opportunities monitoring section. The first section of the interviews aimed to establish workers' residents' and visitors' behaviour patterns in relation to the gardens in the City.
7. Further analysis and response to the key findings from the survey can be found at **Appendix 1**.

Future improvements and initiatives

8. The final section of the survey sought customers' views on future improvements and to gauge interest in volunteering and green gym activities.
9. Customers were asked to respond to the statement 'There should be more open spaces in the gardens'; 88% agree to some extent with the statement, with 59%

agreeing strongly and 30% agreeing. People over 45 and irregular visitors were more likely to strongly disagree, compared to customers who visit regularly and residents, who were more likely to strongly agree.

10. Similar findings were gathered from the statement 'There should be more nature attracting plants in the City'; with 91% to some extent agreeing, 54% strongly agreeing and 37% agreeing. However, unlike other findings, under 25 year olds were more likely to agree, residents strongly agreeing but interestingly the age group 45+ were more likely to strongly disagree, suggesting more traditional planting schemes are favoured by older age groups.
11. Again similar findings for customers' response to 'There should be more trees in the City' with 88% to some extent agreeing, 52% agreeing strongly and 36% agreeing. Again the 45+ age group and workers, were those most likely to disagree.
12. 67% of customers agree with some extent to the statement 'there should be more hard standing landscaping'; with 33% agreeing strongly and 35% agreeing. Females and residents were more likely to strongly agree.
13. 73% agree to some extent to the statement 'there should be more staff presence in the gardens' with 39% strongly agreeing and 35% agreeing. Residents were more likely to disagree. This latter finding may be because the main resident population lives on the Barbican Estate and have established strong relationships with the on-site City Gardens' team over the years.
14. 85% of customers agree to some extent with the statement that 'there should be more focus on encouraging wildlife' with 46% strongly agreeing and 39% agreeing. Females were more likely to agree than males, customers from other ethnicity other than White British ethnicity were more likely to disagree.
15. 91% agreed with the statement 'there should be more lawn areas for sitting in the City Garden'. Interestingly, the 45+ age group were more likely to disagree than residents.
16. 84% agreed to the statement 'there should be more opportunities to learn about 'natural play' with 44% agreeing strongly and 40% agreeing.
17. And finally, customers were asked if they would be interested in taking part in volunteering and or green gym activities. 11% and 14% respectively acknowledged an interest. Those that responded positively to these questions were handed a leaflet and contact details were taken so that this could be followed up by the team.

Conclusion

18. The results of the project have provided a useful indication of satisfaction levels with the services provided by the City Gardens team and will help to inform the City of London Open Space Strategy review. The level of detail provided by the survey can help decide the ranking of competing service priorities in a climate of budgetary restrictions and to concentrate on issues that the community and tax-payers feel are important

19. In terms of overall user satisfaction ratings, 99.1% of users rate their satisfaction with the spaces as either fair (19.7%), good (45%) or very good (34.4%). In comparison to results in 2009, the overall satisfaction is slightly lower. The 2009 survey overall user satisfaction rating was 99.5%, with users rating their satisfaction with the spaces as either fair (3%), good (51%) or very good (45.5%). On comparing the detail of these findings there does not appear to be any one area of dissatisfaction that leads to the overall lower score. The 2012 survey was undertaken between the end of November and the beginning of December, compared to the 2009 survey which was conducted in mid-summer. It is therefore possible that the time of year, the gardens experiencing seasonal changes and colder weather could have been contributing factors to the slight decrease in the higher ratings and scoring.

20. Specific results within the survey provide high levels of satisfaction with accessibility, cleanliness, litter clearance and staff attitudes. Three consecutive London in Bloom Gold awards between the years 2010-13 supports this evidence and also indicates continuous improvements in service standards.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

21. This report clearly supports key strategic aims within the Community Strategy, notably supporting our communities, and protecting, promoting and enhancing our environment.

22. It also supports key objectives within the City of London Open Space Strategy, notably:

- Strategic Objective 1: To maintain and increase public access to existing open spaces and enhance the quality of these spaces, in terms of both design and management.
- Strategic Objective 3: Ensure that all open spaces are designed and managed to be safe and accessible to all and, where appropriate, to provide opportunities for different activities at different times of the day and year.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Analysis and response to the findings of the City Gardens Survey Results 2012.

Background Papers

- Committee Report 15th April 2013. Results of a face- to- face survey of users and non - users of the City's Open Space.

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Appendix 1

ANALYSIS AND RESPONSE TO FINDINGS CITY GARDENS SURVEY 2012

Customer profile	2
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Further analysis on the use of City gardens	8
Main purpose of visit	8
When do customers visit and for how long?	9
How do people use the gardens?	10
Why don't people use the gardens?	10
Which gardens are the most popular?	10
Satisfaction with parks, gardens and churchyards	11
Safety in the gardens	12

Customer profile

1. Of the 1015 people interviewed:

- 50% were men, 50% were female
- 12% were under 25 years old, 29% were aged between 25 and 34, 24% were between 35 and 44, 17% were between 45 to 54, 14% were between 55 to 64, 3% were between 65 to 75 and 1% were over 75
- 3% declared a disability
- 19% lived abroad, 22% lived in the UK, 59% resided in London

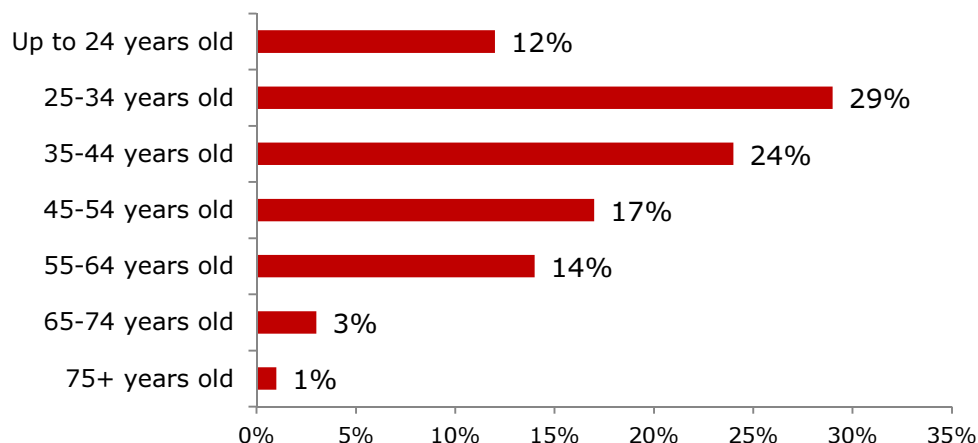


Figure 1 Age of customers

Overview: Key Findings

	What did we find out?	How can this be used?
	Profile of visits to parks, gardens and churchyards	
2.1	<p>Frequency of use</p> <p>More than eight out of ten people have visited, used or walked through the parks, gardens and churchyards in the City of London (including Bunhill Fields Burial Ground).</p> <p>36% of customers use the parks, gardens and churchyards on at least a weekly basis.</p> <p>29% use the parks, gardens and churchyards less than weekly.</p> <p>21% state they have only used the park, gardens and churchyards on one occasion.</p> <p>14% never use or walk through the parks, gardens and churchyards.</p>	<p>The gardens are a key facility for the City's various communities. These statistics are very useful for giving an overview of usage of the City's gardens.</p> <p>City Gardens have a number of interpretation leaflets and trails on offer.</p> <p>To aid further promotion of our green spaces the City Gardens team are in the process of setting up a Twitter account and are taking part in the rebranding project currently being undertaken by Open Spaces.</p>

<p>2.2</p>	<p>Parks Gardens or churchyards visited</p> <p>Certain gardens are consistently the most popular including St Paul's Churchyard, the Barbican and Tower Hill Gardens but smaller sites seem to have particular user groups. Some are more popular with residents than workers and where people live and work in the City determines which gardens they are more likely to visit.</p>	<p>This information is useful to know when planning future workforce activities to ensure adequate levels of staffing for maintenance activities. The information is also useful to be able to identify user numbers at sites, when and if we have to steer future site specific consultations.</p>
<p>2.3</p>	<p>Main time of visit</p> <p>The majority of the use of our gardens takes place during the week. 85% of visitors stated their main visit was during the week day (including commuting time - 8%). With just under half of our customers using them at lunchtime to eat lunch.</p> <p>Only 15% of customers specified the weekend as the main time for their visit.</p>	<p>Useful information for undertaking any consultation to enable the team to reach large audiences in a short time frame.</p> <p>This finding also confirms the increasing difficulty our gardeners experience carrying out maintenance work during lunchtimes on summer days with overcrowded gardens and spaces.</p> <p>This also evidences the increase in convenience food rubbish collected at lunchtimes. We have recently installed 16 recycling bins to help reduce costs for landfill and the team are promoting recycling in general in our gardens. Results of this initiative will be published early next year.</p> <p>In addition, and as indicated in previous years' findings, if intrusive works are to be carried out these activities can take place at the weekends.</p>
<p>2.4</p>	<p>Reasons for visiting our parks, gardens and churchyards</p> <p>Three quarters of customers state relaxation as the main purpose for their visit with half using the gardens on route and over a quarter to meet friends.</p> <p>A small percentage stated visiting to attend events, play sport, contact with nature or walking as their main purpose.</p>	<p>This is a similar finding to previous surveys. The gardens are well resourced with benches. The team and friends groups are exploring the possibility of providing deckchairs and/or rugs for hire to provide temporary seating to accommodate activities and raise income.</p> <p>An events policy is currently being researched to see if there is scope to encourage more use of our gardens during weekends from corporate, business and community groups. The pilot events policy would include a schedule of rates to reflect the type of organisation and size of activity. A report will be brought to this</p>

		committee on this issue at a future meeting.
2.5	<p>Reasons for not visiting parks, gardens or churchyards</p> <p>The small percentage of non-visitors stated not having enough time and not knowing where the parks and gardens were located.</p>	<p>This is useful information for the Open Spaces rebranding programme and for future signage programmes in partnership with the Environmental Enhancement team and actions proposed in point 2.1.</p>
Satisfaction with parks, gardens and churchyards		
2.6	<p>Maintenance</p> <p>The vast majority of people interviewed (79%) provide a positive rating of <i>good or very good</i> relating to their overall view on the standard of maintenance.</p>	<p>This is a pleasing overall satisfaction result which can be used to support the staff funding allocations and as a benchmark for the service with other London boroughs. However there is clearly room for improvement which will be addressed through the performance review process and through more efficient work planning.</p>
2.7	<p>Litter</p> <p>Similar results (78%) provided a positive rating of <i>good or very good</i> with regard to the overall views on the standard of cleanliness.</p> <p>79% of customers provided a positive rating of <i>good or very good</i> on the standard of litter clearance. Workers who visited the gardens regularly were less critical and gave a positive rating. However, residents were more likely to give a poor rating.</p>	<p>Useful statistic to use to as a measure for continued high performance.</p> <p>The latter finding may reflect St Paul's Cathedral and Smithfield Gardens where rubbish volumes are considerably higher. Recycling bins have been introduced to help with the volumes and more temporary bins will be planned for high season months subject to adequate funding becoming available.</p>
2.8	<p>Removal of dog and pigeon mess</p> <p>Over three quarters of customers felt this was good or very good.</p>	<p>Although there are relatively few dogs in the City, pigeons can be a problem at certain sites. This positive finding may be linked to the successful use of a hawk by the environmental services team to control pigeons in the City. This information will be fed back to the Department of Built Environment.</p>
2.9	<p>Attitude of staff</p> <p>three quarters of respondents provide a positive rating of good or very good regarding the attitude of staff in the gardens with the under 45 year old age range and regular customers more likely</p>	<p>This positive finding indicates a good level of on-site customer service by the gardeners who report that they are regularly approached by members of the public enquiring not only about the</p>

	to rate this as good or very good.	gardens but more often asking directions for hospitals, travel and bus stops. The team willingly accepts that this customer facing role is an important part of the service provided by front-line staff.
2.10	<p>Overall views on availability of useful information</p> <p>Half of respondents state this as good or very good, visitors from abroad are most likely to rate this as poor.</p>	<p>This figure is generally positive; the information can be used to support future signage and information dissemination and the branding package that is planned for Open Spaces. This feedback will also be given to the CoL Information Centre, especially in light of feedback from visitors from abroad.</p>
2.11	<p>Overall views on quality of play and sports facilities</p> <p>35% provide a positive rating of good or very good, 25% providing a fair rating and just under half providing a negative rating of poor or very poor.</p>	<p>This finding should be considered within the context of the small size of the majority of our gardens which are considered 'pocket parks' and limited in terms of space to install play equipment and sports facilities. Four of our gardens now have play equipment installed. The river walkways are experiencing growing numbers of people using these areas as a running route. The Friends of City Gardens arrange regular 'green gym' volunteer activities and intend to extend and expand these activities over the coming months. The new open space at the Aldgate Gyrotory planned for 2014 will include a play facility and there will be scope to include play features in the restored Finsbury Circus landscape in 2018.</p>
2.12	<p>Feeling of safety</p> <p>Almost all agreed with the statement 'I always feel safe in the parks and gardens in the City'. Customers using the gardens more than once a week were more likely to strongly agree; interestingly, in 2012 customers were more likely to strongly agree than in 2009.</p> <p>A tiny % stated that drug and alcohol mis - use and the darkness and no lighting as being a reason for feeling unsafe.</p>	<p>The findings are very positive and reflect the partnership working of City Gardens, the police and the homeless unit. However some work needs to be done to reduce drug and alcohol misuse and anti-social behaviour. Drug & alcohol misuse is reported by staff using our incident forms, which are then collated and shared with the City of London Police and the department of community & Children's Services</p>
	Improvements to parks, gardens and churchyards	
2.13	<i>'There should be more open space in</i>	

	<p><i>the City of London'</i></p> <p>The vast majority agreed to some extent that there should be more open spaces in the City. 2012 customers were more likely to strongly agree than 2009 customers.</p>	<p>This finding can be used for area wide strategies for future planning and prioritising S106 funds. It is already a key objective within the Open Space Strategy and likely to remain so following the review. Increasing the amount of green space to maintain the current ratio per head of daytime population remains a daily focus of our work with the Environmental Enhancement team.</p>
2.14	<p><i>'There should be more nature attracting plants in the City'</i></p> <p>The vast majority agree to some extent that there should be more nature attracting plants in the City, in particular residents. Younger people, workers and customers over 45 + were more likely to disagree.</p>	<p>The 2010-15 City Gardens Biodiversity Action plan promotes the use of native planting where possible to attract insects and wildlife. All new planting schemes include plants that offer these qualities. The annual bedding schemes for 2014 and in the future will prioritise nectar rich varieties. The use of pictorial meadow planting in containers on the Barbican Estate received many positive comments.</p>
2.15	<p><i>'There should be more trees in the City of London'</i></p> <p>The vast majority agree that there should be more trees in the City.</p>	<p>This is a positive result, over the last 4 years a number of trees have been planted and more are planned, funded through new landscaping schemes and more notably the 3rd year of the Green Corridors project (55 trees in total), in line with the City of London Tree Strategy.</p>
2.16	<p><i>'There should be more hard standing landscaping within our green spaces'</i></p> <p>Just over half agree there should be more hard standing landscaping within our green spaces.</p>	<p>A surprising result when compared to more negative responses in 2004 and 2009 surveys. There were no comments attached to this statement to explain this finding and it contradicts other improvement findings requesting more green space and lawns. It may be interpreted to increase pathways and areas for seating which will and are addressed in Environmental Enhancement strategies and re-landscaping schemes.</p>
2.17	<p><i>'There should be more staff presence in the gardens in the City'</i></p> <p>Three quarters agree that there should be more staff presence in the gardens in</p>	<p>The findings are similar to 2004/2009 surveys. The number of staff is the same</p>

	the City.	and unlikely to increase in the future. Our team tend not to undertake key grounds maintenance work during busy lunchtimes, especially in the summer months and especially in the gardens that attract large volume of people, making the team less visible to the majority of our customers. In the future we may use more of our volunteers to undertake surveys, provide more tours and activities to help us provide an increased on-site presence during busy periods.
2.18	<i>'There should be more focus on encouraging wildlife in the City'</i> Over three quarters agree with this statement.	Similar actions as outlined in point 2.14
2.19	<i>'There should be more lawn areas for sitting in the City Gardens'</i> The vast majority agree with this statement.	Similar to findings from previous surveys. Recent landscaping schemes such as St Pauls Walk and Blackfriars pub garden have incorporated lawns as a direct response to previous surveys. This information is useful for planning subsequent landscaping schemes.
2.20	<i>'There should be more opportunities to learn about 'natural play'</i> The vast majority agree to some extent with the statement that there should be more opportunities to learn about 'natural play', with 44% agreeing strongly and 40% agreeing.	This question was included for the first time to gauge customers' views. This finding will be useful to support external funding bids to purchase and/or design equipment that encourages natural play.
2.21	<i>'There should be more children's play equipment'</i> Over half agreed with this statement.	As described in point 2.11 & 2.20 play will be included within new landscaping schemes where possible.
2.22	<i>'There should be more sports equipment'</i> Over half agreed with this statement.	As described in point 2.11 providing sports equipment into our gardens is limited due to their size and location. However exercise that does not require installed equipment - such as running, bicycling and walking - is already promoted in the City as a whole. Working with other partners

		such Green Chain, TfL, the Mayor's Office initiatives and the Environmental Enhancement team to incorporate routes for these activities to take place.
	Involvement with parks, gardens and churchyards	
2.23	Interest in a green gym Just less than a quarter of respondents would be interested in taking part in activities that help people keep fit and healthy while improving the environment.	This result will be used to secure external funding for a potential programme to be delivered in partnership with the friends groups.
2.24	Interest in volunteering A small minority were interested in volunteering.	This statistic confirms that there is an interest in volunteering. City Gardens traditionally support corporate volunteering and the Fann Street wildlife group. The Friends of City Gardens has been set up and will be constituted formerly in October 2013. The group will support the City Gardens team to increase volunteering opportunities and activities.

Further analysis on the use of City gardens

3. The survey's findings provide evidence that the Corporation's gardens are a popular destination for all those who come to the City. Out of 1015 people who were interviewed and despite the survey taking place in November, 86% of the total sample questioned spend time in or walk through the City gardens.
4. Of the 1015 questioned the ethnicity of the respondents was as follows:
5. 55% were white British, 17% white European and nearly 21% of respondents spread over 15 different ethnic groups, (no significant difference since 2009 survey);
6. Nearly three-fifths of people travelling to the City did so from elsewhere in London, with a further fifth from elsewhere in the UK and the final fifth from abroad (similar findings from 2009);
7. As to be expected, the frequency of use and time spent was lower when compared to a summer survey but the likelihood of any use was found to be the same, indicating the open spaces are still used by a similar proportion of customers in the winter as in the summer.

Main purpose of visit

8. The main reason for visiting the City of London was to work, with half of customers (50%) stating work. Virtually two fifths of customers (39%) were in the City of London to visit and one tenth (10%) were residents. Customers of white

ethnicity are more likely to be working and more likely to be a resident, with customers of other ethnicity being more likely to be visiting.

When do customers visit and for how long?

9. Distinct patterns emerge in the timing of people's visits to the gardens. In general gardens are used almost twice as much during the week as at the weekend. 85% of respondents stated the weekday as the main time of their visit and 15% the weekend. The usage during the week is a 15% increase since 2009 and the usage during the weekend is 15% decrease since 2009. The latter result could have been a reflection on the type of user and/or the time of year.
10. Weekend evenings and are the least popular times to use the gardens (3% who use the gardens do so at these times) and week day lunchtimes are by far the most popular (42%).
11. The amount of time people spend in the gardens also varies considerably. On week days, over half of visitors (58%) up to half an hour, 26% spending under 15 minutes and nearly one third (32%) spending between 15 minutes and up to 30 minutes. 10 % spending between one to two hours. Residents tend to spend more time, one to two hours and over two hours in the gardens.

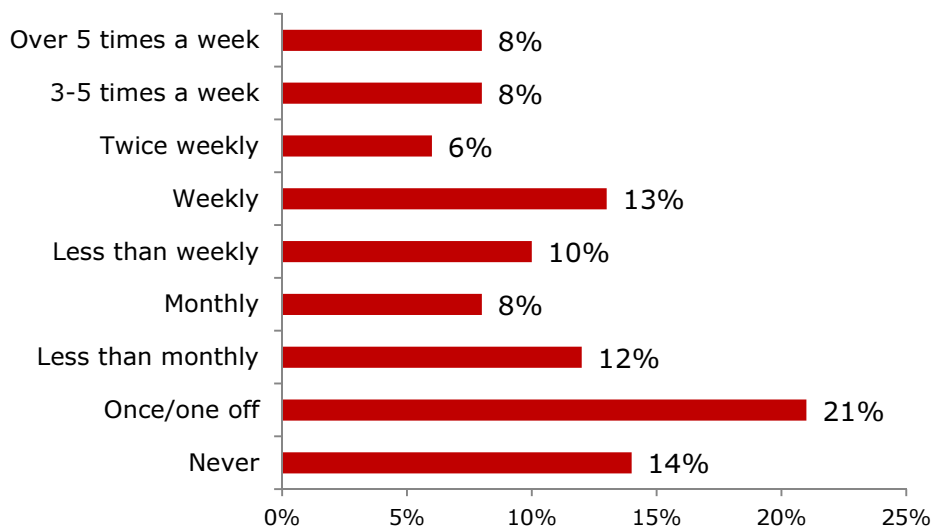


Figure 2 Frequency of use of parks, gardens and churchyards in the City of London

How do people use the gardens?

12. It is interesting to note that relaxation is the main reason for visiting the gardens with nearly 72% stating this as their purpose, with just over one third (35%) using the gardens to meet friends. 9% identified attending events and 9% play and active recreation or sport as the main purpose for their visits. 6% stated contact with nature and 2% dog walking.

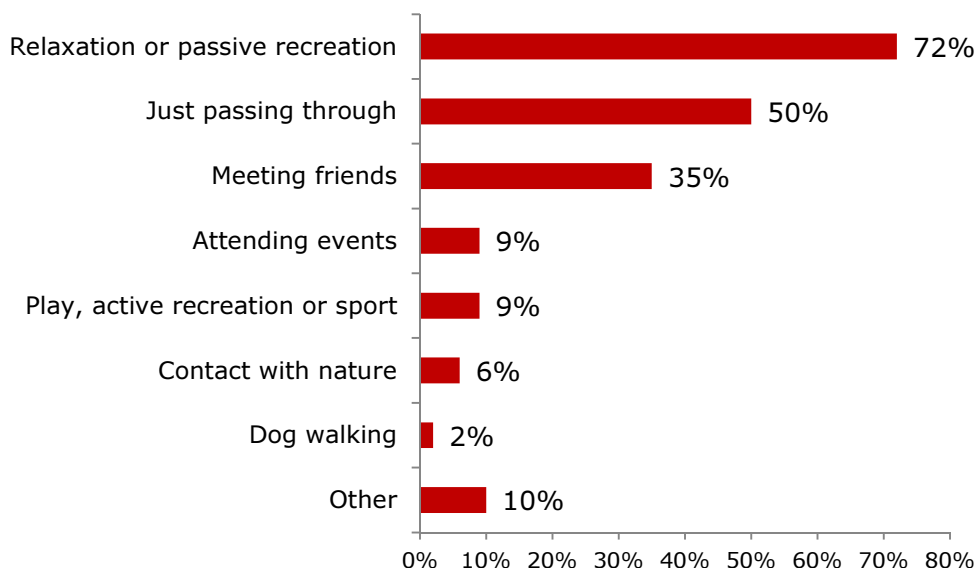


Figure 3 Reasons for visiting parks, gardens and churchyards

Why don't people use the gardens?

13. Of the 14% that are non-visitors, the main reason for not visiting the gardens is that they do not have time to do so, identified by 53% of non-visitors, this was stated by workers in particular. 38% state not passing by or the gardens not being close to where they live or work. 27% state not living in the area. 9% stated not knowing where the gardens are as a reason for not visiting.

Which gardens are the most popular?

14. The three areas most visited by the largest proportion of visitors are: St Paul's Cathedral Garden (54%) the Barbican (46%) and Tower Hill Garden (41%). The type of customer reflects the visit preference, for example visitors to London were more likely to visit St Paul's Churchyard and Tower Hill Gardens, whereas workers are more likely to visit St Andrew's Churchyard or a garden located near to their work. Residents are more likely to include the main three gardens and in addition Postman's Park, the Barbican, Cleary Gardens, St Alphage's Garden, Finsbury Circus and St Dunstan in the East, St Botolph's, Fen Court, Petticoat Square, Portsoken and Bunhill Fields in their top categories.

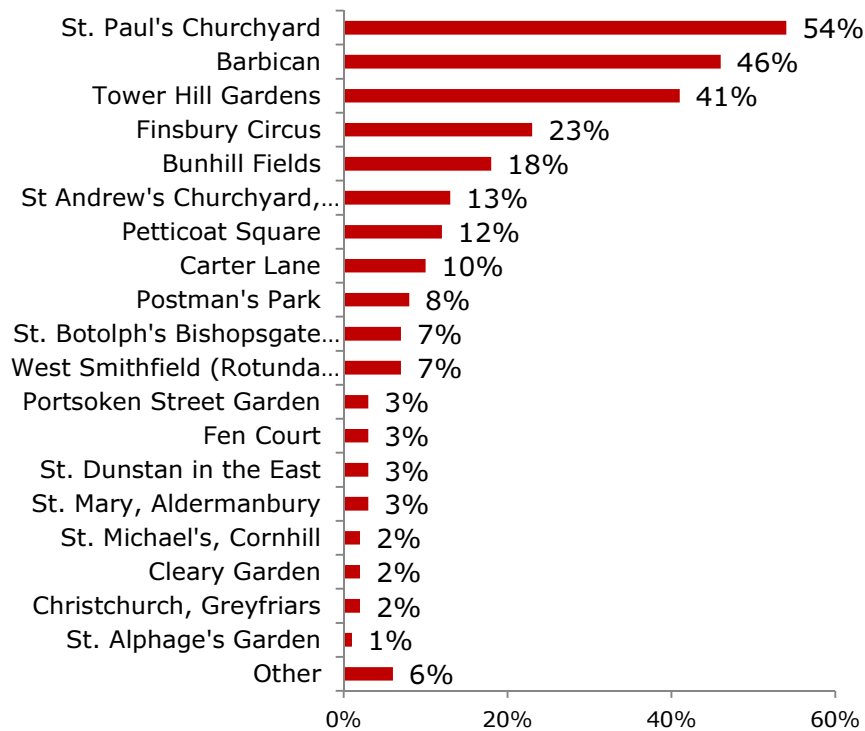


Figure 4 Parks, gardens or churchyards usually visited

Satisfaction with parks, gardens and churchyards

15. The second section of the interview focused on what people thought of the gardens in the City both in respect of the various services provided by the Corporation, and in order to gauge overall levels of satisfaction with the gardens as a whole.

16. The vast majority of people interviewed; 88% of people gave overall satisfaction ratings of good or very good ratings for accessibility to our gardens, similar ratings for general standard of maintenance (79%), for cleanliness (78%), litter clearance (79%), for pigeon mess and dog fouling (80%) and (72%) positive rating for staff attitude in the gardens.

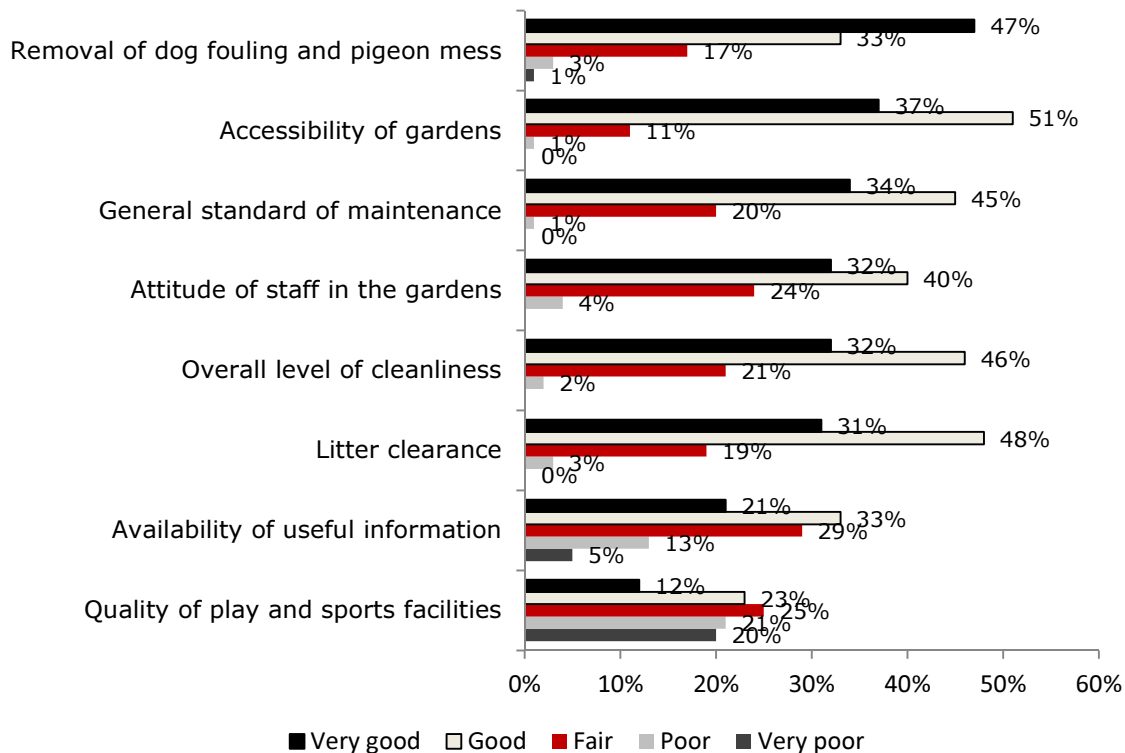


Figure 5 Ratings provided for levels of satisfaction with parks, gardens and churchyards

17. The availability of useful information was the only indicator which received a higher negative rating of 17%. This is a higher negative rating compared to previous surveys undertaken in 2004 and 2009.

18. An overview of satisfaction levels

Accessibility	Customers who visit at least once a week and workers are more likely to give this a higher rating.
General maintenance	Residents are most positive about this aspect of the service than other customers.
Litter clearance	Customers who visit more than once a week are more likely to give a positive rating.
Removal of dog/pigeon mess	Residents were more likely to be very satisfied with how this issued is managed, than irregular visitors
Attitude of staff	45+ were more likely to rate this highly as were customers who visit regularly.

Safety in the gardens

19. The people interviewed were asked whether they agreed with the following statement: 'I always feel safe in the parks and gardens in the City'. Overall the response indicated that in general people feel safe when using the gardens in the City, with 98% saying they agreed or strongly agreed. In general female customers were more likely to agree and less likely to strongly agree. Similar findings for irregular visitors. Those that did feel unsafe felt it was down to poor lighting in the evenings or the anti-social activities or others.

Agenda Item 15

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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