



## Epping Forest & Commons Committee

**Date:** MONDAY, 12 JULY 2021  
**Time:** 11.00 am  
**Venue:** VIRTUAL PUBLIC MEETING (ACCESSIBLE REMOTELY)

**Members:** Graeme Doshi-Smith (Chairman)  
Benjamin Murphy (Deputy Chairman)  
Deputy Philip Woodhouse  
Peter Bennett  
Caroline Haines  
Alderman Robert Hughes-Penney  
Gregory Lawrence  
Deputy Edward Lord  
Alderman Nicholas Lyons  
Jeremy Simons  
Oliver Sells QC (Ex-Officio Member)

*For consideration of Business Relating to Epping Forest Only*

Verderer Michael Chapman DL  
Verderer Paul Morris  
Verderer Nicholas Munday  
Verderer H.H William Kennedy

**Enquiries:** Richard Holt  
Richard.Holt@cityoflondon.gov.uk

### Accessing the virtual public meeting

Members of the public can observe this virtual public meeting via YouTube at the following link

<https://youtu.be/bdXq3CsUB9I>

This meeting will be a virtual meeting and therefore will not take place in a physical location. A recording of the public meeting will be available via the above link following the end of the public meeting for up to one municipal year. Please note: Online meeting recordings do not constitute the formal minutes of the meeting; minutes are written and are available on the City of London Corporation's website. Recordings may be edited, at the discretion of the proper officer, to remove any inappropriate material.

**John Barradell**  
**Town Clerk and Chief Executive**

# **AGENDA**

## **Part 1 - Public Agenda**

### **1. APOLOGIES**

### **2. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

### **3. MINUTES**

To agree the public minutes of the previous meeting of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee held on the 10<sup>th</sup> of May 2021.

**For Decision**  
(Pages 5 - 14)

### **4. EPPING FOREST AND COMMONS COMMITTEE 2022 DATES**

Report of the Town Clerk.

**For Information**  
(Pages 15 - 16)

### **5. EPPING FOREST AND THE COMMONS RISK MANAGEMENT REPORT**

Report of the Director of Open Spaces.

**For Decision**  
(Pages 17 - 70)

### **6. OPEN SPACES DEPARTMENTAL BUSINESS PLAN 2020/21 - YEAR END PERFORMANCE REPORT**

Report of the Director of Open Spaces.

**For Information**  
(Pages 71 - 82)

### **7. REVENUE OUTTURN 2020/21 - EPPING FOREST AND COMMONS**

Joint report of the Director of Open Spaces and Chamberlain.

**For Information**  
(Pages 83 - 94)

## **Epping Forest**

### **8. SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

Report of the Superintendent of Epping Forest.

**For Information**  
(Pages 95 - 110)

**9. EPPING FOREST CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE DRAFT MINUTES**

To note the draft minutes of the Epping Forest Consultative Committee meeting held on the 16<sup>th</sup> of June.

**For Information**  
(Pages 111 - 116)

**10. CHINGFORD INDIVIDUAL SITE PLAN**

Report of the Director of Open Spaces.

**For Decision**  
(Pages 117 - 196)

**11. COPPED HALL PARKLAND MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Report of the Director of Open Spaces.

**For Decision**  
(Pages 197 - 232)

**12. WANSTEAD PARK PERMISSIVE CYCLING EXTENSION**

Report of the Director of Open Spaces.

**For Decision**  
(Pages 233 - 268)

**13. CLIMATE ACTION STRATEGY - OPEN SPACES "CARBON REMOVALS" - SITE PLANS 2021**

Report of the Director of Open Spaces.

**For Decision**  
(Pages 269 - 278)

**14. EPPING FOREST CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE - REQUEST TO CO-OPT A FURTHER MEMBER**

Report of the Director of Open Spaces.

**For Decision**  
(Pages 279 - 282)

**Burnham Beeches & The Commons**

**15. SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

Report of the Superintendent of Burnham Beeches & the Commons.

**For Information**  
(Pages 283 - 290)

- 16. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**
- 17. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT**

**Part 2 - Non-Public Agenda**

**18. 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**

**19. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

To agree the non-public minutes of the previous meeting of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee held on the 10<sup>th</sup> of May 2021.

**For Decision**  
(Pages 291 - 294)

**20. LONG STREET - DEED OF GRANT EASEMENT**

Report of the Director of Open Spaces.

**For Decision**  
(Pages 295 - 306)

**21. WAYLEAVE FEE VALUATION**

Report of the Director of Open Spaces.

**For Decision**  
(Pages 307 - 330)

**22. WOODREDON FARM (RIDING SCHOOL) DISPOSAL**

Report of the City Surveyor.

**For Decision**  
(Pages 331 - 366)

**23. NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

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



## **EPPING FOREST & COMMONS COMMITTEE** **Monday, 10 May 2021**

Minutes of the meeting of the Epping Forest & Commons Committee held remotely  
on Monday, 10 May 2021 at 11.00 am

### **Present**

#### **Members:**

Graeme Doshi-Smith (Chairman)  
Benjamin Murphy (Deputy Chairman)  
Peter Bennett  
Caroline Haines  
Alderman Robert Hughes-Penney  
Gregory Lawrence  
Deputy Edward Lord  
Jeremy Simons  
Verderer Michael Chapman DL  
Verderer H.H William Kennedy  
Verderer Nicholas Munday

#### **Officers:**

Richard Holt	- Town Clerk's Department
Sarah Phillips	- Town Clerk's Department
Mark Jarvis	- Head of Finance, Chamberlain's Department
Bukola Soyombo	- Chamberlain's Department
Charlie Pearce	- Chamberlain's Department
Jeremy Dagley	- Head of Conservation Epping Forest
Jo Hurst	- Business Manager, Epping Forest
Gerry Kiefer	- Business Manager, Open Spaces Department
Jacqueline Eggleston	- Head of Visitor Services (Epping Forest)
Paul Thomson	- Superintendent, Epping Forest
Andy Barnard	- Superintendent, Burnham Beeches, Stoke Common & City Commons
Colin Buttery	- Director of Open Spaces & Heritage

### **1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Alderman Nicholas Lyons and Verderer Paul Morris.

### **2. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

Verderer Michael Chapman made a declaration that he was President of Theydon Bois and District Rural Preservation Society mentioned in Item 12.

Jeremy Simons and Caroline Haines made declarations as members of the Epping Forest Heritage Trust mentioned in Item 12.

3. **ORDER OF THE COURT OF COMMON COUNCIL**

The Committee received the Order of the Court of Common Council dated 15 April 2021 appointing the Committee and setting its Terms of Reference.

**RESOLVED-** That the Epping Forest and Commons Committee Order of the Court of Common Council be noted.

4. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

The Committee proceeded to elect a Chairman in accordance with Standing Order No. 29. The Town Clerk informed that Graeme Doshi-Smith, being the only Member expressing their willingness to serve, was duly elected Chairman of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee for the ensuing year and took the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

**RESOLVED-** That Graeme Doshi-Smith be elected Chairman of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee for the ensuing year.

5. **ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIRMAN**

The Committee proceeded to elect a Deputy Chairman in accordance with Standing Order No. 30. The Town Clerk informed that Benjamin Murphy, being the only Member expressing their willingness to serve, was duly elected Deputy Chairman of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee for the ensuing year and took the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

**RESOLVED-** That Benjamin Murphy be elected Deputy Chairman of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee for the ensuing year.

6. **MINUTES**

The Committee considered the public minutes and non-public summary of the previous meeting of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee held on the 8<sup>th</sup> of March 2021. The Chairman noted that the sentence on item 9 of the minutes needed to be corrected to make clear that the Epping Forest Charity did not receive any funds from local authorities.

The Chairman noted that Sylvia Moys had stepped down from her role on the Court of Common Council and, as a result, from the Epping Forest and Commons Committee. The Chairman added that he would be writing to Ms Moys to thank her for contribution to the work of the Committee and the City of London Corporation.

**RESOLVED-** That the public minutes of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee held on the 8<sup>th</sup> of March, subject to the corrections specified, be approved as an accurate record.

7. **2021/22 COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS**

The Committee considered a report of the Town Clerk, inviting Members to make their appointments to various Consultative Committees and Groups for 2021/22.

The Committee agreed that the Consultative Committees and Groups would continue with their membership for the previous year with the change of Sylvia Moys no longer serving on the various committees she previously served on and Caroline Haines stepping down from the Epping Forest Consultative Committee.

The Town Clerk informed the Committee that Jeremy Simons was the only Member expressing an interest to be appointed as the local observer on the Open Spaces & City Gardens Committee. Jeremy Simons was therefore approved as the Epping Forest and Commons Committee appointed local observer on the Open Spaces & City Gardens Committee.

**RESOLVED** – That the following appointments be agreed:

**Ashtead Commons Consultation Group**

Graeme Doshi-Smith (Chairman)  
Benjamin Murphy (Deputy Chairman)  
Jeremy Simons

**Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common Consultation Group**

Graeme Doshi-Smith (Chairman)  
Benjamin Murphy (Deputy Chairman)  
Alderman Robert Hughes-Penney

**Coulsdon Commons, West Wickham & Spring Park Consultation Group**

Graeme Doshi-Smith (Chairman)  
Benjamin Murphy (Deputy Chairman)  
Jeremy Simons

**Epping Forest Joint Consultative Committee**

Graeme Doshi-Smith (Chairman)  
Benjamin Murphy (Deputy Chairman)

**Epping Forest Consultative Committee**

Graeme Doshi-Smith (Chairman)  
Benjamin Murphy (Deputy Chairman)  
Verderer Michael Chapman DL  
Verderer Paul Morris  
H.H. Verderer William Kennedy  
Verderer Nicholas Munday

**Epping Forest Management Plan Steering Group**

Graeme Doshi-Smith (Chairman)  
Benjamin Murphy (Deputy Chairman)  
Verderer Michael Chapman DL  
Verderer Paul Morris

H.H. Verderer William Kennedy  
Verderer Nicholas Munday

**Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee Representative**  
Jeremy Simons.

8. **EPPING FOREST AND COMMONS COMMITTEE 2021 DATES**

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk on the dates for 2021 relating to the Epping Forest and Commons Committee.

A member of the Committee commented that it would be helpful to extend the meeting dates provided into 2022 and that it was important that a variety of sites were visited to ensure appropriate oversight of land under the Committee's responsibility. The Director of Open Spaces informed the Committee that a number of visits have had to be cancelled due to the requirements of the Coronavirus Regulations. the Director hoped that visits would resume once the restrictions had been eased. Responding to a query from a Member of the Committee the Director of Open Spaces confirmed that a date for the Lord Mayor's visit to Burnham Beeches would be established when appropriate.

**RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

9. **SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Open Spaces on the Superintendent's update issues across the nine sites within 'The Commons'.

A Member expressed concern on the abuse of staff mentioned in the report and asked how this abuse had affected staff morale. The Director of Open Spaces replied by explaining that, in general, the morale of staff had shown great resilience in the period effected by COVID-19, but that this would of course be keep under review.

Responding to a Member's query on the visitor numbers to the open spaces the Director of Open Spaces explained that numbers were expected to increase in the summer months and added that the numbers were likely to be higher than they were pre COVID19 pandemic for years to come. The Chairman noted that it was important to establish if any substantive mitigation strategies would be required in relation to the increased visitor numbers. Replying to a question from the Deputy Chairman the Director of Open Spaces explained that the Department would continue to work with local open spaces to discuss the effect of increased visitor numbers.

**RESVOLED-** That the report be noted.

10. **SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Open Spaces on the Superintendent's update which summarised the Epping Forest Division's activities across February to March 2021.

A Member commented on the virtual outing to Epping Forest for young unaccompanied refugee minors mentioned in the report and suggested that a similar in person event be considered when possible.

The Committee discussed the issue of increased fly tipping in Epping Forest. The Director of Open Spaces informed the Committee that the Department were working closely with the local authorities in the area and that a number of prosecutions were being placed before the Courts following their reopening. It was commented by a Committee member that they were scheduled to meet with Officers to assist with familiarisation visits by local Magistrates. The Deputy Chairman suggested that a specific metric be developed to measure against for fly tipping in Epping Forest as it was evident that this was a significant issue for the Department.

The Director of Open Spaces, replying to a query from the Deputy Chairman, explained that the term clearance had been used in the report to refer to the removal of waste left by rough sleepers, rather than describing the NSNO process. The Director confirmed that Rough Sleeper numbers had increased due to household sharing restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. It was added that volunteer litter pickers had been extremely helpful in clearing this waste. Further to this the Chairman noted he and the Deputy Chairman were writing to open spaces staff to thank them for their contribution.

Responding to query from a member of the Committee the Director of Open Spaces informed the Committee that Fixed Term Contract staff were to be recruited, which should improve response to issues presented deer vehicular collisions.

**RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

**11. EPPING FOREST WORK PROGRAMME 2021/2022**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Open Spaces on the Epping Forest Work Programme 2021/22.

**RESOLVED-** The annual work programme as summarised in the report be approved.

**12. EPPING FOREST CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS 2021 TO 2024 (SEF 21/21)**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Open Spaces on the Epping Forest Consultative Committee appointments 2021 to 2022. The Chairman noted that the correct version of the report was included in the supplementary agenda which the Committee would be considering.

Verderer Michael Chapman made a declaration that he was President of the Theydon Bois and District Rural Preservation Society, which was mentioned in the report and, therefore, decided not to take part in the discussion further beyond raising concerns regarding the report's description of Society's constitution. Jeremy Simons and Caroline Haines made declarations as members of the Epping Forest Heritage Trust.

A Member of the Committee commended the option to co-opt further representatives of certain groups, onto the Epping Forest Consultative Committee to allow those groups to contribute to relevant discussions.

The Committee considered the various organisations which had applied for membership of the Epping Forest Consultative Committee. The Committee agreed with list recommended but to leave the position allocated to heritage organisation vacant to limit the size of the Committee to ensure there is room to co-opt members as appropriate.

The Epping Forest Conservation Volunteers were not appointed as recommended to allow for co-option's. It was decided that the Loughton Residents Association could remain as a member of the Epping Forest Consultative Committee for a restricted period, while alternative measures are considered with regard to the rules on Political Party membership. The Forest Forum was co-opted. With regard to cycling groups representation on the Consultative Committee the Committee agreed that the Four cycling organisations who have applied would be encouraged to choose their representative.

**RESOLVED-** That: -

- I. The applications as explained in the report, and detailed in Appendix 1, were considered and appointed as appropriate under the revised Terms of Reference; and
- II. That thanks be extended to organisations that have applied, particularly those who have attended for the last three years but have been unsuccessful in their application this time around.

**13. COPPED HALL PARKLAND MANAGEMENT PLAN. (SEF 22/21)**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Open Spaces on the Copped Hall Parkland Management Plan. The Director of Open Spaces noted that there were some challenges regarding the funding of this project and the connections to carbon recovery, public access and carbon recovery.

A Member of the Committee encouraged Officers to be bold in their approach to this project especially regarding the connections to the Climate Action Strategy. In addition, it was commented that a practical management plan and public consultation would be important. The Director of Open Spaces confirmed that a further report with more details on the project would be prepared for consideration by the Committee in July.

**RESOLVED-** That Option 1 to make the PMP publicly available and to allow dialogue with key stakeholders from 11th May 2021 onwards be approved.

**14. EPPING FOREST TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2020**

The Committee received a joint report of the Director of Open Spaces and the Chamberlain. The Chamberlain drew the Committee's attention to the £5.2

million from City's Cash that was provided to the Epping Forest Charity in the previous year.

A Member suggested that the full membership of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee be detailed in future reports to evidence with whom specific responsibility, of the City of London Corporation as the Corporate Trustee, is held.

**RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

**15. WHIPPS CROSS HOSPITAL DEVELOPMENT : IMMINENT PLANNING APPLICATION.**

Due to the timing of the planning application, the Committee considered a late report of the Director of Open Spaces on the Whipps Cross Hospital Development Imminent Planning Application. The Director of Open Spaces apologies for the lateness of the report and outlined the central elements of the report to the Committee.

The Chairman noted that while he was happy to see a new hospital development in the area and reiterated the Committee's role in protecting Epping Forest. The Deputy Chairman added that there were significant issues with the Development particularly the number of homes which were to be included.

A Committee Member commented that he was happy to delegate authority to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, to resolve a way forward on the access issue with Barts Health NHS Trust, but requested that related reports are circulated to the Committee for their views.

**RESOLVED-** That: -

- I. Authority be delegate to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, to negotiate and resolve a way forward on the access issue with the Barts Health NHS Trust; and
- II. That the City Solicitor be instructed to provide advice on 'in perpetuity' in relation to SAC Mitigation; and
- III. Authority be delegated to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, to continue SAC mitigation negotiations, 'without prejudice' to the planning application response and returning to Committee for approval of any final mitigation package agreed by the parties

**16. DRAFT PUBLIC MINUTES OF THE EPPING FOREST JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 22ND OF APRIL**

The Committee considered the draft public minutes of the Epping Forest Joint Consultative Committee held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April 2021.

**RESOLVED-** That the draft minutes be noted.

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

There were no questions received in the public session.

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

The Chairman requested that a report on the communications policy relating to the City of London Corporation managed open spaces be prepared for the Committee's consideration. The Deputy Chairman commented that the Committee had a specific challenge in presenting a number of complex planning documents in a manner which is publicly accessible, noting that the requisite skills were present in the City of London Corporation, but were not always best utilised to this end. The Director of Open Spaces informed the Committee that the report on communication policies was being worked on and would be prepared for the next meeting of the Committee.

In response to a query from a member of the Committee the Chairman informed the Committee that its future meetings were planned to be held in a hybrid format with Members and Officers able to attend in person or dial-in to the meeting and public discussions being streamed to YouTube. However, it was added that the ability of the Committee to meet, at least partly, in person was dependant on the position regarding social distancing rules.

**19. 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.

**20. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

The Committee considered the non-public minutes of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee meeting held on the 8<sup>th</sup> of March 2021.

**RESOLVED-** That the non-public minutes of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee meeting held on the 8<sup>th</sup> of March 2021.

**21. CLIMATE ACTION STRATEGY - CARBON REMOVALS PROJECT (SEF 23/21)**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Open Spaces on the Climate Action Strategy Carbon Removals Project.

**RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

**22. WHIPPS CROSS: INITIAL NEGOTIATIONS ON SPECIAL AREA OF CONSERVATION (SAC) AND VEHICULAR ACCESS (SEF 25/21)**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Open Spaces on the Whipps Cross Hospital Development Imminent Planning Application.

*At 1pm Members agreed to extend the business of the agenda beyond two hours, in accordance with Standing Order 40, in order to conclude the business on the agenda.*

**RESOLVED-** That the report be approved.



**23. DRAFT PUBLIC MINUTES OF THE EPPING FOREST JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 22ND OF APRIL**

The Committee considered the draft non-public minutes of the Epping Forest Joint Consultative Committee held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April 2021.

**RESOLVED-** That the draft minutes be noted.

**24. NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

There were two questions received in the non-public session.

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

There were not urgent items considered in the non-public session.

**The meeting ended at 13:27**

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Chairman

**Contact Officer: Richard Holt**  
**Richard.Holt@cityoflondon.gov.uk**

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# Agenda Item 4

Date	Committee/Meeting/Visit
	<b>2022 Epping Forest and Commons Committee dates</b>
17 January, 11.00am Late January	Epping Forest & Commons Committee Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common Consultation group
9 February, 7.00pm 21 February, 7.00pm	Epping Forest Consultative Committee Provisional, Ashted Common Consultative Group
7 March, 11.00am 29 March, 7.00pm	Epping Forest & Commons Committee Provisional, West Wickham, Spring Park and Coulsdon Commons Consultation Group
13 April, 11.00am	Epping Forest Joint Consultative Committee
9 May, 11.00am	Epping Forest & Commons Committee
15 June, 7.00pm	Epping Forest Consultative Committee
9 July, 10.00am 11 July, 11.00am July	Provisional Epping Forest & Commons Committee Epping Forest Saturday Visit Epping Forest & Commons Committee Burnham Beeches & Stoke Common Consultation Group
10 September, 12 September, 11.00am 24 September,	Epping Forest & Commons Committee visit, Commons Epping Forest & Commons Committee Provisional, Ashted Common Consultative Group site meeting
8 October 19 October, 7.00pm 21 October, 11.00am	Provisional, West Wickham, Spring Park and Coulsdon Commons Consultation Group, site visit Epping Forest Consultative Committee Epping Forest Joint Consultative Committee
21 November, 11.00am	Epping Forest & Commons Committee

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<b>Committee(s):</b> Epping Forest & Commons Committee	<b>Dated:</b> 12/7/2021
<b>Subject:</b> Epping Forest and The Commons Risk Management Report	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	1 / 5 / 12
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	N
<b>If so, how much?</b>	N/A
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	N/A
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?</b>	N/A
<b>Report of:</b> Colin Buttery, Director of Open Spaces	<b>For Decision</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Martin Falder, Project Support Officer, Open Spaces	

## Summary

This report provides the Epping Forest and Commons Committee with an update on the management of risks undertaken by the Open Spaces Department and the Epping Forest and the Commons Divisions. Risk is reviewed regularly by the Department's Senior Leadership Team as part of the ongoing management of the operations of the Department. It is also reviewed regularly by the Management teams at Epping Forest and The Commons.

The Open Spaces Department reports on 10 departmental risks. These will next be presented to Open Spaces & City Gardens Committee on 13 July 2021.

Your Committee is responsible for five Registered Charities: Epping Forest (charity number 232990), Ashted Common (charity number 1051510), Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common (charity number 232987), Coulsdon & Other Commons (charity number 232989) and West Wickham & Spring Park (charity number 232988). In accordance with the Charity Commission's Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP), Trustees are required to confirm in the charity's annual report that any major risks to which the charity is exposed have been identified and reviewed and that systems are established to mitigate those risks. Using the corporate risk register guidance, the management of these risks meets the requirements of the Charity Commission.

There are fourteen risks managed by the Superintendent of Epping Forest. Six of these risks are currently reported red and eight are reported amber.

There are nine risks managed by the Superintendent of The Commons. Two of these risks are currently reported red, five are amber and two are green. Two risks are proposed for removal.

## **Recommendation**

Members are asked to note the report and:

- Approve the Epping Forest Risk Register included at Appendix 2.
- Approve The Commons Risk Register included at Appendix 3.
- Approve the removal of one green risk, TC 011 – Riddlesdown Quarry, as explained in paragraph 18.
- Approve the removal of one amber risk, TC 012 – Farthing Downs Cattle Grid, as explained in paragraph 19.

## **Main Report**

### **Background**

1. The Open Spaces Department's Risk Registers conform to the City's corporate standards as guided by the Risk Management Strategy 2014, and all of our Departmental and Divisional Risks are registered on the Pentana Risk Management System.
2. The Open Spaces Department manages risk through a number of processes including: Departmental and Divisional Risk Registers, the Departmental Health and Safety Improvement Group, Divisional Health and Safety Groups and Risk Assessments. Departmental Risks are reviewed by the Department's Senior Leadership Team (SLT) on a regular basis and Divisional Risks by Divisional Management Teams.
3. The Charity Commission requires Trustees to confirm in the charity's annual report that any major risks to which the charity is exposed have been identified and reviewed and that systems are established to mitigate those risks. These risks are to be reviewed annually. Each Open Spaces Service Committee is presented with relevant risk registers to fulfil this requirement.

### **Current Departmental Position**

4. The Departmental risks were received and agreed by the Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee on 2 December 2020. The Senior Leadership Team regularly reviews the departmental risks.
5. On 13 July, the Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee will receive a report on the following ten risks:
  - OSD 001 – Health and safety (Amber)
  - OSD 002 – Extreme weather and climate change (Amber)
  - OSD 004 – Repair and Maintenance of Buildings and Structural Assets (Red)
  - OSD 005 – Pests and diseases (Red)
  - OSD 006 – Impact of development (Amber)
  - OSD 007 – Maintaining the City's water bodies (Red)
  - OSD TBM 001 – The effect of a major event in central London on the tourism business at Tower Bridge and Monument (Amber)
  - OSD 010 – Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) Fleet Purchase Risk (Amber) (Proposed for removal)

- OSD 012 – Budget Reduction & Income Loss Summary Risk (Red) (Reactivated risk)
  - CR32 – Wanstead Park Reservoirs (Red) (Corporate risk)
6. Risks related to COVID-19 are managed corporately under a separate risk register. Risks relevant to this committee have been attached at Appendix 6 for information.

### **Epping Forest**

7. There are fourteen risks identified across Epping Forest. These are:
- EF 001 Increase in Health and Safety Incidents/Catastrophic Health & Safety failure (amber, score 6)
  - EF 002 Decline in Assets Condition (red, score 24)
  - EF 003 Declining Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)/Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Condition (amber, score 8)
  - EF 004 Raised Reservoirs (red, score 24)
  - EF 007 Pathogens (amber, score 12)
  - EF 008 Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) (red, score 16)
  - EF 009 Severe Weather Events (amber, score 6)
  - EF 010 Development Consents close to Forest Land (amber, score 12)
  - EF 011 Wanstead Park – Heritage at Risk Register (amber, score 8)
  - EF 012 Loss of Forest Land and/or Concession of Prescriptive Rights (red, score 16)
  - EF 013 Loss of Knowledge in Skilled Staff/Difficulties in Recruitment (red, score 16) (Increased)
  - EF 014 Major Incident Resulting in Prolonged 'Access Denial' (amber, score 8) (Decreased)
  - EF 015 Public Behaviour (red, score 16) (Decreased)
  - EF 016 Financial Management and Loss of Income (amber, score 12) (Decreased)
8. There are currently six red risks and eight amber risks. There are currently no green risks.
9. EF 013 – Loss of Knowledge in Skilled Staff / Difficulties in Recruitment has been increased to Red (16) from a previous score of Amber (6). This is to reflect the recent loss of experienced staff related to TOM and the difficulty attracting applicants with the right skills and experience due to the moratorium on recruiting permanent roles in favour of FTCs. The target is to reduce this to Amber by March of next year, at which point the TOM should have been implemented and staff structure will be clearer.
10. EF 014 – Major Incident Resulting in Prolonged 'Access Denial' has been reduced to Amber (8) from Red (16), to reflect relaxations to lockdown. We will continue to monitor as further changes occur.
11. EF 015 – Public Behaviour has been reduced to Red (16) from Red (24) to reflect the changes to lockdown and the relief this is expected to provide to some sites. Nonetheless, it remains at red, as we have seen significantly increased visitor numbers and a commensurate increase in antisocial behaviour during this period. The target is

set for October 2021 at the same level as the current risk, although we hope to be able to lower this risk by the time of the next report to this committee.

12. The target score is Red for two risks, Amber for eleven risks, and Green for one risk. Actions are identified to help us achieve these target scores. Full details of these targets can be found at Appendix 2.
13. The detail of the individual Epping Forest risks is shown in Appendix 2. This also shows the actions that are being undertaken to bring the current risk score to the target risk score.

### **The Commons**

14. There are nine risks currently identified across the Commons. These are:
  - TC 001 Health and Safety Failure (amber, score 8) (Decreased)
  - TC 002 Local Planning Issues (amber, score 12)
  - TC 004 Tree Diseases and Other Pests (red, score 16)
  - TC 005 Climate and Weather (amber, score 8)
  - TC 006 Pond Embankments, Burnham Beeches (green, score 2)
  - TC 007 Rural Payment Agency Grants (red, score 16) (Increased)
  - TC 010 Kenley Revival Project – Conservation Works (amber, score 6)
  - TC 011 Riddlesdown Quarry (green, score 4) (Decreased, proposed for removal)
  - TC 012 Farthing Downs Cattle Grid (amber, score 12) (Proposed for removal)
15. There are currently two red risks and five amber risks. There are two green risks. One of the green risks is proposed for removal.
16. TC 001 – Health and Safety Failure has decreased its score, but remains at Amber. This has been decreased to reflect reduction in pressure on site since lockdown measures have reduced. Mitigation work remains in place. Further details on this risk can be found at Appendix 3.
17. TC 006 – Pond Embankments, Burnham Beeches remains at Green (2). This risk will remain reportable to committee, however, to reflect the possibility that it may escalate in future, and to ensure trustees are properly informed of potential issues in this area.
18. TC 007 – Rural Payment Agency Grants has increased its score from Amber (8) to Red (16) to reflect the potential reduction of RPA grant by 75%, which would cause a significant funding gap. We are exploring options to challenge this reduction.
19. OSD TC 011 – Riddlesdown Quarry is proposed for removal. The risk has been reduced to Green (4) by actions on site and work is now complete.
20. OSD TC 012 – Farthing Downs Cattle Grid is a proposed for removal. Although the risk remains at Amber (12), this is now being managed under the City Surveyors Department under their 20-year CWP (and related risks), and no longer sits with The Commons. This cattle grid is off-site and is not under the direct management of the local team, but this risk was added in the prior report to help tackle the issue of ownership and management. This issue has now been resolved.



21. The target for five of the risks is amber and the other four are green. Actions are identified to help achieve these target scores. Full details of how we intend to achieve these targets can be found at Appendix 3.
22. The detail of the individual risks for the Commons is shown in Appendix 3. This also shows the actions that are being undertaken to reduce the current risk score to the target risk score.

### **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

23. The Departmental and Divisional Risk Registers will help us achieve the Corporate Plan 2018 – 2023 aim to:

- Shape outstanding environments

Within which they will help deliver the outcomes:

- We have clean air, land and water and a thriving and sustainable natural environment.
- Open spaces are secure, resilient and well-maintained.

24. The Departmental risk register reflects the risks associated with delivering the Open Spaces Department's Business top line objectives and associated outcomes:

A. Open spaces and historic sites are thriving and accessible.

B. Spaces enrich people's lives.

C. Business practices are responsible and sustainable.

### **Conclusion**

25. The need to systematically manage risk across the Department and at a Divisional level for Epping Forest and The Commons is addressed by the production of these Risk registers, as too are the requirements of the Charity Commission. This document will inform the collective risk across the Department's business activities.

### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Corporate Risk Scoring grid
- Appendix 2 – Epping Forest Divisional Risk Register
- Appendix 3 – The Commons Divisional Risk Register
- Appendix 4 – Matrix to show Epping Forests current and target risks on the Corporate risk scoring grid
- Appendix 5 - Matrix to show The Commons current and target risks on the Corporate risk scoring grid
- Appendix 6 – COVID-19 Risks & Actions Relevant to EFCC

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## Appendix 1:

## City of London Corporation Risk Matrix

Note: A risk score is calculated by assessing the risk in terms of likelihood and impact. By using the likelihood and impact criteria below (top left (A) and bottom left (B) respectively) it is possible to calculate a risk score. For example a risk assessed as Unlikely (2) and with an impact of Serious (2) can be plotted on the risk scoring grid, top right (C) to give an overall risk score of a green (4). Using the risk score definitions bottom right below, a green risk is one that just requires actions to maintain that rating.

### Likelihood criteria

	Rare (1)	Unlikely (2)	Possible (3)	Likely (4)
Criteria	Less than 10%	10 – 40%	40 – 75%	More than 75%
Probability	Has happened rarely/never before	Unlikely to occur	Fairly likely to occur	More likely to occur than not
Time Period	Unlikely to occur in a 10 year period	Likely to occur within a 10 year period	Likely to occur once within a one year period	Likely to occur once within three months
Numerical	Less than one chance in a hundred thousand (<10-5)	Less than one chance in ten thousand (<10-4)	Less than one chance in a thousand (<10-3)	Less than one chance in a hundred (<10-2)

### Impact Criteria

Impact Title	Definitions
<b>Minor (1)</b>	Service delivery/performance: Minor impact on service, typically up to one day. Financial: financial loss up to 5% of budget. Reputation: Isolated service user/stakeholder complaints contained within business unit/division. Legal/statutory: Litigation claim or find less than £5000. Safety/health: Minor incident including injury to one or more individuals. Objectives: Failure to achieve team plan objectives.
<b>Serious (2)</b>	Service delivery/performance: Service disruption 2 to 5 days. Financial: Financial loss up to 10% of budget. Reputation: Adverse local media coverage/multiple service user/stakeholder complaints. Legal/statutory: Litigation claimable fine between £5000 and £50,000. Safety/health: Significant injury or illness causing short-term disability to one or more persons. Objectives: Failure to achieve one or more service plan objectives.
<b>Major (4)</b>	Service delivery/performance: Service disruption > 1 - 4 weeks. Financial: Financial loss up to 20% of budget. Reputation: Adverse national media coverage 1 to 3 days. Legal/statutory: Litigation claimable fine between £50,000 and £500,000. Safety/health: Major injury or illness/disease causing long-term disability to one or more people objectives: Failure to achieve a strategic plan objective.
<b>Extreme (8)</b>	Service delivery/performance: Service disruption > 4 weeks. Financial: Financial loss up to 35% of budget. Reputation: National publicity more than three days. Possible resignation leading member or chief officer. Legal/statutory: Multiple civil or criminal suits. Litigation claim or find in excess of £500,000. Safety/health: Fatality or life-threatening illness/disease (e.g. mesothelioma) to one or more persons. Objectives: Failure to achieve a major corporate objective.

### Risk Scoring Grid

		Impact			
Likelihood	X	Minor (1)	Serious (2)	Major (4)	Extreme (8)
	Likely (4)	4 Green	8 Amber	16 Red	32 Red
	Possible (3)	3 Green	6 Amber	12 Amber	24 Red
	Unlikely (2)	2 Green	4 Green	8 Amber	16 Red
	Rare (1)	1 Green	2 Green	4 Green	8 Amber

### Risk Definitions

<b>RED</b>	Urgent action required to reduce rating
<b>AMBER</b>	Action required to maintain or reduce rating
<b>GREEN</b>	Action required to maintain rating

This is an extract from the City of London Corporate Risk Management Strategy, published in May 2014

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## Appendix 2 – Epping Forest Risk Register

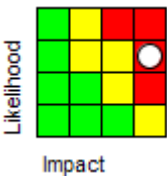
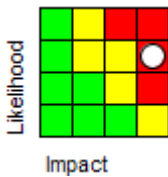

### OSD Epping Forest Risk Register

Report Author: Martin Falder

Generated on: 01 July 2021



Rows are sorted by Risk Score

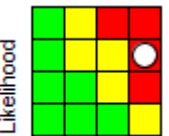


Risk no, title, creation date, owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date/Risk Approach	Current Risk score change indicator
<b>OSD EF 002</b> <b>Decline in Assets condition</b> <b>09-25</b>	<b>Causes:</b> Poor maintenance, failure to implement recommendations. <b>Event:</b> Failure to meet statutory regulations and checks. Buildings deteriorate to unusable/unsafe condition. <b>Impact:</b> Poor condition of Assets, loss of value, cost of repair. Fines from Local Authority, and other statutory bodies.		24	Investigating investment opportunities for the Warren House for long-term sustainable use. Investment in buildings from local risk is slow but proceeding. CWP investment has been significantly reduced below the levels reported last year. This risk therefore remains at Red and potentially escalating. We are working closely with CSD for more detailed asset management planning.  Several significant assets are in decline and works have revealed further unseen dilapidations we do not have resources currently planned to address. The target score remains at Red, to indicate that we are aiming to maintain our current position based on existing budgets and do not anticipate significant improvement in the coming year.		24	31-Mar-2022	

## Appendix 2 – Epping Forest Risk Register

19-Aug-2015 Paul Thomson				22 Jun 2021				Constant
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Action no	Action description	Latest Note	Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
OSD EF 002 d	Schedule of statutory checks and visits held and carried out by CS or delegated to site	Fire risk assessments and legionella testing reprogrammed during COVID-19 with formal sign-off required prior to bringing buildings back into service. This is being actively managed as buildings return to use.	Jo Hurst	22-Jun-2021	31-Mar-2022
OSD EF 002 e	Joint inspection of all buildings including residential by site and CS to capture maintenance needs. Required annually	COVID complications have delayed this; it is being prioritised for second half of 2021. New schedule and priorities are being worked up at present.	Jo Hurst	22-Jun-2021	31-Mar-2022
OSD EF 002 g	Put actions and processes in place that ensures the upkeep and development of the site.	Continued progress on minor improvements including some additional drainage. Several minor works have been completed locally, particularly around fire safety. However, the replacement of the roof on the small barn postponed further under CWP, with no future date identified.	Jeremy Dagley	22-Jun-2021	31-Mar-2022
OSD EF 002 i	Seek capital funding for essential works to Aldersbrook changing facilities to meet safeguarding standards.	RASC supportive of project, but delayed significantly due to COVID and other factors. Project timeline is being reassessed.	Jacqueline Eggleston	22-Jun-2021	31-Mar-2022

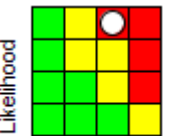
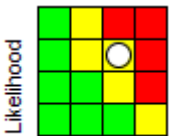

## Appendix 2 – Epping Forest Risk Register

Risk no, title, creation date, owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date/Risk Approach	Current Risk score change indicator
<b>OSD EF 004 Raised Reservoirs</b>  19-Aug-2015 Paul Thomson	<b>Causes:</b> Inadequate design, insufficient prescribed maintenance, leaks compromising dam integrity, failure to implement Panel Engineer's Recommendations, failure to keep dams clear of vegetation; failure to maintain Blue Books, failure to evaluate large water body capacities; disputed ownership/responsibility for one LRR <b>Event:</b> Severe rainfall event resulting in overtopping of embankments, leading to erosion of dam and potential collapse <b>Impact:</b> Loss of life. Damage to downstream land/property. Litigation. Risk of prosecution. Reputational harm. Damage to/loss of habitat and associated rare species. Fines from EA	 Likelihood Impact	24	No change to current risk score. Works are being progressed to tender at Birch Hall Park and Baldwins Pond, but we do not expect to begin works this year. Planning permission has been received for Birch Hall Park. Target date has been pushed to October 2023 to reflect this timeline.  <b>22 Jun 2021</b>	 Likelihood Impact	4	31-Oct-2023	  Constant
							Reduce	

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Action no	Action description	Latest Note		Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
OSD EF 004 a	Statutory inspection visits by engineer - 6 monthly in May and October	Inspections completed on schedule as agreed with the panel engineer.		Martin Newnham; Geoff Sinclair	22-Jun-2021	31-Mar-2022
OSD EF 004 c	Weekly inspection of reservoirs / dam.	Ongoing action. Blue books being completed at agreed intervals.		Martin Newnham	22-Jun-2021	08-Apr-2022
OSD EF 004 e	Undertake scoping evaluations for Baldwins Pond and Birch Hall Park Pond	As per main update.		Geoff Sinclair	22-Jun-2021	31-Oct-2023
OSD EF 004 f	Rookery Wood, Tudor Square Pond actions. Copped Hall: DBE have carried out assessment works of the in-place dam structure and LiDAR mapping.	DBE to fund and plan maintenance works. No plans to fund at the moment, so remains in progress. However, we are relatedly looking at further survey work on heritage value with Historic England from July 2021 to explore options on the site and possible funding. This may have medium-term implications beyond 2024 for beginning to access site and explore modifying the earthworks in the long term. No funding from CWP at present.  This will be linked to Copped Hall Conservation Management Plan which has been completed and is currently out for consultation.		Geoff Sinclair	22-Jun-2021	31-Mar-2022

## Appendix 2 – Epping Forest Risk Register

Risk no, title, creation date, owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date/Risk Approach	Current Risk score change indicator
<b>OSD EF 008 Invasive Non Native Species (INNS)</b>  19-Aug-2015 Paul Thomson	<b>Causes:</b> Lack of adequate controls on international trade encourages transmission of invasive non-native species; inadequate site biosecurity often through conscious public release of INNS within Forest <b>Event:</b> Sites become occupied by INNS which can lead to the decline, hybridisation or loss of key native species due to out-competition/disease transmission. Some INNs have health protection issues particularly moths producing urticating hairs and terrapins carrying <i>Salmonella</i> (DT 191a) <b>Impact:</b> loss or decline of key species; temporary site closures; increased costs of monitoring and control. Threat to existing conservation status of sites.	 Likelihood Impact	<b>16</b>	OPM risk remains red over summer, with the hope to reduce to amber over winter. This is a seasonal risk. Other INNS are being monitored as usual.  Spraying has been completed. Survey work began in June.  <b>01 Jul 2021</b>	 Likelihood Impact	<b>12</b>	01-Nov-2021	 Constant
							Reduce	

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Action no	Action description	Latest Note	Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
OSD EF 008 c	Develop an INNS policy - particular focus on OPM, although other pathogens and areas of concern to be tackled.	No further updates. As part of the business plan, INNS policy is due for completion and review by 2022. There are a few new species to be considered as part of that overall policy. Resources will be considered once this is complete.	Jeremy Dagley	22-Jun-2021	01-Oct-2022
OSD EF 008 g	This action tracks work done to mitigate the spread of Oak Processionary Moth in Epping Forest.	As per main update note.	Jeremy Dagley	22-Jun-2021	01-Nov-2021



## Appendix 2 – Epping Forest Risk Register

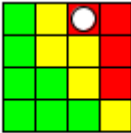
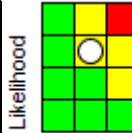

Risk no, title, creation date, owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date/Risk Approach	Current Risk score change indicator
<b>OSD EF 012</b> <b>Loss of Forest Land and/or concession of prescriptive rights</b>  <div>Page 29</div>	<b>Causes:</b> Lack of single definitive reference point for Epping Forest boundaries and accesses. <b>Event:</b> Failure to recognise encroachments or legal limitation by the failure to act within a reasonable period of time. <b>Impact:</b> compromising statutory responsibility through loss of Forest Land to encroachment; concession of prescriptive rights and loss of potential income; significant costs and jeopardy of litigation in recovering rights; harm to City of London's reputation as Conservators	<div>Likelihood</div> <div>Impact</div>	<b>16</b>	<p>The risk remains at the same level. We have not achieved target to reach Amber this year due to test case issues (below) and lack of resources in terms of completing on-site surveys. Resources have been diverted for COVID-related site/visitor management. Position is improving, however, and we hope to get to Amber within 18 months, provided resources are available.</p> <p>Test case has unfortunately not progressed due to concerns expressed by City Solicitors. Therefore, a different test case is being considered.</p> <p>Access audit phase one (desk-based review) has been completed. However, over half the 38 compartments remain to have a ground-truthing field visits to assess the issues with access on the ground. Therefore, risk remains of potential prescriptive rights being developed. Resources to ensure this survey takes place will need to be reviewed as part of TOM in early 2022.</p>	<div>Likelihood</div> <div>Impact</div>	<b>12</b>	01-Dec-2022	
							Reduce	
19-Aug-2015 Paul Thomson				22 Jun 2021				Constant

Action no	Action description	Latest Note			Action	Latest Note	Due Date
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## Appendix 2 – Epping Forest Risk Register

			owner	Date	
OSD EF 012 b	Establish timetable to undertake sequence of audits and complete audits of all 38 Forest compartments.	As per main update.	Jeremy Dagley; Sue Rigley	22-Jun-2021	01-Dec-2022
OSD EF 012 c	Keeper team to undertake audits. this will be cyclical and ongoing	Ongoing action, as per main update.	Martin Newnham	22-Jun-2021	01-Dec-2022
OSD EF 012 d	Work with City Surveyors and Comptrollers and Solicitors department to consider if legal action is required to settle disputes. Ongoing	As per main update.	Sue Rigley	22-Jun-2021	01-Dec-2022

## Appendix 2 – Epping Forest Risk Register

Risk no, title, creation date, owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date/Risk Approach	Current Risk score change indicator
<b>OSD EF 013</b> <b>Loss of knowledge in skilled staff/Difficulties in recruitment</b>  <b>Page 31</b> Aug-2015 Paul Thomson	<b>Cause:</b> Previous reliance on memory-based rather than documentary records; Retirements amongst ageing workforce; Remuneration and benefits package increasing uncompetitive for market sector <b>Event:</b> Loss of knowledge and skills. <b>Impact:</b> Extra training needs, difficulty in recruitment or induction of new staff	 Likelihood Impact	<b>16</b>	Risk has increased due to loss of skilled staff related to TOM and inability to recruit beyond FTCs. This risk is an active issue at present. Skilled staff are being lost and we are unable to recruit to certain roles.  Target to reduce to Amber by March of next year, by which time TOM should have been progressed.  Talent management strategy listed as management plan action by end of 2021.  <b>22 Jun 2021</b>	 Likelihood Impact	<b>6</b>	31-Mar-2022	  Increasing
							Reduce	

Action no	Action description	Latest Note		Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
OSD EF 013 a	Identify key roles where officers are nearing retirement or expressing development needs or desire to leave COL/Open Spaces Review this data annually via PDR's and one to one's Succession plan drawn up by DMT and agreed by Superintendent/HR support for Key roles	Talent management strategy is being worked on, per main update. At least four members of staff have been lost from key roles in the past three months.		Jo Hurst	22-Jun-2021	31-Mar-2022
OSD EF 013 b	Increase documentation of memory based knowledge Ensure that information needed for emergency situations and out of hours is written down forming part of a pack Move collected data onto the GIS system	CRM system is being actively pursued at present.		Jo Hurst; Martin Newnham	22-Jun-2021	31-Mar-2022
OSD EF 013 c	Ability to recruit overlapping positions to allow transfer of knowledge. Budgetary consideration and proactive support	Details to be articulated in talent management strategy, but will always be budgetary constraints and decisions taken on case-by-case basis.		Jo Hurst	22-Jun-2021	31-Mar-2022

Appendix 2 – Epping Forest Risk Register

	from HR.				
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19-Aug-2015  
Paul Thomson

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## Appendix 2 – Epping Forest Risk Register

	ISA and sharing enforcement action.				
OSD EF 015 e	Multi disciplinary approach to anti-social behaviour.	Antisocial behaviour will be monitored over the busy summer period. We hope for a reduction in issues compared to last summer as other venues reopen, but this is not guaranteed, and we will continue to work actively to manage this with local services.	Martin Newnham	22-Jun-2021	31-Oct-2021
OSD EF 015 f	Develop stronger links and become a trusted partner with EFDC, LBWF, LBR and LBN. New relationships with officers in local authorities need creating/developing following staff changes Ongoing action	This has been very successful during the COVID period. Head Keeper has been able to use links to other authorities to ensure we have a better co-ordinated response to antisocial behaviour.	Martin Newnham	22-Jun-2021	31-Oct-2021
OSD EF 015 g	Cycling / horse-riding / walking endangering others with anti-social activity.	Ongoing action. We seek to address this through conflict resolution and joint partnership working.	Martin Newnham	22-Jun-2021	31-Oct-2021

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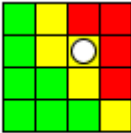
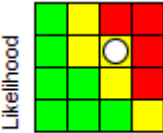

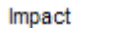
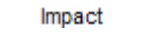
Page 35

## Appendix 2 – Epping Forest Risk Register

Action no	Action description	Latest Note	Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
OSD EF 007 a	Implement actions arising from Massaria survey. Survey to be undertaken twice yearly	Tree safety programme has been significantly affected this year but is being prioritised for second half of 2021. Survey work has been completed. Massaria items are high priority and will take place on programme.	Geoff Sinclair	22-Jun-2021	31-Mar-2022
OSD EF 007 d	Sudden Oak Death - Yearly inspection of all Rhododendron and Larch. Tender of Larch removal (now completed). To be done yearly	As per main update.	Jeremy Dagley	22-Jun-2021	31-Mar-2022
OSD EF 007 e	Need to develop a biosecurity policy and then implement.	Biosecurity position statement was completed. Biosecurity measures remain in place for Ramorum at Warren Plantation, however wider biosecurity measures for other pathogens are yet to be determined or agreed. A report is due by end 2021.	Jeremy Dagley	22-Jun-2021	31-Mar-2022



## Appendix 2 – Epping Forest Risk Register

Risk no, title, creation date, owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date/Risk Approach	Current Risk score change indicator
OSD EF 010 Development Consents close to Forest Land	<p><b>Causes:</b> Lack of suitable protections in EF Acts; Planning Authorities obligations to meet housing targets. Failure to monitor and challenge housing and other development plans. Lack of resources to employ specialist support or carry out necessary monitoring/research</p> <p><b>Event:</b> Large housing; transport infrastructure or other developments on land affecting Epping Forest.</p> <p><b>Impact:</b> Change in character to the context and setting of Forest Land. Potential increase in visitor numbers and recreational pressure. Increased in air, light and noise pollution and consequent potential decline in biodiversity and tranquillity. Further increases in traffic volumes on local road network.</p>	 <p>Likelihood</p>	12	<p>The Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) Local Plan HRA has now been fully updated in relation to air pollution. An Air Pollution Mitigation Strategy (APMS) was approved by EFDC full council in Feb 2021. Nonetheless elements of this APMS remain to be resolved due to controversy about their introduction or effectiveness - namely the Clean Air Zone - and development sites still present an air quality risk as a result. A Green &amp; Blue Infrastructure Strategy was approved in April 2021 by EFDC but concerns remain about the lack of alternative greenspace (SANGS) provision to protect the Forest from increased recreational pressure. The London Borough of Waltham Forest (LBWF) Local Plan Submission Version has provision for SANGS and provisional review of SANGS options with Natural England appears to show that there is scope for effective network of alternative sites.</p> <p>However, various proposed residential developments, like Whipps X Hospital site, have minimal provision or opportunity for SANGS and recreational impacts on the Forest could be severe if these residential allocations approved unmodified. At present the risk remains <i>Amber</i> and unchanged with London Borough of Enfield Plan now just up for review and comment. Negotiations through</p>	 <p>Likelihood</p>	12	31-Oct-2021	
		 <p>Impact</p>			 <p>Impact</p>			

## Appendix 2 – Epping Forest Risk Register

19-Aug-2015 Paul Thomson				the SAC Mitigation Oversight Group remain a positive avenue to achieve mitigation but housing allocations as set out remain a threat to the integrity of the Forest.  <b>22 Jun 2021</b>			Reduce	Constant
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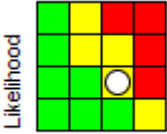
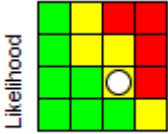

Action no	Action description	Latest Note	Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
OSD EF 010 a	Epping Forest DC local plan - Attend meetings and respond to consultation on the local plan so that can influence the content of the plan and the Memorandum of Understanding between EFDC and Natural England LB Waltham Forest core strategy and other LA actions plans - respond to any further consultation.	Good progress as the SAC oversight group has now met monthly since January 2021. We are now close to agreeing governance, finance, and a package of mitigation measures. There are nine local authorities involved and Natural England is chairing the meetings with the full involvement of the GLA.	Jeremy Dagley	22-Jun-2021	31-Mar-2022
OSD EF 010 c	Development and ongoing work on the Forest Transport Strategy	Limited progress has been made in relation to specific sustainable transport initiatives. Dialogue has begun with EFDC's Sustainable Transport Manager (appointed 2020) with a view to engaging with the highways authorities, both London and Essex in the near future on a more integrated strategy. An element of this is developing in the form of a proposed clean air zone within EFDC's area.	Jeremy Dagley	22-Jun-2021	31-Mar-2022



## Appendix 2 – Epping Forest Risk Register

		also be carefully examined.			
OSD EF 016 e	Working to budget reduction targets.	Savings programmed in to this financial year rely heavily on income from car parking but EF still has about £35k an unallocated savings.	Paul Thomson	22-Jun-2021	31-Mar-2022

## Appendix 2 – Epping Forest Risk Register

Risk no, title, creation date, owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date/Risk Approach	Current Risk score change indicator
<b>OSD EF 003 Declining Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)/Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Condition</b>  <div>Page 41</div>	<b>Causes:</b> Lack of appropriate habitat & tree management (pollarding) and lack of grazing pressure; Invasive Non Native Species (INNS); anthropogenic nitrogen deposition; atmospheric pollution; and climate change. <b>Event:</b> Unfavourable assessment by Natural England. <b>Impact:</b> Decrease in % SSSI area in favourable condition (currently 35.42%); decrease in %SSSI area in unfavourable recovering (currently 48.24%); loss of current (HLS) and future grant (e.g. CSS) funding; harm to City's reputation. Fines from Natural England and Defra	 Likelihood Impact	8	10-year Countryside Stewardship Agreement (Forest 1) for part of the SSSI has been achieved, as of June 2020. Part of the work has been completed already (February 2020).  Further tree works are to begin later in summer 2021 following some delays due to further negotiations with the Rural Payments Agency. Conservation grazing is set to cover more sites during 2021 and this should see an improvement in the grassland management of those sites within the SSSI. The timetable for Forest 2 is likely to be for application in 2023.  Site has had significant damage to the fabric of the SSSI/SAC due to increased visitor numbers during COVID, with a rise of around 300%. This is also recognised as a departmental COVID risk. Damage to entrances and ride edges has been significant. Pathways have proliferated in the wooded areas.  <b>22 Jun 2021</b>	 Likelihood Impact	8	31-Mar-2022	 Constant
							Reduce	
19-Aug-2015 Paul Thomson								

Action no	Action description	Latest Note			Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
OSD EF 003 a	Make CSS grant application to avoid loss of this vital	This item is covered in the main update. Date for application is fixed at 2023 rather than 2022.			Jeremy	22-Jun-	31-Mar-

## Appendix 2 – Epping Forest Risk Register

	income stream whilst ensuring habitat management targets sustainable across 10-year agreement period		Dagley	2021	2022
OSD EF 003 b	Create plan of action for 5 compartments within existing resources to ensure consideration of priorities for CSS application	Natural England officers have still been unable to visit due to COVID, so we remain in the same position on these.	Jeremy Dagley	22-Jun-2021	31-Mar-2022
OSD EF 003 c	Remodel GEP as in-house operation to meet conservation objectives of approved Grazing Strategy building up number of livestock to optimise income and environmental benefits.	Redraft is aiming to go to October 2021 Consultative Committee and November full Committee. The main improvement in the meantime has been the replacement of the ten year old wire-based invisible fence system with a GPS invisible fence system which will see major improvements in the number of areas grazed, number of grazing days, and security of the cattle.	Jeremy Dagley	22-Jun-2021	31-Mar-2022

## Appendix 2 – Epping Forest Risk Register

Risk no, title, creation date, owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date/Risk Approach	Current Risk score change indicator
<b>OSD EF 011 Wanstead Park – Heritage at Risk Register</b>  14 Aug-2015 Paul Thomson	<b>Causes:</b> Grade II* Registered Park and Garden Wanstead Park has been on the “Heritage at Risk” register since 2009, listed as in declining condition. Further restoration by four landowners is required to halt deterioration in condition and secure continued abstraction licence. <b>Event:</b> Failure to complete <b>Impact:</b> Continuing deterioration of at risk heritage features; education and interpretation opportunities missed; deteriorating state impacts negatively on the City’s reputation Fines from English Heritage in respect of listed buildings	 Likelihood Impact	8	This remains at risk with Historic England. However, there have been productive meetings with HE and the Wanstead Park Liaison Group. A detailed plan for the restoration of the Grotto (a listed building) is being worked up in detail.  An application for Countryside Stewardship for 2023 is being actively considered, but it remains to be clarified as to whether this CSS application can be done separately from Forest 2, or if it has to be part of that application.  <b>22 Jun 2021</b>	 Likelihood Impact	8	31-Mar-2022	 Constant

Action no	Action description	Latest Note			Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
OSD EF 011 b	Identify potential funding / partners and submit bid. Funders may include HLF	Funding is being worked on through Wanstead Park Project Board. Otherwise, as per main update.			Paul Thomson	22-Jun-2021	31-Mar-2022

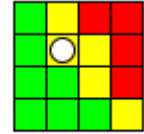
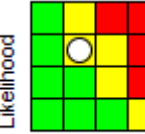
## Appendix 2 – Epping Forest Risk Register

Risk no, title, creation date, owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date/Risk Approach	Current Risk score change indicator
<b>OSD EF 014</b> <b>Major Incident resulting in prolonged 'Access Denial'</b>  <div>Page 44</div>	<b>Causes:</b> Pandemic; Human error, mechanical failure or deliberate act of terrorism. <b>Event:</b> Major incident, terrorism,; evacuation of East London; aircraft crash; failure of underground services; major pollution incident from M25 Pollution from septic tanks or cattle buildings. <b>Impact:</b> damage to and loss of Forest habitat; threat to existing conservation status of sites; reduced income from licensees unable to trade; costs of remediation and staff engagement. Fines from EA for pollution incidents		8	Risk reduced to Amber, as we have successfully managed the COVID-related issues on this risk. Many learning points from this experience are being incorporated into our action plans and BAU routines.  Target has raised to current position, in recognition of how this will remain an active issue in the coming years. We are confident that our work in this area has been successful, but will continue to assess protocols going forward.  <b>22 Jun 2021</b>		8	31-Mar-2022	
							Reduce	

Action no	Action description	Latest Note			Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
OSD EF 014 a	This action covers work to review and update the Emergency Plan.	Plan is in place, having been mobilised last year. Learning points from COVID-related access denial issues are being gathered in preparation for the next review cycle.			Martin Newnham	01-Jul-2021	31-Mar-2022



## Appendix 2 – Epping Forest Risk Register

Risk no, title, creation date, owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date/Risk Approach	Current Risk score change indicator
<b>OSD EF 001</b> <b>Increase in Health and Safety incidents/Catastrophic Health &amp; Safety failure</b>  19 Aug-2015 Paul Thomson	<b>Causes:</b> Poor understanding and/or delivery of Health and Safety policies and procedures; Failure to link work activity with adequate procedures; risk assessments and safe systems of work not undertaken or completed incorrectly; inadequate appropriate training; failure to implement the results of audits. <b>Event:</b> Staff, volunteers contractors or licensees undertake unsafe working practices <b>Impact:</b> Injury or death of staff, volunteer(s), contractor(s) or licensee(s), volunteer or member of the public. Prosecution by HSE and/or Police; increased insurance premiums; harm to City's reputation. Fine from HSE	 Likelihood Impact	<b>6</b>	This continues to be actively managed as a BAU item, and remains at the same level as previously.  Tree survey was completed last year but works arising, particularly at the amber zones, have not been completed due to COVID-related staff pressure. These are unlikely to be completed this year. Red zones are being prioritised. This may increase the risk score if not addressed in the coming year.  <b>22 Jun 2021</b>	 Likelihood Impact	<b>6</b>	31-Mar-2022	Constant
							Reduce	

Action no	Action description	Latest Note			Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
OSD EF 001 c	Staff roles linked to essential and desirable training needs. Continual and annual review	H&S training (operational) system is in place and established. Expiring training known in advance and scheduled. Some training items were delayed or deprioritised due to COVID-related complications. Training matrix link to induction and new starters is in place but still embedding as BAU.			Jo Hurst	22-Jun-2021	31-Mar-2022
OSD EF 001 e	Clear role and responsibilities set out in documentation and reinforced by training. Structure of local H&S meeting arrangements cascading down decisions, issues, responsibilities and communications. Ongoing action	All outlined and clarified in the agreed local H&S statement. Ongoing action.			Paul Thomson	22-Jun-2021	31-Mar-2022
OSD EF 001 f	H&S checks undertaken annually for all refreshments and food outlets under licence in the forest, excluding ice cream vans	Annual licensee checks are underway. New tenancies are being negotiated. We are concentrating on catering outlets where there are specific issues around hygiene ratings and other issues. Intent is to extend to all commercial tenants. Following incident at fairground June 2021, we are reviewing responsibilities and appropriate levels of monitoring, working with Local Authority Safety Advisory Group.			Jo Hurst	22-Jun-2021	31-Mar-2022



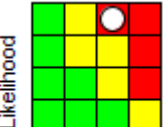
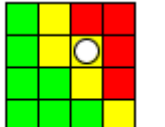

## Appendix 2 – Epping Forest Risk Register

OSD EF 009 h	Grass & Heathland Fire	Nine site-specific wildfire response plans have been signed off by the respective Fire & Rescue Services. However, site inspections by junior fire officers are still planned at the London sites to check access routes and other infrastructure in liaison with Forest Keepers. With Essex Fire & Rescue Service, a July/August site visit has been arranged to examine infrastructure of heathland sites.	Martin Newnham	22-Jun-2021	01-Nov-2021
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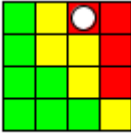
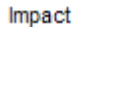
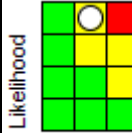
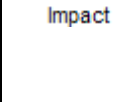



Risk no, title, creation date, owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date/Risk Approach	Current Risk score change indicator
<b>Page 49</b> <b>2020 TC 004</b> <b>Tree Diseases and Other Pests</b>	<b>Causes:</b> Inadequate biosecurity, purchase or transfer of infected, plants, soil and animals. 'Natural' spread of pests and diseases from neighbouring areas e.g. Oak Processionary Moth and Foot and Mouth <b>Event:</b> Sites become infected by animal, plant or tree diseases <b>Impact:</b> Service capability disrupted, ineffective use of staff resources, damage to corporate reputation, loss of species, site closures (temp) and associated access, increased costs for reactive maintenance. Threat to existing conservation status of sites, particularly those with woodland habitats.	 Likelihood Impact	16	This risk remains seasonal; it increases to red during summer to reflect OPM, and then reduces to Amber in winter. Winter target score has increased slightly to recognise ongoing OPM risk during the winter. OPM is now on Stoke Common. Other pests and diseases are reflected below.  Ash die-back: Local tree safety inspections would consider this a low risk locally due to active zoning and targeted work. There are ongoing biosecurity concerns, however.	 Likelihood Impact	12	01-Dec-2021	
10-Jun-2015 Andy Barnard				23 Jun 2021			Reduce	Constant

## Appendix 3 – The Commons Risk Register




Action no	Action description	Latest Note	Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
OSD TC 004 a	Ensure staff training is kept updated to enable timely identification of pest and knowledge of correct treatment/prevention.	Ongoing. Training needs reviewed at regular team meetings, and proactively promoted via HSIG and other corporate boards.  Needs also reviews at 6 monthly divisional H&S meetings.	Allan Cameron; Martin Hartup; Andy Thwaites	23-Jun-2021	31-Mar-2022
OSD TC 004 b	Annual tree inspections undertaken through qualified personnel	Ongoing. Inspections continue on a schedule basis or if-and-when the need arises.	Allan Cameron; Martin Hartup; Andy Thwaites	23-Jun-2021	31-Mar-2022
OSD TC 004 c	Active involvement with leading partners such as Forestry Commission and Natural England	Ongoing.	Allan Cameron; Martin Hartup; Andy Thwaites	23-Jun-2021	31-Mar-2022
OSD TC 004 d	Measures in place for staff, volunteers and contractors including public messages	Ongoing. Tick / lyme disease information cards produced for volunteers / contractors / visitors to Ashted Common.	Allan Cameron; Martin Hartup; Andy Thwaites	23-Jun-2021	31-Mar-2022
OSD TC 004 e	Review of divisional tree Safety Policy tri-annually and local site policy annually.	Divisional policy reviewed every three years. Next due in July 2021. Local site policy review annually (July 2021).	Allan Cameron; Martin Hartup; Andy Thwaites	23-Jun-2021	01-Aug-2021
OSD TC 004 f	Actions for the management of OPM at Stoke Common.	OPM management plan developed and implemented for Stoke Common in summer 2021 in line with Natural England advice / restriction and Forestry Commission requirements - survey and nest removal undertaken as required - ongoing.	Martin Hartup	23-Jun-2021	31-Mar-2022

## Appendix 3 – The Commons Risk Register

Risk no, title, creation date, owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date/Risk Approach	Current Risk score change indicator
<b>OSD TC 007 Rural Payment Agency Grants</b>  10-Jun-2015 Andy Barnard	<b>Causes:</b> Amendments to EU 'Common Agriculture Policy' legislation/UK interpretation. <b>Event:</b> Reduction in direct grant available from the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) to deliver agricultural/conservation related services across the Division. <b>Impact:</b> Reduction or cessation of agricultural/conservation services. Reduction of income direct and indirect. Reduction/loss of biodiversity (legal implications); reductions in recreational access due to reduction/cessation of grazing activities.	 Likelihood  Impact	16	Form submission is in process for some sites. Application process is ongoing. Further update in actions below.  RPA is reassessing agreed grant. There is the potential to reduce it by 75% which would cause a significant funding gap. We are exploring options in this area, but the risk has risen to Red, 16 to reflect the significant financial impact this could cause.  <b>24 Jun 2021</b>	 Likelihood  Impact	8	31-Mar-2022  Reduce	  Increasing

Action no	Action description	Latest Note			Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
OSD TC 007 a	Seek clarity/advice from RPA on the above Monitor review of latest RPA advice and procedures	Currently drafting Countryside Stewardship grant applications for Ashted Common and West Wickham & Coulsdon Commons. This leaves a funding vacuum of 12 months.			Allan Cameron; Martin Hartup; Andy Thwaites	23-Jun-2021	30-Mar-2022
OSD TC 007 c	Seek clarity/advice from RPA/Natural England (NE) and agree any possible mitigation to limit the negative impacts of proposed changes in payments, for the existing Countryside Stewardship Scheme (CSS) agreement, for Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common (BBSC).	A 10 year CSS grant funding agreement was secured for BBSC in 2019/20 – however in 2021 the RPA has revised guidance criteria on one grant item - BE6, payments relating to old/veteran tree works. These changes could result in a reduction in annual grant payments to BBSC of around 75% for the next 8 years. This would result in serious and ongoing funding gap of around £40k/year. Negotiations to try and resolve /mitigate this position are in progress with Natural England and the RPA, however it is uncertain that the negotiations will fully achieve the highlighted shortfall, if at all.			Martin Hartup	24-Jun-2021	31-Mar-2022

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Risk no, title, creation date, owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date/Risk Approach	Current Risk score change indicator
<b>OSD TC 002 Local Planning Issues</b>  09-Jun-2015 Emily Barnard	<b>Causes:</b> Pressure on Planning Authorities to meet housing targets. Failure to monitor and challenge housing and other development plans. Lack of partnership working with Planning Authorities inclusion in Local Development Plans. Lack of resources to employ specialist support or carry out necessary monitoring/research <b>Event:</b> Large housing or other developments on land affecting the Open Spaces. <b>Impact:</b> Increase in visitor numbers and general recreation pressure. Potential decline in biodiversity due to disturbance and habitat quality. Increased in air, light and noise pollution. Decrease in water availability. Increased hydrological pollution risk. Increased traffic on local road network.	 Likelihood Impact	12	Ongoing - local plans continue to be developed, and are scrutinised and commented on by officers from the Commons, when required. Staffing capacity is currently able to manage the volume of work associated with commenting on local plans, but staff are under significant pressure and there may be issues with staff resource in future. In the future this risk may increase again as volume increases / capacity reduces.  We accept the risk at the current level.  <b>23 Jun 2021</b>	 Likelihood Impact	12	31-Mar-2022	  Constant
							Reduce	

Action no	Action description	Latest Note	Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
OSD TC 002 a	Inclusion in core strategy planning documents or equivalent. Close partnership working with local planning authorities Active monitoring of planning applications with responses as appropriate All ongoing and/or as and when	Monitoring activity continues. Ongoing action. Mitigation strategy with Bucks council completed and projects within in underway. Plan / mitigation strategy still a work in progress with Slough BC. Watching brief with other local authorities.	Helen Read	23-Jun-2021	31-Mar-2022
OSD TC 002 b	Active monitoring of pollution where possible Active monitoring of environmental impacts - where possible Undertake research - where appropriate and where	Planning for implementation of section 106 funded project on air quality work.	Helen Read	23-Jun-2021	31-Mar-2022




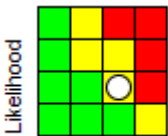

Appendix 3 – The Commons Risk Register

	resources allow Ongoing and/or as and when.				
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## Appendix 3 – The Commons Risk Register

Risk no, title, creation date, owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date/Risk Approach	Current Risk score change indicator
<b>OSD TC 012 Farthing Downs Cattle Grid</b>  30-Jan-2020	<b>Causes:</b> A cattle grid within Farthing Downs is at risk of failing. Traffic movements, weather events, natural environment mean it is at the end of its lifespan. <b>Event:</b> Structural failure of asset leading to a major accident. <b>Impact:</b> Continuing deterioration of features; reputational damage; catastrophic injury or death.	 Likelihood Impact	<b>12</b>	Risk remains, but will now be managed by the City Surveyors Department under their 20-year CWP.  Risk proposed for removal from The Commons risk register.  <b>23 Jun 2021</b>	 Likelihood Impact	<b>4</b>	01-Apr-2021	 Constant

## Appendix 3 – The Commons Risk Register


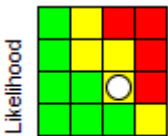

Risk no, title, creation date, owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date/Risk Approach	Current Risk score change indicator
<b>OSD TC 001 Health and Safety Failure</b>  09-Jun-2015 Andy Barnard	<b>Causes:</b> Poor understanding and/or delivery of Health and Safety policies, procedures and safe systems of work: inadequate training, failure to implement the results of audits, dynamic risk assessments not undertaken <b>Event:</b> Staff, volunteers or contractors undertake unsafe working practices <b>Impact:</b> Injury or death of staff, contractor, volunteer or member of the public	 Likelihood Impact	8	This risk has reduced from a 12 as systems are now in place for the management of COVID-related pressures, which have reduced significantly since this time last year.  Nonetheless, staffing issues remain and if these are not tackled in the coming year there is a risk that this will increase to 12 again.  <b>23 Jun 2021</b>	 Likelihood Impact	8	31-Mar-2022	  Decreasing
							Reduce	

Action no	Action description	Latest Note		Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
OSD TC 001 a	Adequate and appropriate training for staff and volunteers - link to PDR's (all line managers) Links to other departmental service providers in OSD Clear and appropriate communication Ongoing	This is an ongoing action.  Review of H & S Action Plan at monthly SMT meetings and Quarterly Divisional H & S meetings.  Attendance and reporting at quarterly departmental health and safety meetings.  This has been maintained over the past year, although pressure on staff has increased due to current situation.		Allan Cameron; Martin Hartup; Andy Thwaites	23-Jun-2021	31-Mar-2022
OSD TC 001 b	Avoid incident / accident arising from digging or insertion below ground that interferes with hazardous underground infrastructure through having relevant controls in place including: mapping of underground services, liaison with utility companies, local control of contractors' procedures, staff training and experience, corporate guidance for control of contractors, SLA with City Surveyor includes	Ongoing item.		Allan Cameron; Martin Hartup; Andy Thwaites	23-Jun-2021	31-Mar-2022

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	procedures for CS appointed contractors on site. Areas checked for service covers, location markers and recorded site information before breaking ground. Trained operatives use scanning equipment. Appropriate excavation tools and procedures used.				
OSD TC 001 c	Undertake quarterly reviews of the regular health and safety audits Ensure risk assessments and safe systems of work are up to date. Ongoing	Ongoing item.	Allan Cameron; Martin Hartup; Andy Thwaites	23-Jun- 2021	31-Mar- 2022

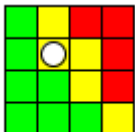
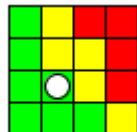

## Appendix 3 – The Commons Risk Register

Risk no, title, creation date, owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date/Risk Approach	Current Risk score change indicator
<b>OSD TC 005 Climate and Weather</b>  10-Jun-2015 Andy Barnard	<b>Causes:</b> Severe wind events, prolonged precipitation or restricted precipitation. May be Climate change influenced <b>Event:</b> Severe weather/climate impacts at one or more sites <b>Impact:</b> Service capability disrupted; fire, flood and storm events (potentially increasing in frequency); increased demand for staff resources to respond to incidents and maintain site safety; loss of species, temporary site closures and associated access; increased costs for reactive management. Injury or death to staff, visitors, contractors and volunteers. Damage/loss of rare/fragile habitats and species.	 Likelihood	8	Work on site continues to mitigate the impact of extreme weather events, although this will be monitored over the summer. We accept this at the current level of risk.  <b>23 Jun 2021</b>	 Likelihood	8	31-Mar-2022	 Constant
							Reduce	

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Action no	Action description	Latest Note		Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
OSD TC 005 a	Review and update plan bi-annually. Habitat fire management and monitoring policies and plans in place and link to staff training and local emergency services	Site maps currently under construction in collaboration with local fire services.		Allan Cameron; Martin Hartup; Andy Thwaites	23-Jun-2021	31-Mar-2022
OSD TC 005 b	Storm monitoring & management and closure policies across all sites linked to high staff awareness and training	The sites continue to monitor and respond to warnings of extreme weather.		Allan Cameron; Martin Hartup; Andy Thwaites	23-Jun-2021	31-Mar-2022
OSD TC 005 c	Understanding of the potential impacts of climate change on the open spaces Engagement in climate change research and debate	Ongoing research and dialogue continues. Work on carbon sequestration is being progressed.		Allan Cameron; Martin Hartup; Andy Thwaites	23-Jun-2021	31-Mar-2022

## Appendix 3 – The Commons Risk Register

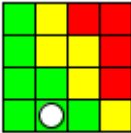
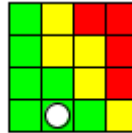

Risk no, title, creation date, owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date/Risk Approach	Current Risk score change indicator
<b>OSD TC 010 Kenley Revival Project – Conservation Works</b> 16-Apr-2019 Andy Barnard	<b>Causes:</b> Substandard works; materials failure; poor works specification, contract administration or workmanship. <b>Event:</b> Structural failure of conserved assets. <b>Impact:</b> Continuing deterioration of at risk heritage features; reputational damage; injury to person.	 Likelihood	6	Rectification schedule produced, agreed, and funded. Work due to commence during summer / autumn 2021. Project is extended to March 2022 to reflect new timeline.  <b>23 Jun 2021</b>	 Likelihood	4	01-Mar-2022	 Constant

Action no	Action description	Latest Note			Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
OSD TC 010 a	Rectification schedule to be implemented.	As per main update.			Andy Barnard	23-Jun-2021	01-Mar-2022

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Risk no, title, creation date, owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date/Risk Approach	Current Risk score change indicator
<b>OSD TC 011 Riddlesdown Quarry</b> 30-Jan-2020	<b>Causes:</b> Natural wear to rock face in the quarry as a result of erosion and land movements. Additionally, development beneath the rock face. <b>Event:</b> Structural failure of landscape feature. Collapse or rock fall from quarry cliff face through natural events and management operations. <b>Impact:</b> Continuing deterioration of landscape feature; reputational damage; injury or death to person.	 Likelihood	4	Target achieved. Work has been completed and risk is proposed for closure. <b>23 Jun 2021</b>	 Likelihood	4	30-Oct-2020	 Decreasing

## Appendix 3 – The Commons Risk Register

Risk no, title, creation date, owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date/Risk Approach	Current Risk score change indicator
<b>OSD TC 006 Pond Embankments, Burnham Beeches</b>  10-Jun-2015  Andy Barnard	<b>Causes:</b> Erosion, inadequate design quality, lack of maintenance, leaks <b>Event:</b> Severe rainfall event resulting in overtopping of embankments, leading to erosion and potential collapse <b>Impact:</b> Loss of life. Damage to downstream land/property. Litigation. Damage to/loss of habitat and associated rare species. Reputational harm.	 Likelihood	2	Leak has been identified and fixed on one of the pond embankments, reducing this risk to score 2. We will continue to report on this risk even as it remains at low level, as it has potential to escalate again.  <b>23 Jun 2021</b>	 Likelihood	2	31-Mar-2022	 Constant
							Reduce	

Action no	Action description	Latest Note			Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
OSD TC 006 a	Project development work on pond embankments.	Investigation works undertaken October 202 - March 2021. Leak and outflow repair plans to be drawn up by DBE officers and costings obtained to allow fundraising options to be explored.			Martin Hartup	23-Jun-2021	31-Dec-2022
OSD TC 006 b	Ongoing monitoring and inspection works.	All water bodies are now actively monitored by local team in line with annual H&S work programmes.			Martin Hartup	23-Jun-2021	31-Mar-2022



## Appendix 4 –Epping Forest Risk Scores & Targets

### Epping Forest Risks and Target Scores

<b>Likelihood</b>	<i>Likely (4)</i>		<b><i>EF 011</i></b>	<b>EF 008 EF 012 EF 013</b>	
	<i>Possible (3)</i>		<b><i>EF 001 EF 009 EF 013</i></b>	<b><i>EF 007 EF 008 EF 010 EF 012 EF 016</i></b>	<b><i>EF 002 EF 004</i></b>
	<i>Unlikely (2)</i>			<b><i>EF 003 EF 014</i></b>	<b><i>EF 015</i></b>
	<i>Rare (1)</i>			<b><i>EF 004</i></b>	
<b>OS EF Risks July 2021</b>		<i>Minor (1)</i>	<i>Serious (2)</i>	<i>Major (4)</i>	<i>Extreme (8)</i>
<b>Impact</b>					

- Bold** - Current Score  
*Italics* - Target Score  
**Bold Italics** - Current & Target Score Aligned

#### Risk Reference:

- EF 001 Increase in Health and Safety Incidents/Catastrophic Health & Safety failure
- EF 002 Decline in Assets Condition
- EF 003 Declining Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)/Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Condition
- EF 004 Raised Reservoirs
- EF 007 Pathogens
- EF 008 Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS)
- EF 009 Severe Weather Events
- EF 010 Development Consents close to Forest Land
- EF 011 Wanstead Park – Heritage at Risk Register
- EF 012 Loss of Forest Land and/or Concession of Prescriptive Rights
- EF 013 Loss of Knowledge in Skilled Staff/Difficulties in Recruitment
- EF 014 Major Incident Resulting in Prolonged 'Access Denial'
- EF 015 Public Behaviour
- EF 016 Financial Management and Loss of Income

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Appendix 5 – The Commons Risk Scores & Targets  
**The Commons Risks and Target Scores**

<b>Likelihood</b>	<i>Likely (4)</i>		<i>TC 007</i>	<b>TC 004 TC 007</b>	
	<i>Possible (3)</i>		<b>TC 010</b>	<i>TC 002 TC 004 TC 012</i>	
	<i>Unlikely (2)</i>		<i>TC 010 TC 011 TC 012</i>	<b>TC 001 TC 005</b>	
	<i>Rare (1)</i>		<b>TC 006</b>		
<b>OSD TC Risks July 2021</b>		<i>Minor (1)</i>	<i>Serious (2)</i>	<i>Major (4)</i>	<i>Extreme (8)</i>
		<b>Impact</b>			

**Bold** - Current Score  
*Italics* - Target Score  
**Bold Italics** - Current & Target Score Aligned

**Risk Reference:**

- TC 001 Health and Safety Failure
- TC 002 Local Planning Issues
- TC 004 Tree Diseases and Other Pests
- TC 005 Climate and Weather
- TC 006 Pond Embankments, Burnham Beeches
- TC 007 Rural Payment Agency Grants
- TC 010 Kenley Revival Project – Conservation Works
- TC 011 Riddlesdown Quarry
- TC 012 Farthing Downs Cattle Grid

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## Appendix 6 – Risks & Actions Relevant to Epping Forest & Commons Committee

### OSD COVID-19 Risks Relevant to Epping Forest & Commons Committee

Report Author: Martin Falder

Generated on: 24 June 2021



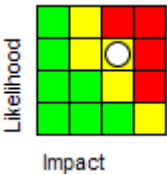
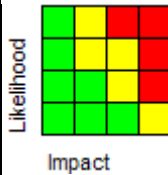

Rows are sorted by Risk Score

Risk no, title, creation date, owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date/Risk Approach	Current Risk score change indicator
<b>OSD19 SGPS Accelerated Long-term Damage to Sites (OSD)</b>  01-Dec-2020 Colin Buttery	<p><i>Cause:</i> Lockdown and tiered restrictions on leisure activities have resulted in a 300-500% increase in visitor numbers to Open Spaces sites since the start of the pandemic, with commensurate increase in littering and other antisocial behaviour.</p> <p><i>Event:</i> Long-term environmental damage, with a particular focus on protected landscapes and Sites of Special Scientific Interest which are not designed for such high visitor numbers.</p> <p><i>Impact:</i> Ecological and environmental damage; negative press coverage; loss of grants related to preservation; increased spend required to maintain sites / mitigate damage.</p>	<p>Likelihood</p> <p>Impact</p>	16	Damage to SAC and SSSI land has increased, especially in light of lockdown measures causing more people to visit. Risk score is commensurate to this damage. Measures are being considered to reduce visitor numbers, such as closing car parks.	<p>Likelihood</p> <p>Impact</p>	4	31-Mar-2022	
				Achievement of target score for 2022 is contingent upon funding and support for open space reinstatement after lockdown formally ends.  <b>21 Jun 2021</b>			Reduce	Constant
Action no	Action description	Latest Note			Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date	

## Appendix 6 – Risks & Actions Relevant to Epping Forest & Commons Committee




CVD19 SGPS 36 001	Exceptional actions (above BAU) being taken by sites to mitigate this risk.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional monitoring and ecological assessments required.</li> <li>• Messaging via social media asking visitors to be considerate and alerting when the site is full.</li> <li>• All overflow car parks opened to accept additional visitors.</li> <li>• Increased Ranger activity.</li> <li>• Introduction of weekday parking charges to influence visitor numbers.</li> <li>• 50% reduction in car parking at Burnham Beeches SAC. 4 miles of parking restriction zone on surrounding roads introduced and enforce by Buckinghamshire Council</li> </ul> <p>Little else possible until visitor numbers fall significantly. Target set for 2022, as we expect this to be a long-term mitigation exercise.</p>	Colin Buttery	21-Jun- 2021	31-Mar- 2022
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## Appendix 6 – Risks & Actions Relevant to Epping Forest & Commons Committee

Risk no, title, creation date, owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date/Risk Approach	Current Risk score change indicator
<b>CVD19 SGPS 30 Health and Safety of Visitors and Staff (OSD)</b>  29-Apr-2020 Colin Buttery	<p>Cause: Open Spaces have become essential services during the pandemic as they have been asked to remain open by the government. In the absence of other forms of recreation, public pressure on open spaces has increased significantly, and with staff numbers impacted by the virus, BAU health &amp; safety works become more difficult to deliver and more important than ever.</p> <p>Event: Significant health and safety event at one of our sites (including but not limited to: flood, fire, tree disease leading to collapse, and drowning in open water bodies). Alternatively, the closure or cessation of critical services due to H&amp;S concerns which cannot be properly addressed due to pressure on staff.</p> <p>Impact: Personal injury or death of a member of the public or staff; reputational impact; legal repercussions; cessation of critical service; site closures.</p>		<b>12</b>	<p>This is a blanket health and safety risk intended to cover the threat COVID-19 poses to health &amp; safety related work which takes place at our sites; for further information on the specifics of this work, please see local Open Spaces risk registers.</p> <p>At present this work is being delivered at a steady state despite increased pressure on sites and staff.</p> <p><b>21 Jun 2021</b></p>				  Constant
							Accept	

Action no	Action description	Latest Note			Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
CVD19 SGPS 30 002	Actions undertaken at the Commons to maintain key H&S works.	Public H&S works continue as usual, with appropriate mitigation in place against COVID-related H&S issues. Further details of H&S-related work is held in the primary OSD Risk Register.			Andy Barnard	21-Jun-2021	30-Sep-2021
CVD19 SGPS 30 003	Actions undertaken at Epping Forest to maintain key H&S works.	Public H&S works continue as usual, with appropriate mitigation in place against COVID-related H&S issues. Further details of H&S-related work is held in the primary OSD Risk Register.			Paul Thomson	21-Jun-2021	30-Sep-2021

## Appendix 6 – Risks & Actions Relevant to Epping Forest & Commons Committee

Risk no, title, creation date, owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date/Risk Approach	Current Risk score change indicator
<b>CVD19 SGPS 32 Income Generation and Financial Management (OSD)</b>  <div>Page 68</div> <div>19 Apr-2020</div> <div>Colin Buttery</div>	Cause: COVID-19 has led to closure or deferral of many of the income-generating aspects of our business, as well as the incursion of significant additional costs. In combination with existing financial pressures, we are likely to run significantly overbudget. Event: Significant overspend due to underachievement of expected income. Impact: Financial impact, potentially leading to permanent cessation of services. High likelihood of requiring additional financial support from the corporate centre.	 Likelihood Impact	8	Third lockdown has now concluded. Year end budgets showed an underspend across all funds due to significant restriction on expenditure. Income generation remains an area of concern, as heritage attractions are not yet fully open, and social distancing requirements will limit visitor numbers.  Likelihood level has been dropped to reflect successful management of this risk, and due to reduced chance of further lockdowns due to vaccination / testing rollout. Any further restrictions will cause this risk to escalate again, however.  <b>21 Jun 2021</b>	 Likelihood Impact			 Constant
							Accept	

Action no	Action description	Latest Note	Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
CVD19 SGPS 32 001	Departmental overview of actions taken to help mitigate this risk.	Continuing to engage with Chamberlains and monitor income losses due to COVID-19.	Colin Buttery	21-Jun-2021	31-Aug-2021

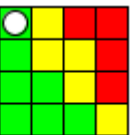




## Appendix 6 – Risks & Actions Relevant to Epping Forest & Commons Committee

Risk no, title, creation date, owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date/Risk Approach	Current Risk score change indicator
<b>CVD19 SGPS 37 Open Spaces Workforce Wellbeing (OSD)</b>  04 Dec-2020 Colin Buttery	<i>Cause:</i> Greatly increased pressure on staff across all sites, who have continued throughout the pandemic, often with an increased workload. This risk incorporates both the pressures on frontline staff (more incidents of verbal abuse, confrontation with members of the public, and antisocial behaviour on site) and WFH staff (isolation, depression, anxiety and work related abuse coming into the home). <i>Event:</i> Increased staff sickness levels and worsening wellbeing outcomes for staff across sites. <i>Impact:</i> Cessation of services; damage to sites; loss of vital expertise from staff turnover; serious injury or death of employee in service due to exhaustion or suicide.	 Likelihood Impact	8	Risk remains high to reflect the very difficult situation across all sites. Cemetery in particular was heavily impacted throughout third lockdown but is now returning to BAU, although all sites have seen increased visitor numbers, antisocial behaviour, and commensurate damage to natural asset, impacting staff morale. We expect extremely high visitor numbers over summer. This is in combination with other mitigating staff morale and wellbeing factors outside of COVID. Risk to be considered regularly at Bronze for possible mitigations.  <b>21 Jun 2021</b>	 Likelihood Impact	4	31-Aug-2021	 Constant
							Reduce	

Action no	Action description	Latest Note			Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
CVD19 SGPS 37 001	Departmental actions taken to help mitigate this risk.	Target date has been pushed to end of summer to reflect expected visitor pressure in this period.			Colin Buttery	21-Jun-2021	31-Aug-2021

## Appendix 6 – Risks & Actions Relevant to Epping Forest & Commons Committee

Risk no, title, creation date, owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date/Risk Approach	Current Risk score change indicator
<b>CVD19 SGPS 35 Reopening Services (OSD)</b>  30-Jun-2020 Colin Buttery  <b>Page 70</b>	This risk is separated into two possible scenarios, denoted below. <i>Cause:</i> 1) Re-opening services where social distancing is difficult or impossible to enforce, such as (but not limited to) public toilets, the Parliament Hill Lido, and the Hampstead Heath swimming ponds. 2) Government guidance advises the re-opening of facilities which are not yet considered COVID-19 safe by our local risk assessors. <i>Event:</i> 1) Social distancing is not observed, in contravention of government guidance; social distancing measures are actively disobeyed, resulting in antisocial behaviour and the need for enforcement actions. 2) Facility opening is delayed past the date at which government guidance changes. <i>Impact:</i> 1) Staff members become sick; reputational damage; damage to properties; cessation of services that cannot be safely operated. 2) Reputational impact; antisocial behaviour & break-ins, and the requisite health & safety impact of this behaviour.	 Likelihood  Impact	4	Risk to remain at green at present despite current lockdown due to previous experience with re-opening services. Changes to the tier system or sudden increase in demand will be monitored for impact on this risk.  <b>21 Jun 2021</b>	 Likelihood  Impact		Accept	 Constant

Action no	Action description	Latest Note		Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
CVD19 SGPS 35 001	Actions managed by the Directorate to mitigate this risk.	Regular OSD Bronze Group meetings are being convened to monitor this risk in case it further escalates, but at present it remains at Green.		Colin Buttery	21-Jun-2021	31-Aug-2021

<b>Committee(s):</b> Epping Forest & Commons Open Spaces & City Gardens West Ham Park Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queens Park	<b>Dated:</b> 12 July 2021 13 July 2021 13 July 2021 29 September 2021
<b>Subject:</b> Open Spaces Departmental Business Plan 2020/21 – Year End performance report	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 12
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	N
<b>If so, how much?</b>	N/A
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	N/A
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?</b>	N/A
<b>Report of:</b> Colin Buttery – Director, Open Spaces	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Gerry Kiefer, Open Spaces	

## Summary

This report provides Members with a review of the Open Spaces Department’s delivery of its 2020/21 Business Plan. This Plan was agreed in February 2021 before the Coronavirus pandemic. Consequently, not all the actions and priorities have been completed. The report highlights the main achievements and progress that has been made against the Business Plan’s four priority outcomes. It also identifies other areas of progress listed under the three overarching objectives of the Department.

The report identifies the level of achievement against performance measures, recognising that in some instances it was impossible to set targets. Several performance measures were not achieved as some facilities and venues were closed during periods of 2020/21.

Financially, the services that report through the Open Spaces Committees closely managed their budgets, such that at year end there was only a small net overspend of £64k in City Fund and a City’s Cash underspend of £5k against the net budgets that were reset in November.

## Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

## Main Report

### Background

1. The Open Spaces & City Gardens Committee approved the [Departmental Business Plan 2020/21](#) (Appendix 1) on 3 February 2020.
2. The Department's Vision is: *to enrich people's lives by enhancing and providing access to ecologically diverse open spaces and outstanding heritage assets across London and beyond.*
3. The Department's three overarching objectives are:
  - A. Open spaces and historic sites are thriving and accessible.
  - B. Spaces enrich people's lives.
  - C. Business practices are responsible and sustainable.Under each of these three objectives sit a total of twelve outcomes (See page 4 in Appendix 1).
4. The Department's Business Plan identified four outcomes that would be the priority for 2020-21:
  - I. Maximise the value and opportunities of our built and natural assets
  - II. Protect and enhance our sites biodiversity and determine the value of our green infrastructure
  - III. Engage with the local planning processes to mitigate and protect against the negative impact of development on our open spaces
  - IV. Develop innovative approaches to income diversification

### Current Position

4. The Business Plan was agreed prior to Covid-19 and therefore did not take account of the impact the pandemic would have on the services and resources available to the Department.
5. Throughout 2020, Covid restrictions on travel resulted in all the open spaces having significantly greater visitor numbers than usual, which has had a negative impact on many sites. The greater number of visitors also meant that staff resources, which were reduced due to shielding, self-isolation and illness, had to be refocussed to ensure provision of essential services. Meanwhile our heritage visitor attractions and sports facilities were required to close, re-open with Covid safe operating procedures, close again and re-open, due to the various periods of lockdown restrictions.
6. Reports on the Business Plan performance in relation to services which sit outside the responsibility of Open Spaces Committees are reported separately.

### Delivering our priority outcomes

7. Below are listed key areas of progress that were achieved in 2020/21 listed under the four priority outcomes.
  - I. **Maximise the value and opportunities of our built and natural assets**
    - Progressed Finsbury Circus reinstatement

- Progressed the masterplan for the future of West Ham Park Nursery site
- COL's Climate Action Strategy was agreed which includes Carbon Removal projects to be delivered by Open Spaces, initially focussed in and around Epping Forest, primarily on buffer land.

## **II. Protect and enhance our sites' biodiversity and determine the value of our green infrastructure**

- City of London Biodiversity Action Plan drafted for consultation
- Desk based tree canopy survey undertaken and shows 5% canopy cover in the City
- Discussions held with South London Downs National Nature Reserve partners regarding sharing resources to improve the landscape's biodiversity
- Grazing expanded at The Commons and onto Wanstead Park, Epping Forest

## **III. Engage with the local planning processes to mitigate and protect against the negative impact of development on our open spaces**

- Mitigation strategies developed / approved with host Authorities: Epping Forest District Council and Buckinghamshire Council
- Feedback given on planning applications, to the planning authorities across the properties.
- Introduction of 'red line' parking restrictions to reduce encroachment on land by cars implemented at Epping Forest
- Introduced Permanent Clear Way along Ditches Lane on Farthing Downs and various parking restrictions around BB under formal consultation.

## **IV. Develop innovative approaches to income diversification**

- Committee approval to let a lodge on the edge of Kenley Common and an office at Farthing Downs
- Holiday lodge refurbishment completed, and bookings taken at Epping Forest.
- Campaign donations pages on website went live in December 2020 and March 2021
- Regular benchmarking of fees and charges, as reported to Committees.

8. The Business plan also identified a number of other areas of work that would help achieve the departments overarching objectives. Despite the impact of Covid 19, the following activity was progressed:

### **Open Spaces and Historic Sites Are Thriving and Accessible**

- ✦ Committee agreed the 2021-2031: Ashted Management Plan and West Wickham & Spring Park Management Plans
- ✦ Capital funding approved for Carbon Removals project as part of Climate Action Strategy
- ✦ Completed the refurbishment of the Highgate Wood Pavilion Café toilets in December 2020
- ✦ Undertook partnership working with Plantlife HLF Back from the Brink project, including survey of lichens and the rare moss *Zygodon forsteri* at Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common.

- ✦ Completed the engineering assessment for the large Raised Reservoirs in the Wanstead Park lake cascade
- ✦ Working in partnership with Parochial Church Councils and the Diocese of London to access funding to enhance City churchyards

### **Spaces Enrich People's Lives**

- ✦ Completed the review of Hampstead Heath Bathing Ponds and a range of outcomes identified which were implemented during 2020/21 together with additional Covid-19 related operational changes including: contactless payment systems, contactless season ticket wristbands and on-line booking for swimming sessions.
- ✦ Installed new signage at Kenley Revival Project, marking the projects final phase.
- ✦ Committee approved use of COL capital funding to refurbish the playground at West Ham Park.
- ✦ Online nature-focused learning tools developed for schools and families which they could do themselves as well as printed activity sheets which were shared via food banks, community centres and hostels, reaching families who may not have access to a computer.

### **Business practices are responsible and sustainable**

- ✦ Successfully introduced remote working across the workforce
- ✦ Committee approved the Epping Forest Deer Management Strategy
- ✦ Completed the introduction of cashless car park charging at Farthing Downs and Riddlesdown Common and moved to 7 days a week charging at Burnham Beeches
- ✦ Geotechnical engineers designed and installed safety system comprising bolting, wiring and netting the quarry face at Riddlesdown to prevent rockfall.
- ✦ Successful introduction of on-line booking and payment for many activities due to Covid-19 regulations

### **Key Data - Performance Measures**

9. The Department identified seventeen performance measures to cover its range of services. At the start of 2020/21 several facilities were closed due to Lockdown 1 and as the duration of the Lockdown and its implications were unclear, targets were not set. This was the case for:
  - Visitor numbers to our various heritage attractions
  - Customer satisfaction scores at our various heritage visitor attractions
  - Tennis court usage
  - Learning programme engagement
  - Volunteer hours
  - Apprentice performance
10. For those performance measures where we did set targets, we:
  - retained all our Green Flag and Green Heritage Awards
  - reduced short-term sickness levels
  - reduced our use of electricity, gas and water.

- put on hold our ancient tree management works at Epping Forest due to lack of clarity of the value of the Countryside Stewardship Grant (The Stewardship agreement was eventually confirmed in March 2021 with a £1.3million grant over the ten year period 2020 to 2029)
- received fewer visits to our webpages compared to 2019/20 which may be due to the introduction of the new corporate website in July 2020, which means that the Open Spaces information is more streamlined and there are fewer pages for people to visit
- missed the 85% Corporate target, by 1% (achieved 84%) for investigating health and safety accidents, due to staff capacity and availability.
- continued to comment on local authority planning applications as reported regularly to Committees

11. The table of performance against performance measures is attached as Appendix 2

## Corporate & Strategic Implications

### Strategic implications

12. **The Corporate Plan** - The Open Spaces Department actively contributes to all three Corporate Plan 2018-23 aims:

- Contribute to a flourishing society
  - Support a thriving economy
  - Shape outstanding environments
- and ten of its twelve outcomes.

13. **Corporate Strategies** - The activity undertaken to deliver the Business Plan also helps achieve the outcomes of a range of Corporate strategies including:

- Responsible Business strategy
- Climate Action strategy
- Sport and Physical Activity strategy
- Transport strategy
- Education, Cultural and Creative Learning and Skills Strategy

### Financial implications

14. Closure of facilities and cancellation of events due to Government lockdown restrictions impacted on expenditure and income. Across the Corporation, budgets were reviewed and reset in November which was prior to, and without predicting further lockdowns during early 2021.

15. The services that report to this Committee were not able to achieve their income targets, however by regular in depth forecasting and closely managing expenditure the services that report to this Committee were able to almost achieve the overall net expenditure budget.

- The **net expenditure outturn position** for the Open Spaces City Fund and City Cash budgets reporting to the various Open Spaces Committees, was a £59k (0.5%) overspend from a total net local risk budget of £13million.

- The **total income outturn position** was £4,748,000 which was £808k (15%) below target.
- The **total expenditure outturn position** was £17,986,000 which was £749k (4%) below target.

16. The information below details the outturn position against budget, by Fund.

- **City Fund** – spent 103% of its local risk expenditure budget and achieved 99% of its local risk income target. City Fund was only £64k (6%) overspent on its overall net budget position. This was largely due to additional transport related spend, higher than anticipated irrigation costs and overspend on equipment and materials.
- **City's Cash** – spent 95% of its local risk expenditure budget and achieved 84% of its local risk income target. City's Cash total overall net position was only £5,000 underspent against its revised budget position set in November 2020

17. More detailed information regarding the year end outturn financial position for each Service Committee is provided in the Revenue Outturn reports from the Chamberlains Department.

18. The Department successfully applied for internal funding from the Covid 19 Fund, awarded £65k for additional costs associated with health and safety changes for staff and customers. Funding applications for additional support for costs associated with waste collection and removal, plus security costs, were also considered later in the year, but as these costs had already been forecast and factored into the resetting of budgets, funding was not awarded.

19. Resource implications – None

20. Legal implications – None

21. Risk implications – none

### **Equalities implications**

22. The Business Plan identified five equalities and inclusion priorities for which additional activity has been undertaken. Some examples are shown below:

- Improve accessibility within our sites, subject to funding.**
  - Awarded capital funding of £755k to improve access as well as safety and security aspects at Hampstead Heath swimming facilities.
  - Accessible pontoon added at Highams Pond.
- Improve inclusivity at our sites.**
  - New car parking charges included concessions for blue badge holders
  - Phone helpline set up to assist with swim bookings as an accessible alternative to online booking.
- Increase our collection and analysis of 'protected characteristics' data.**



- The two Commons Management plans and Epping Forest's Car Parking and Cycling consultations monitored protected characteristic data which was considered to ensure responses and outcomes were representative.
- iv. **Develop our Learning programme offer to Special Educational Needs & Disabilities Schools (SEND).**
  - New programme provided during Lockdown for children with Autism.
  - Bespoke school programme set up for SEND schools within walking distance of sites, to support them during lockdowns.
- v. **Implement the agreed transgender policy.**
  - Online transgender awareness training rolled out to all sites and ongoing regular work with Hampstead Heath lifeguards on transgender inclusivity.

### **Climate implications**

23. Funding has been awarded to the Department to deliver Carbon Removal projects as part of the Climate Action Strategy.

Security implications - None

### **Conclusion**

24. The Covid19 Pandemic impacted on the delivery of the 2020/21 Business Plan and achievement of performance measure targets. However, despite facilities being closed and resources predominantly having to focus on essential service delivery, a number of priority areas of work were progressed. The Department also closely managed its income and expenditure budgets and were only slightly overspent against its reset budget.

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Business Plan 2020/21

Appendix 2 – Performance Measures 2020/21

### **Gerry Kiefer**

Business Manager – Open Spaces Department

T: 020 7332 3517

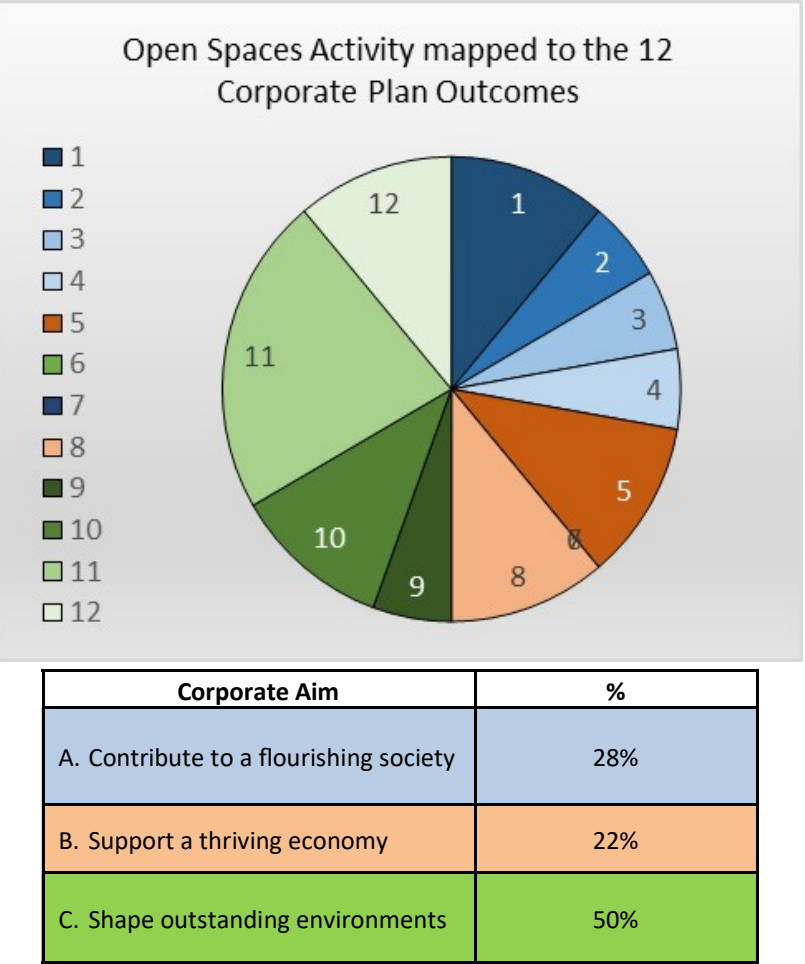
E: [Gerry.Kefer@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:Gerry.Kefer@cityoflondon.gov.uk)

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DEPARTMENT VISION:	We enrich people's lives by enhancing and providing access to ecologically diverse open spaces and outstanding heritage assets across London and beyond.
Department objectives:	Open Spaces Department's twelve outcomes:
A. Open spaces and historic sites are thriving and accessible.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>Our open spaces, heritage and cultural assets are protected, conserved and enhanced (12)</li><li>London has clean air and mitigates flood risk and climate change (11)</li><li>Our spaces are accessible, inclusive and safe (1)</li><li>Our habitats are flourishing, biodiverse and resilient to change (11)</li></ol>
B. Spaces enrich people's lives.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>People enjoy good health and wellbeing (2)</li><li>Nature, heritage and place are valued and understood (3)</li><li>People feel welcome and included (4)</li><li>People discover, learn and develop (3)</li></ol>
C. Business practices are responsible and sustainable.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>Our practices are financially, socially and environmentally sustainable (5)</li><li>London's natural capital and heritage assets are enhanced through our leadership, influence, investment, collaboration and innovation (10)</li><li>Our staff and volunteers are motivated, empowered, engaged and supported (8)</li><li>Everyone has the relevant skills to reach their full potential (8)</li></ol>

The numbers in brackets show how the Open Spaces outcomes link to the 12 Corporate Plan 2018 - 2023 Outcomes



The table overleaf lists all the activities we will be working on and developing this year.

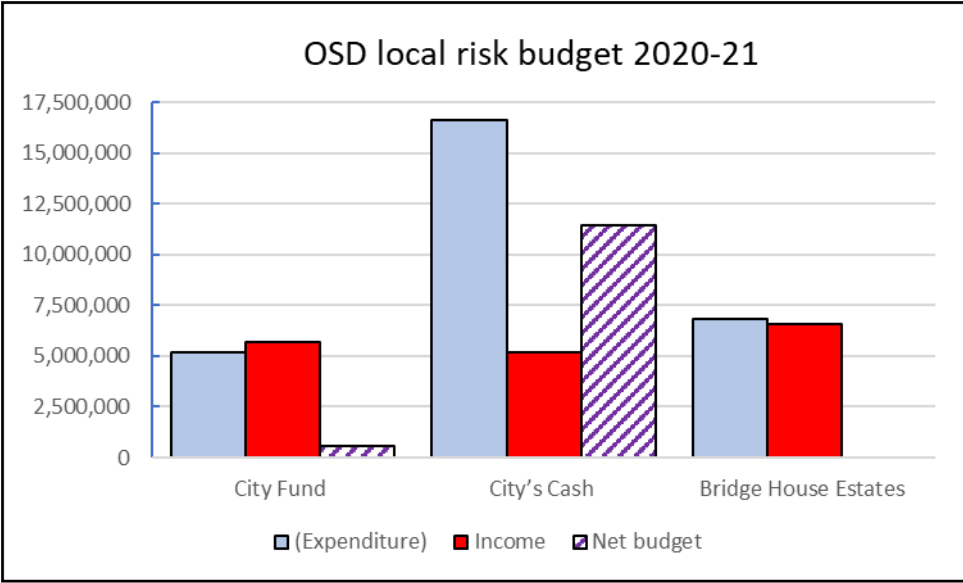
**Our key activities for 2020/21 will be:**

- j) Maximise the value and opportunities of our built and natural assets (10c)
- f) Protect and enhance our sites biodiversity and determine the value of our green infrastructure (11b)
- d) Engage with the local planning processes to mitigate and protect against the negative impact of development on our open spaces (12b)
- q) Develop innovative approaches to income diversification (8d)

**We will also be supporting the work of the Fundamental Review.**

Appendix 1 provides the detail that sits behind these key activity statements.

Numbers in brackets show links to the outcomes and actions within the Corporate Plan 2018-2023



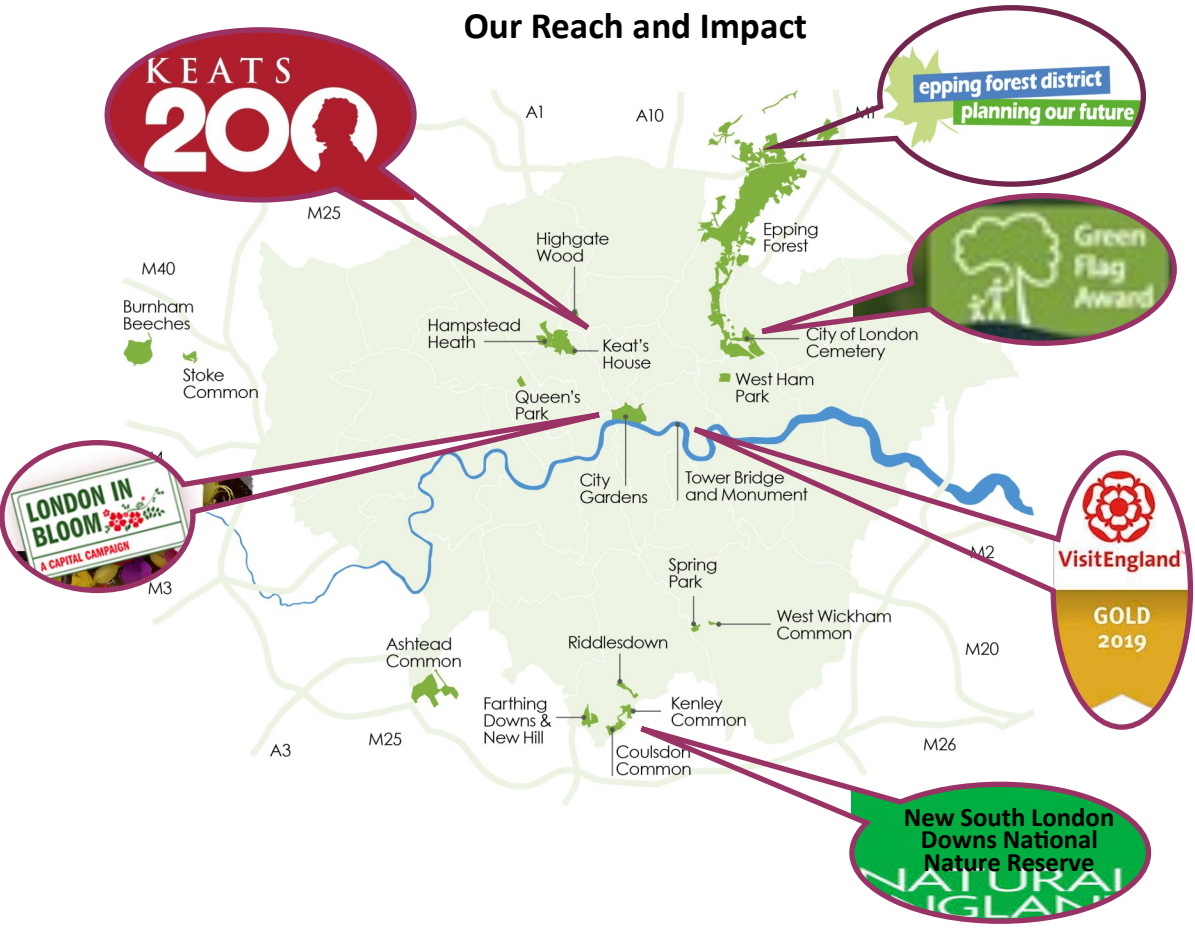
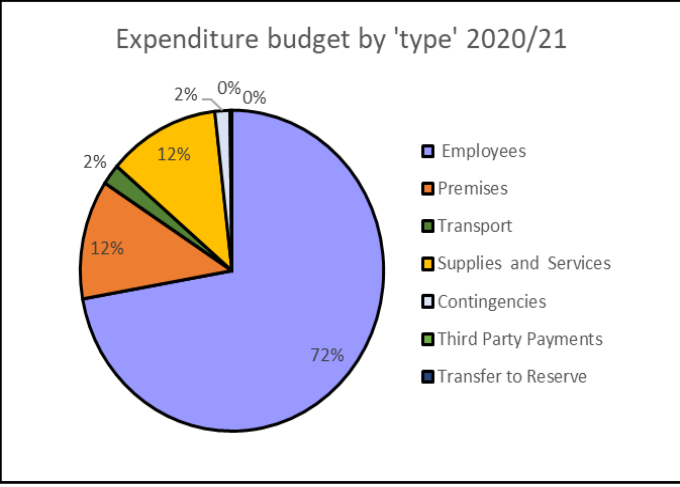
**Bids for Capital Funding**

**Agreed in principle by RASC:**

- West Ham Park Playground
- East Heath Car Park
- Chingford Golf Course

**More information requested by RASC:**

- Finsbury Circus Reinstatement
- The Monument Visitor Centre
- ParkLife (Wanstead Football)
- Parliament Hill Athletics Track
- Queens Park Toilets (Chairman's request)



## COL Staff Survey

TOP 3 Highest Scoring	%	BOTTOM 3 Lowest Scoring Questions	% Positive
I have the skills I need to do my job effectively	94%	The City of London Corporation manages change effectively	32%
I am interested in my work	93%	I believe that action will be taken on	33%
I am clear about what I am expected to achieve in my job	87%	Poor performance is dealt with effectively where I work	34%

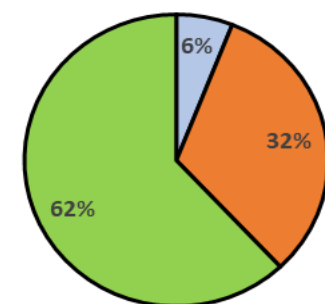
### Action Being taken includes:

**Improving Communication:** All staff updates from SLT and Committees, staff briefings on 'change' including fundamental review.

**Leadership:** Open door sessions, visibility of managers, one to one's, appraisals,

## Key Customer Feedback

Visitors satisfaction rating of open spaces site from snapshot survey



Other Good Very Good

## Performance Measures

We will contribute to a number of Corporate Performance Measures including: FOI responses, health and safety investigations, sickness absence, budgets, employee volunteering

### We will also set Departmental performance measures including:

Performance Measure	Performance target 2019/20	Department Outcomes	Department Activity
Retaining Green Heritage Site Accreditation and Green Flag Awards	13 Green Heritage Awards 15 Green Flag Awards	Our open spaces, heritage and cultural assets are protected, conserved and enhanced	Protect our heritage: developing partnership funding bids where possible
Number of tennis courts booked	31,500	People enjoy good health and wellbeing	Provide a sustainable range of sports and recreational opportunities
Number of visits to our heritage visitor attractions	1,124,400 visits	People feel welcome and included	Improve the visitor and cultural offer
Active management of our ancient trees	Baseline	Our habitats are flourishing, biodiverse and resilient to change	Protect and enhance our sites biodiversity

### What's changed since last year...

- Completed the Programme of events celebrating 125 years of Tower Bridge and 30 years custodianship of Hampstead Heath.
- Natural England declare a new National Nature reserve; South London Downs NNR, covering Coulsdon Commons and Happy Valley, in partnership with the London Borough of Croydon
- Retendered OPM Control Methods contract and a partner with the Forestry Commission in their OPM pilot study.
- City Gardens fleet is ULEZ compliant
- Events policy agreed and implemented for the Department and all divisions
- Delivered improvement projects in City Gardens including Senator House and St Alphrage's Gardens
- Introduce longer lease durations allowing greater capital investment / external funding capacity under powers created by the Open Spaces Act 2018

### Equalities and Inclusion Priorities:

- Improve accessibility within our sites, subject to funding.
- Improve inclusivity at our sites.
- Increase our collection and analysis of 'protected characteristics' data
- Develop our Learning programme offer to Special Needs Schools.
- Implement the agreed transgender policy.

### Other activities that we will be undertaking this year under the headings of our three objectives.

#### Open Spaces and Historic Sites Are Thriving and Accessible

- Protect our heritage: developing partnership funding bids where possible (10d)
- Progress reviews, drafting, approval and implementation of management / conservation / heritage plans (11b)
- Reduce the negative environmental impacts of our activities (11a)
- Review security and access control provision (1c)

#### Spaces Enrich People's Lives

- Provide a sustainable range of sports and recreational opportunities (2d)
- Improve the visitor and cultural offer, including the development of facilities, new technologies, customer service and a programme of events celebrating our anniversaries, historic sites and nature (4a)
- Develop our 'learning offer' (3b)

#### Business practices are responsible and sustainable

- Deliver opportunities arising from improved management capability from the City of London Corporation (Open Spaces) Act 2018 (1c)
- Make more effective use of IT and technology and adopt 'smarter' ways of working (9b)
- Support the development of asset management plans and master plans for each site and influence the City Surveyors implementation of their operational property review (12a)
- Maintain our regional and national influence with regard to environmental, open space, burial, heritage and tourism matters (11d)
- Implement the recommendations arising out of the workforce plan, staff and customer surveys (8a)
- Develop our apprenticeship programme and volunteering opportunities across the Department (8d)
- Progress the prioritisation of services to mitigate efficiencies and establish long term sustainable service provision (5c)

Appendix 1 provides the detail that sits behind these action statements.

◆ Numbers in brackets show links to the outcomes and actions within the Corporate Plan

### Our delivery partners and key stakeholders include:

Local community groups, forums and local residents

Host and neighbouring local authorities and the GLA

Forestry Commission, Natural England and National Trust

Parks for London, GiGL, Action Oak

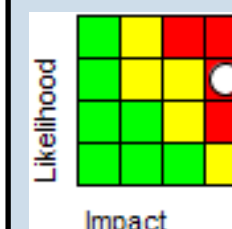
Historic England & English Heritage

National Governing Bodies of Sport and local sports groups

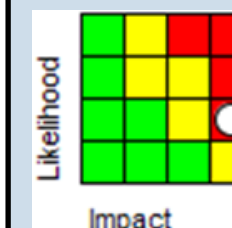
Consultation Committees and Forums

City of London Departments

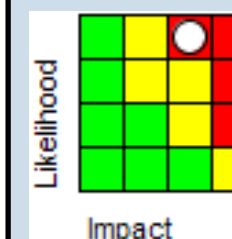
### Departments three red risks:



OSD 013 Wanstead Park Reservoirs (Score = 24)



OSD 004 Repair and Maintenance of Buildings & structural assets (Score = 16)



OSD 005 Pests and Diseases (Score = 16)



## Appendix 2 – Performance Measures 2020/21

Performance Measure Description	2019/20 Actual (annual)	2020/21 Target (annual)	2020/21 Actual (annual)
Green Heritage Site Accreditation	13 Green Heritage Site Accreditations	Retain 13 Awards	<b>ACHIEVED</b> 13 Green Heritage Site Accreditations
Green Flag Awards	15 Green Flag Awards	Retain 15 Awards	<b>ACHIEVED</b> 15 Green Flag Awards
Improving the condition of our Sites of Special Scientific Interest	No change to 2018/19 as Natural England officers have not been able to undertake a new assessment	Favourable = 12 (28%) Unfavourable recovering = 22 (52%) Unfavourable - no change = 7 (17%) Unfavourable - declining = 1 (2%)	No change as Natural England officers have not been able to undertake any new assessments
Reducing our environmental footprint	Water consumption 30% reduction on 18/19 data. Electricity usage has reduced by 0.5%	Reduction on previous years consumption	Electricity consumption reduced by 11.4%, Gas consumption reduced by 10%, Water consumption reduced 4.8%. Total PV energy generation 111,607 KW/HRS (Jan to Dec 2020)
Influencing planning authorities development approvals and planning policy documents	Comments provided on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>planning application.</li> <li>habitats regulation assessment,</li> <li>Green Infrastructure Strategy.</li> </ul> Developed Mitigation Strategies with host local authorities	Commentary	Comments provided on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>pre-planning and planning applications</li> <li>local plan consultation</li> <li>SANGS strategy</li> <li>SPD's</li> <li>Mitigation strategies</li> <li>City Biodiversity Action Plan SDP being drafted</li> </ul>
Active management of our ancient trees as part of the Countryside Stewardship (CS) Schemes at Epping Forest and Burnham Beeches.	EF - 80 trees completed - managed by re-pollarding or crown reduction Burnham Beeches - 9 trees completed, managed by crown reduction.	Epping Forest – 354 Burnham Beeches – 61  Targets are flexible CS target is a ten-year fixed total, the planned annual level of management can change due to weather and ground conditions and procurement constraints.	Burnham Beeches – Work undertaken on 32 trees  Epping Forest - Work put on hold due to uncertainty of CS grant and impact of Covid-19 on staff resources
The number of 'visitors' to the Open spaces webpages.	686,677	930,000	<b>NOT ACHIEVED</b> 806,142
Learning & volunteer programme measures	Increase across the learning impacts:	No target set due to Covid 19	Nature connection (11%) Understanding (1.5%)

Performance Measure Description	2019/20 Actual (annual)	2020/21 Target (annual)	2020/21 Actual (annual)
	nature connection (19%) confidence (13%), well-being (5%), understanding (1.5%)		Sample size too small for comparison for well-being and confidence.
Increase the amount of directly supervised volunteer work hours	24,394	No target set due to Covid 19	1,407
Increase the amount of indirectly supervised volunteer work hours	3,051	No target set due to Covid 19	3,535
Increase the amount of unsupervised volunteer work hours	19,935	No target set due to Covid 19	12,745
Increase the number of visits to our heritage visitor attractions (Tower Bridge, Monument, Keats House, The Queens Hunting Lodge hub and The Temple)	1,100,110	No target set due to Covid 19	57,172
Improve customer satisfaction at our heritage visitor attractions (Tower Bridge, Monument, Keats House, Epping Forest experience)	Visit England Annual Quality Attraction Assessment Scheme survey not undertaken for Epping Forest	No target set due to Covid 19	Quality Assessments not taken place due to Covid-19
Increase the number of hours of tennis court usage	33.550	No target set due to Covid 19	50,663
Apprentice performance	81% pass their training qualification (4 left before the end of the course) 20% (that we know of) have got jobs, 25% have progressed from level 2 to level 3	No target set due to Covid 19	Not measurable as apprentices impacted by Covid 19
Average number of days per FTE short term sickness	3.37	3.37	<b>ACHIEVED</b> 2.77
Health and safety accident investigations	89%	85%.	<b>NOT ACHIEVED</b> 84%
Open Spaces Net expenditure (OS Director local risk & OS Committee budgets only)	£12,633,989	<b>£13,177,000</b>	<b>NOT ACHIEVED</b> £13,238,360
Open Spaces Income target (OS Director local risk & OS Committee budgets only)	£4,862,303	<b>£5,556,000</b>	<b>NOT ACHIEVED</b> £4,747,545

<b>Committee(s)</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Epping Forest & Commons	<b>12 July 2021</b>
<b>Subject:</b> Revenue Outturn 2020/21 – Epping Forest and Commons	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	<b>1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 11 &amp; 12</b>
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>If so, how much?</b>	<b>n/a</b>
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	<b>n/a</b>
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?</b>	<b>n/a</b>
<b>Report of:</b> The Chamberlain & the Director of Open Spaces	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Beatrix Jako – Chamberlains Department	

## Summary

This report compares the revenue outturn for the services overseen by your Committee in 2020/21 with the final agreed budget for the year.

In total, there was a favourable budget position of £604,000 for the services overseen by your committee compared with the final agreed budget for the year as set out below.

	<b>Final Agreed Budget</b> <b>£000</b>	<b>Outturn</b> <b>£000</b>	<b>(Increase)/ Decrease</b> <b>£000</b>
<b>Local Risk</b>			
Director of Open Spaces			
<i>Expenditure</i>	(7,362)	(6,622)	740
<i>Income</i>	2,836	1,950	(886)
City Surveyor	(531)	(519)	12
<b>Total Local Risk</b>	<b>(5,057)</b>	<b>(5,191)</b>	<b>(134)</b>
<b>Cyclical Works Programme</b>	<b>(1,127)</b>	<b>(482)</b>	<b>645</b>
<b>Central Risk</b>	<b>(862)</b>	<b>(775)</b>	<b>87</b>
<b>Recharges</b>	<b>(1,485)</b>	<b>(1,479)</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>(8,531)</b>	<b>(7,927)</b>	<b>604</b>

There were significant variations within the Director of Open Spaces, the Cyclical Works Programme, and Central Risk, further detail on these variations can be found in paragraphs 4a), 4b), 4c), 4d) and 4e) respectively.

The Director of Open Spaces had an unfavourable variance of £146,000 (Local Risk), this unfavourable variance has been aggregated with budget variations on services overseen by other committees which produces a City's Cash overall favourable position of £83,000 (Local Risk) across all Open Spaces.

### **Recommendation(s)**

It is recommended that this revenue outturn report for 2020/21 is noted.

### **Main Report**

#### **Budget Position for 2020/21**

1. The 2020/21 latest agreed budget for Epping Forest & Commons services overseen by your Committee received in January 2021 was £8.444m. This budget was endorsed by the Court of Common Council in March 2021 and subsequently updated for approved adjustments. There was a total increase of £87,000 in approved adjustments, consisting of an overall increase of £7,000 in Local Risk expenditure (of which £22,000 are for additional payments made to staff regarding additional work in relation to COVID-19, partly offset by a reduction of £15,000 to the centrally funded apprentices budget), an increase of £88,000 in Central Risk (due to an increase of £50,000 to the Supplementary Revenue Project budget and a £38,000 adjustment for costs relating to the flexible retirement pension strain costs). These budget adjustments were partly offset by a £8,000 reduction in Recharges. Movement of the original Local Risk budget to the final agreed budget is shown in Appendices A and B.

#### **Revenue Outturn 2020/21**

2. Actual net expenditure for your Committee's services during 2020/21 totalled £7.927m, an underspend of £604,000 compared with the final agreed budget.
3. A summary comparison with the final agreed budget for the year is tabulated below. In the tables, income, increases in income, and reductions in expenditure are shown as positive balances, whereas brackets are used to denote expenditure, increases in expenditure, or shortfalls in income. Reason(s) for any larger variances (greater than £50,000) are indexed in the table.



**Epping Forest**  
**Comparison of 2020/21 Revenue Outturn with Final Agreed Budget**

		Original Budget £000	Final Agreed Budget £000	Revenue Outturn £000	(Increase) Decrease £000	Reason Paragraph
<b>LOCAL RISK</b>						
<b>Director of Open Spaces</b>						
<b>Epping Forest</b>						
	Expenditure	(4,181)	(4,042)	(3,801)	241	
	Income	1,463	1,115	1,010	(105)	
		<b>(2,718)</b>	<b>(2,927)</b>	<b>(2,791)</b>	<b>136</b>	4a)
<b>Epping Forest – Countryside Stewardship Scheme</b>						
	Expenditure	-	(535)	(107)	428	
	Income	-	646	47	(599)	
		-	<b>111</b>	<b>(60)</b>	<b>(171)</b>	4b)
<b>Chingford Golf Course</b>						
	Expenditure	(290)	(306)	(253)	53	
	Income	338	374	362	(12)	
		<b>48</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>41</b>	
<b>Wanstead Flats</b>						
	Expenditure	(227)	(229)	(220)	9	
	Income	95	95	1	(94)	
		<b>(132)</b>	<b>(134)</b>	<b>(219)</b>	<b>(85)</b>	4c)
<b>Woodredon &amp; Warlies</b>						
	Expenditure	(68)	(69)	(70)	(1)	
	Income	90	90	74	(16)	
		<b>22</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>(17)</b>	
<b>Total Director of Open Spaces Local Risk</b>						
	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>(4,766)</b>	<b>(5,181)</b>	<b>(4,451)</b>	<b>730</b>	
<b>Total Director of Open Spaces Local Risk</b>						
	<b>Income</b>	<b>1,986</b>	<b>2,320</b>	<b>1,494</b>	<b>(826)</b>	
<b>City Surveyor</b>						
<b>City Surveyors Local Risk</b>						
		(287)	(343)	(300)	43	
<b>Total City Surveyor Local Risk</b>						
		<b>(287)</b>	<b>(343)</b>	<b>(300)</b>	<b>43</b>	
<b>TOTAL LOCAL RISK</b>						
		<b>(3,067)</b>	<b>(3,204)</b>	<b>(3,257)</b>	<b>(53)</b>	
<b>Cyclical Works Programme</b>						
		<b>(1,250)</b>	<b>(743)</b>	<b>(349)</b>	<b>394</b>	4d)
<b>CENTRAL RISK</b>						
<b>Epping Forest</b>						
		(463)	(650)	(597)	53	
<b>Wanstead Flats</b>						
		(28)	(72)	(72)	-	
<b>Woodredon &amp; Warlies</b>						
		-	(8)	(7)	1	
<b>TOTAL CENTRAL RISK</b>						
		<b>(491)</b>	<b>(730)</b>	<b>(676)</b>	<b>54</b>	4e)
<b>RECHARGES</b>						
<b>Insurance</b>						
		(85)	(85)	(78)	7	
<b>Support Services</b>						
		(397)	(397)	(361)	36	
<b>Surveyor's Employee Recharge</b>						
		(309)	(309)	(292)	17	
<b>I.S. Recharge</b>						
		(163)	(163)	(206)	(43)	
<b>Recharges Within Fund (Directorate Democratic Core, and Learning)</b>						
		(221)	(169)	(192)	(23)	

**RECHARGES (continued)**  
**Recharges Across Fund**

Woodredon & Warlies	-	9	26	17
Structural Maintenance	(12)	(12)	(11)	1
<b>TOTAL RECHARGES</b>	<b>(1,187)</b>	<b>(1,126)</b>	<b>(1,114)</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>(5,995)</b>	<b>(5,803)</b>	<b>(5,396)</b>	<b>407</b>

**The Commons**  
**Comparison of 2020/21 Revenue Outturn with Final Agreed Budget**

		Original Budget £000	Final Agreed Budget £000	Revenue Outturn £000	(Increase) Decrease £000	Reason Paragraph
<b>LOCAL RISK</b>						
<b>Director of Open Spaces</b>						
<b>Burnham Beeches</b>						
	Expenditure	(705)	(815)	(804)	11	
	Income	221	317	295	(22)	
		<b>(484)</b>	<b>(498)</b>	<b>(509)</b>	<b>(11)</b>	
<b>Stoke Common</b>						
	Expenditure	(53)	(56)	(55)	1	
	Income	31	31	22	(9)	
		<b>(22)</b>	<b>(25)</b>	<b>(33)</b>	<b>(8)</b>	
<b>City Commons</b>						
	Expenditure	(1,194)	(1,310)	(1,312)	(2)	
	Income	128	168	139	(29)	
		<b>(1,066)</b>	<b>(1,142)</b>	<b>(1,173)</b>	<b>(31)</b>	
<hr/>						
<b>Total Director of Open Spaces Local Risk</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>(1,952)</b>	<b>(2,181)</b>	<b>(2,171)</b>	<b>10</b>	
<b>Total Director of Open Spaces Local Risk</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>516</b>	<b>456</b>	<b>(60)</b>	
<hr/>						
<b>City Surveyor</b>						
<b>City Surveyors Local Risk</b>						
		(188)	(188)	(219)	(31)	
<b>Total City Surveyor Local Risk</b>		<b>(188)</b>	<b>(188)</b>	<b>(219)</b>	<b>(31)</b>	
<hr/>						
<b>TOTAL LOCAL RISK</b>		<b>(1,760)</b>	<b>(1,853)</b>	<b>(1,934)</b>	<b>(81)</b>	
<hr/>						
<b>Cyclical Works Programme</b>		<b>(357)</b>	<b>(384)</b>	<b>(133)</b>	<b>251</b>	4d)
<hr/>						
<b>CENTRAL RISK</b>						
<b>Burnham Beeches</b>						
		(33)	(92)	(78)	14	
<b>City Commons</b>						
		(25)	(40)	(21)	19	
<b>TOTAL CENTRAL RISK</b>		<b>(58)</b>	<b>(132)</b>	<b>(99)</b>	<b>33</b>	4e)
<hr/>						
<b>RECHARGES</b>						
<b>Insurance</b>						
		(21)	(21)	(19)	2	
<b>Support Services</b>						
		(187)	(187)	(175)	12	
<b>Surveyor's Employee Recharge</b>						
		(41)	(41)	(39)	2	
<b>I.S. Recharge</b>						
		(74)	(74)	(96)	(22)	
<b>Recharges Within Fund (Directorate &amp; Democratic Core)</b>						
		(57)	(36)	(36)	-	
<hr/>						
<b>TOTAL RECHARGES</b>		<b>(380)</b>	<b>(359)</b>	<b>(365)</b>	<b>(6)</b>	
<hr/>						
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>		<b>(2,555)</b>	<b>(2,728)</b>	<b>(2,531)</b>	<b>197</b>	

## **Reasons for Significant Variations**

4.
  - a) The £136,000 better than budget position within Epping Forest Local Risk is a combination of an underspend within employee expenses due to vacancy management and visitor services staff on furlough due to COVID-19 and an underachievement in rental income due to rent holidays and lower income agreements for commercial tenants during COVID-19 restrictions.
  - b) The £171,000 unfavourable variance is due to a reduction in premises related expenditure and a reduction in government grant due to the transition to the new 10 year Countryside Stewardship Scheme (CSS).
  - c) The £85,000 unfavourable variance within Wanstead Flat Local Risk is mainly due to a reduction in customer and client receipts. No football play was possible due to lockdowns coinciding with football season.
  - d) Due to the economic impact of COVID-19 and subsequent reduced income revenue generation, the City Surveyor was tasked by the Chamberlain to review current programmes of work. This was to level the expenditure, smoothing some of the spend into a 'fourth' year to reduce the impact of committed expenditure within the next two years. The Chamberlain has confirmed acceptance of the proposals put forward by the City Surveyor. This provides the Chamberlain with an overall 4-year forecast expenditure across all funds and funding years.
  - e) The £87,000 favourable variance in Central risk (PiP funded projects) is mainly due to a reduction in the wayleaves officer's working hours at Epping leading to lower staff costs of £61,000 and unspent expenditure associated with the Ecologist position at Burnham Beeches of £14,000. Both unspent budgets are the subject of carry forwards requested by the Director of Open Spaces.
  - f) The Department's additional costs associated with Covid-19 relating to this Committee totalled £155,848 (of which £135,657 relates to Epping Forest and £20,191 relates to the Commons) in 2020/21.

## **Local Risk and Central Risk Carry Forward to 2021/22**

5. Chief Officers can generally request underspends of up to 10% or £500,000 (whichever is the lesser) of the final agreed local risk budget to be carried forward, so long as the underspending is not fortuitous and the resources are required for a planned purpose. Such requests are subject to the approval of the Chamberlain in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Resources Allocation Sub Committee.
6. Overspends are carried forward in full and are met from the agreed 2021/22 budgets.

7. The Director's unfavourable budget position of £146,000 (Local Risk) has been aggregated with budget variations on services overseen by other committees which for City's Cash produce an overall favourable variance of £83,000 (Local Risk) across all Open Spaces. The Director of Open Spaces has submitted the following carry forward requests within City Cash which relate to this Committee:

- Epping Forest - £50,000 Insurance cost saving of root barrier provision. Requesting support for root-barrier installations to reduce insurance claim costs funded centrally. Climate warming is increasing the frequency of droughts, with dry summers in 2003, 2006 and 2018 causing significant increases in subsidence insurance claims. While Epping Forest and Insurance Team have successfully resisted a number of subsidence claims using strong evidential arguments, the Forest has been unable to evade responsibility for all tree root-related subsidence claims. The City Corporation self-insures for claims under £1m and the Insurance Team can only settle agreed insurance claims and does not have delegated powers to fund mitigation measures. The installation of 5 metre deep root barriers can mitigate against settling underpinning insurance claims of £100k per property – this approach was recognised by the Insurance team as providing excellent Value For Money however, CoL funding arrangements prevent an easily achieved offset. The request would be to provide root barrier at a number of locations which have the greatest likelihood of an insurance claim that the COL would lose. This carry forward request could save the central risk budget several hundreds of thousands of pounds.
- West Wickham and Coulsdon Common - £53,000 in total
  - a) £20,000 to fund essential health and safety works, also recorded on the risk register, were planned in order to stabilise the slope at Riddlesdown Quarry;
  - b) £17,000 to fund CCTV works at Merlewood Estate Office – project follows 12 separate incidents of vandalism over past 18 months. The project was delayed as various contractors were unavailable due to the impact of COVID-19 on their business and their availability of staff;
  - c) £16,000 to fund tree safety works on the West Wickham & Coulsdon Commons- project not delivered due to unavailability of contractors who suffered from an unforeseen reduction in capacity due to COVID-19.

In addition, there are four Central Risk Carry Forwards: -

- £61,000 Funding for the Wayleaves officer at Epping Forest
- £4,000 Funding for the “developing a parking strategy” project at Epping Forest

- £14,000 Unspent expenditure associated with the Ecologist position at Burnham Beeches
- £11,000 Unspent expenditure relating to the City funded Legacy Officer post linked to the Kenley Revival Project.

### **Strategic Implications**

8. None

### **Financial Implications**

9. All financial implications contained within the report.

### **Resource Implications**

10. None.

### **Legal Implications**

11. None.

### **Risk Implications**

12. None.

### **Equalities Implications**

13. None.

### **Climate Implications**

14. None.

### **Security Implications**

15. None

### **Public sector equality duty**

16. Our fees and charges are regularly benchmarked with neighbouring / competing facilities, but we will continue to informally assess any negative impact on protected characteristic groups.

### **Conclusion**

17. This report presents the revenue outturn position for 2020/21 for Members to consider and to note the carry forward bids for 2021/22 budgets.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix A - Movement between the Original 2020/21 Budget and the 2020/21 Final Agreed Budget (Epping Forest)
- Appendix B - Movement between the Original 2020/21 Budget and the 2020/21 Final Agreed Budget (The Commons)

### **Beatrix Jako**

Acting Senior Accountant

E: [Beatrix.Jako@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:Beatrix.Jako@cityoflondon.gov.uk)

## Appendix A

### **Movement between the 2020/21 Original Budget to the 2020/21 Final Agreed Budget**

<b>Epping Forest</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>Original Net Local Risk Budget (Director of Open Spaces &amp; City Surveyor)</b>	<b>(3,067)</b>
<b>Director of Open Spaces</b>	
Apprentices – centrally funded	17
Contribution Pay	(22)
Allocation from the Directorate to fund unsuccessful 2019/20 carry forward bids	(31)
Allocation from the Corporate COVID-19 fund	(16)
Allocation from the Directorate to cover Oak Processionary Moth (OPM) costs	(15)
Additional payment to staff regarding work in relation to COVID-19	(14)
<b>City Surveyor</b>	
Planned & Reactive Works including Cleaning	(56)
<b>Final Agreed Net Local Risk Budget (Director of Open Spaces &amp; City Surveyor)</b>	<b>(3,204)</b>



## Appendix B

### **Movement between the 2020/21 Original Budget and the 2020/21 Final Agreed Budget**

<b>The Commons</b>	<b>£000</b>
<b>Original Net Local Risk Budget (Director of Open Spaces &amp; City Surveyor)</b>	<b>(1,760)</b>
<b>Director of Open Spaces</b>	
Apprentices – centrally funded	(2)
Contribution Pay	(9)
Allocation from the Directorate to fund unsuccessful 2019/20 carry forward bids	(11)
Allocation from the Corporate COVID-19 fund	(9)
Allocation from the Directorate to cover Oak Processionary Moth (OPM) costs	(29)
Resetting of departmental Budgets 2020/21 due to COVID-19 pandemic	(25)
Additional payment to staff regarding work in relation to COVID-19	(8)
<b>City Surveyor</b>	
Planned & Reactive Works including Cleaning	-
<b>Final Agreed Net Local Risk Budget (Director of Open Spaces &amp; City Surveyor)</b>	<b>(1,853)</b>

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<b>Committee(s)</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Epping Forest and Commons	12/07/2021
<b>Subject:</b> Epping Forest - Superintendent's Update for April to May 2021 (SEF 29/21)	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	<b>2, 5, 11 &amp; 12</b>
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>If so, how much?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	<b>City's Cash Local Risk</b>
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Director of Open Spaces	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Paul Thomson – Epping Forest	

## Summary

This purpose of this report is to summarise the Epping Forest Division's activities across April to May 2021.

Of particular note was the loss of six long-service staff; a significant rise in licence income; the introduction of car parking charges at Phase One car parks across the Forest; a mass defoliation event by Winter Moth caterpillars of oak and hornbeam trees across the Forest; the successful initiation of a Countryside Stewardship application for £1.39 million over 10 years (2020-2029); a further and unusual tree fall on a neighbouring building; ongoing negotiations with Local Planning Authorities on the content of the Epping Forest SAC Mitigation Strategy tariff; a doubling of hazardous tree assessments for the current year in response to Sooty Bark Disease of Sycamores; a positive Large Raised Reservoir Panel Engineer Inspection and a continued improvement in Chingford Golf Club performance.

## Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the report

## Main Report

### Staff and Volunteers

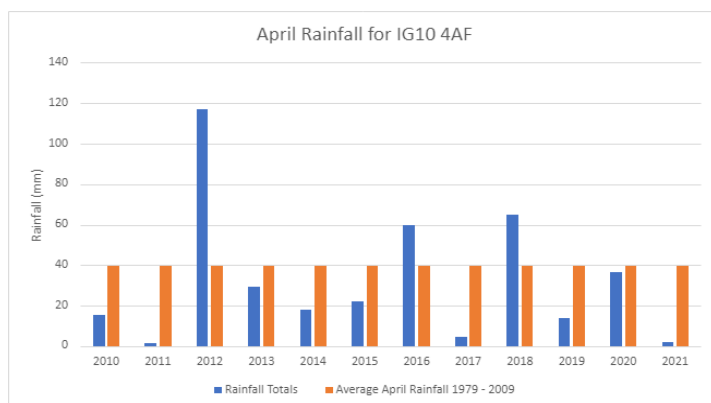
1. Six long service staff have left the Epping Forest team over the reporting period. A Conservation Team Leader, Conservation Arborist, Administrative Team Leader and Stores person have all resigned. Furthermore, a Forest Keeper and Wayleaves Officer have retired. Fixed Term Contract recruitment, subject to the Target Operating Model (TOM) reorganisation is underway for selected staff.

### Budgets

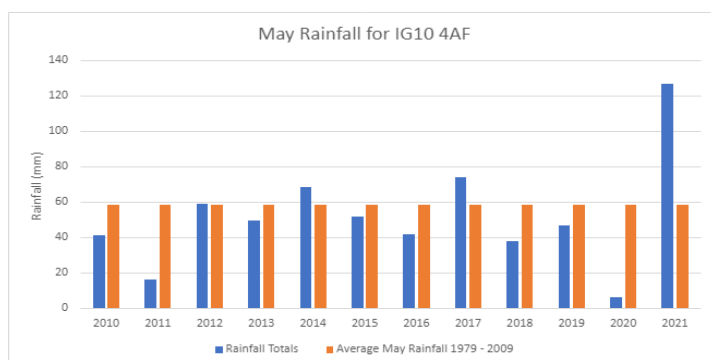
2. At the end of May, two months (17%) of the financial year, spend is at 14% of budget overall. Income is currently performing ahead of projections, reflecting sales of car parking annual passes and a rise in licence applications due to the lifting of the Government's COVID-19 restrictions on recreational and social gatherings.

### Weather

3. Rainfall for April 2021 registered just 2.2mm and was much lower than the average rainfall seen for April (39.8mm), showing a 37.6mm (94.5%) decrease. There was a total of only 4 days of rain, the wettest day, 28 April, with just 1mm of rainfall.



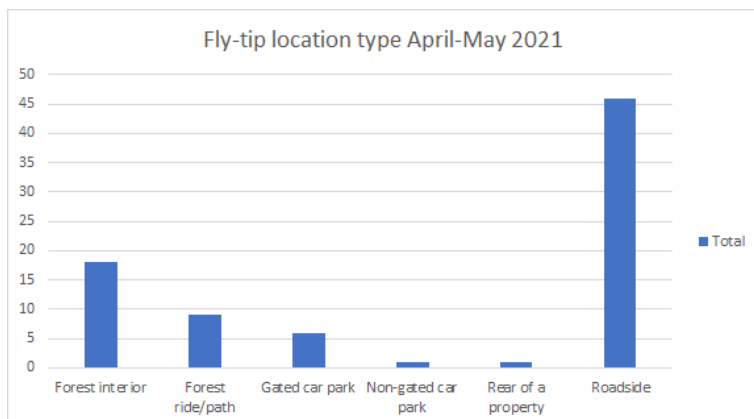
4. May 2021 has recorded the coldest and wettest conditions since 1986. The month's rainfall had a total of 126.8mm which was 215.6% above the average for this time of year (58.8mm). There was a total of 24 days of rain with the 16 May the wettest day, seeing 19.8mm of rainfall.



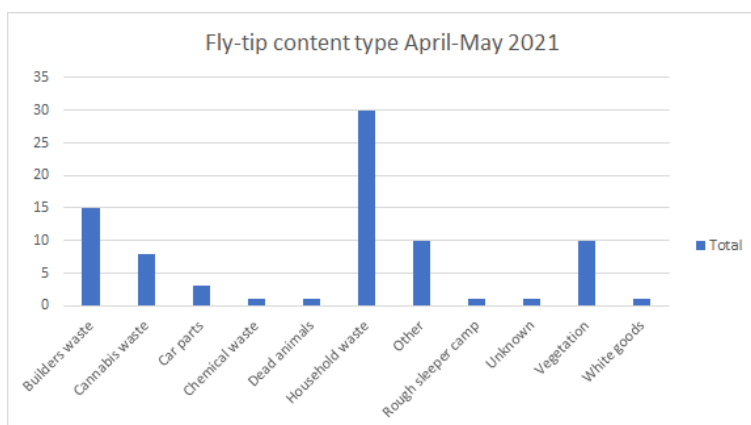
## Forest Services

### Fly-tipping

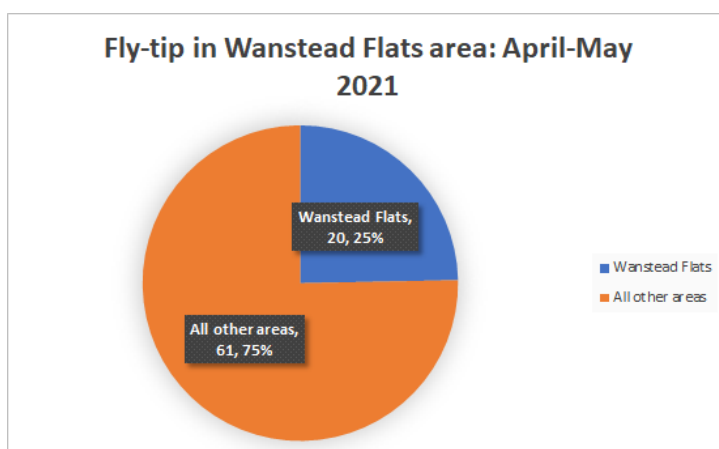
5. There were a total of 81 fly-tips recorded over the period of April – May 2021, this represents a 17% decrease over the same period in 2020.



6. Roadside locations represented 57% of the tip locations over the period.



7. Household waste represented the largest category of items tipped over the period at 30 (37%), while 'Other waste' (concrete, polystyrene, wires etc.) represented 10 tips (12%).



8. There were 20 fly-tips in the Wanstead Flats area over the period which represents 25% of all tips. Nine of these tips were on Forest Land adjacent to Highway Land on Capel Road.

### **Enforcement Activity**

9. No EPA prosecutions were heard in the period under report. Four verbal warnings were issued, alongside one written warning issued and two Conditional Cautions bringing total fines of £290.

### **Licences**

10. A total of 47 licences for events were issued during the months being reported, which yielded an income of £124,358.25 plus VAT, mainly due to three large compound licences. Eight licences were issued during the same period in 2020 yielding an income of £2,520 which reflects the impact of COVID-19 restrictions.

### **Unexplained Deaths**

11. Sadly, there were 2 unexplained deaths during this reporting period, bringing the total for the calendar year of 4. This is higher than the average occurrences in previous years, and contrary to national measures which show no increase in unexplained deaths.

- 01/04/21 – Wake Valley Pond
- 09/04/21 – Exchange Land Wanstead

### **Rough Sleepers**

12. There were 15 rough sleeper camps located during the reporting period which have been managed in line with No Second Night Out (NSNO) guidance. The current COVID-19 restrictions around household mixing is thought to be expanding homelessness by reducing the potential for short-term support by friends and relatives.

- 01/04/21 – Woodcote Rd cleared on 22/04/21
- 03/04/21 – Bushwood, cleared 03/04/21
- 06/04/21 – Near Bushwood Lodge, vacated 06/04/21
- 07/04/21 – Whipps Cross Hospital, vacated 02/05/21
- 07/04/21 – Bushwood, vacated 02/05/21
- 10/04/21 – Exchange Land, vacated 10/05/21
- 13/04/21 – Wanstead Flats, vacated 13/04/21
- 15/04/21 – Woodcote Rd, vacated 20/04/21
- 26/04/21 – Woodcote Rd, vacated 29/04/21
- 02/05/21 – Bury Rd, vacated 02/05/21
- 15/05/21 – Bushwood Road, vacated 10/06/21
- 17/05/21 – Woodcote Rd, vacated 17/05/21
- 23/05/21 – By Crossroads Whipps Cross, vacated 05/06/21
- 22/05/21 – Leyton Flats, vacated 28/05/21
- 30/05/21 – Cuckoo Brook, vacated 30/05/21

### **Unauthorised Occupations**

13. There has been 1 traveller incursion over this reporting period at Chingford Plain.

14. There have been no reported Unlicensed Music Events (UMEs) or Spontaneous Social Gatherings (SSGs) on Forest Land.

### **Injunction**

15. In anticipation of the repeat of last summer's poor public behaviour associated with some SSGs and UMEs, an application at the High Court for temporary powers to enable the enforcement of selected offences was unsuccessful following developing case law underlining the importance of identifying and notifying 'persons unknown'.

### **Dog Incidents**

16. There have been 3 recorded dog related incidents during this reporting period.

- 16/04/21 – Wanstead Flats, Dog off lead and jumped up and scratched complainant.
- 20/04/21 – Wanstead Park, Dog on Dog attack, Metropolitan Police dealing
- 03/05/21 – Near Earls Path, Dog attacked runner, Essex Police dealing.

### **Deer Vehicle Collisions**

17. Epping Forest staff dealt with a total of 3 deer vehicle collisions (DVC) during this reporting period.

- 12/04/21 - Crown Hill near Junction with Epping New Road
- 26/04/21 – Epping New Road
- 29/04/21 – Nursery Rd near Stubbles

### **Open Horse Riding**

18. On Monday 28 May, the Forest re-opened to open horse riding.

### **North Essex Parking Partnership Red Route Figures**

19. There have been 143 Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued manually during the reporting period. These figures do not include PCNs issued from the NEPP camera car footage. The total number of PCN's issued on the red route to date now totals 1,341. A review by NEPP of the Red Route Scheme is planned for late summer.

### **Car Park Charging Scheme**

20. During April and early May, the infrastructure to support the introduction of car parking charges was installed within the fourteen Phase One car park locations. Software and association administrative systems were brought to operational readiness through close liaison with chosen contractors.

21. The scheme went live to the public on the 10 May 2021. There were a limited number of technical 'teething issues', which were quickly resolved by contractors and affected a limited number of users. Aside from these initial issues, the system functioned as intended. Forest Keepers and Voluntary Wardens were deployed to support visitors with questions regarding the new payment system.

22. A two-week 'grace period' ended on the 24 May, with visitors given warning notices instead of Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) during this period. The first week of PCNs, including a busy bank holiday, saw a steady number of enforcement measures. Enforcement levels are expected to fall now that the system is more established.
23. There were a number of customer contacts relating to the introduction of charging, particularly during the first week. Some of these were complaints about the introduction of charges, however, the vast majority were queries about how the RINGO pay-by-phone and Pay-by-Card systems work and how to access the phone application. These questions have quickly declined as visitors became more familiar with the process.
24. The annual pass has proved more popular than some predictions with 152 sold so far and to date (7 June). A total of 10,600 parking sessions had been booked and overall, the scheme has raised £47,600 in the first 28 days of generally unseasonable weather.
25. Negotiations are continuing with tenants, inclosure occupiers and neighbours who claim to be adversely affected by the introduction of the car parking scheme.

### **Volunteer Figures**

26. There has been a total of 525 volunteer hours completed over this reporting period by 37 volunteer wardens.

## **Heritage; Landscape and Nature Conservation**

### **Climate Action Strategy**

27. A report was presented to this Committee (SEF 31/21) and Project Sub (Policy & Resources) Committee detailing the first phase of works. This will include tendering for studies to understand the carbon sequestration across the Open Spaces and identifying opportunities to increase it, to catalogue and quantify the natural beneficial functions that the ecosystem services of the Open Spaces provide, and to understand how wood products can be used to lower carbon footprints. The report also outlined the first phase of land management works on the Buffer Lands.

### **Biodiversity**

28. Discussions were held with the regional Natural England Nature Recovery Networks officer to explore opportunities for including some of the conservation projects at Epping Forest in the contributions to the network and ensuring link-ups with similar projects.
29. The main wildlife event of this period was the mass defoliation of oak and hornbeam trees across the Forest, by caterpillars of the Winter Moth (*Operophtera brumata*). Numbers of Winter Moth have been building for several years, with limited but noticeable concentrations of defoliation of oaks in both 2019 and 2020. However, this was the first mass event since 2009, the longest gap between such Forest-wide defoliation years since the 1990s.



30. Unfortunately, despite this large availability of food resources for Forest bird populations, like the blue and great tits, the impacts of climate change continue to create an asynchrony between these birds and their insect prey. On average birds' eggs are hatching earlier and the caterpillars appearing later than in previous decades.
31. The impact of this asynchrony was revealed by the nest monitoring results from the Centre of Ecology and Hydrology PhD project, that is in its second year at the Forest in 2021. The numbers of nestlings and their growth rates were much lower than normal, with significant die-off of starved nestlings. The birds are responding in some cases with second broods or second nesting attempts and, as a result, the breeding season looks set to continue until the end of June, a month later than average.
32. In the meantime, Starlings, a bird species in severe decline and now red-listed in the UK, produced their young much later than in 2020 and many of their fledglings missed out on the caterpillar bonanza. However, there were beneficiaries and Jackdaws, with young, were concentrated in their hundreds across Bury Wood and Fairmead.
33. The unusually cool spring, including one of the driest April months on record, ensured that the Forest and Buffer Land grasslands had significantly limited growth in this period (see *Grazing* section below). Peak flowering of the rare species, Lousewort, was delayed by 6 weeks and in some of the smaller populations the dry April resulted in no appearance of any plants. However, the even rarer Petty Whin was found flowering at a new site in the centre of the Forest, probably spread through cattle grazing.

### **Damage to Forest and Buffer Lands habitats**

34. A recent spate of sewage leaks from Thames Water pipes has damaged three sites across the Forest and Buffer Lands. The most significant damage occurred in April at Swaines Green (Compartment 63) on the Buffer Lands. Here the pond, dug as a special conservation project on the site shortly after acquisition and an important breeding place for amphibians, was flooded with large volumes of raw sewage from a pipe running close to it.
35. Following a site inspection with your officers, Thames Water undertook to clean out the pond and refill with non-chlorinated water. Heavy rainfall in May also helped with the water level restoration. TW also completed repairs to the pipeline in May, including removing significant tree root ingress.
36. Water sample testing has also been requested so that residual pollution can be assessed later in the summer. In the meantime, newt fencing was put around the pond to prevent newts reaching it from their hibernation sites, and as a result this year's breeding cycle is unlikely to take place.

### **Agri-environment Schemes**

37. Epping Forest Officers completed the negotiation with the Rural Payments Agency (SEF 13/21) on the Countryside Stewardship application which went live

in early April 2021. This agreement is for £1.39 million over 10 years (2020-2029).

38. A Countryside Stewardship application for Wanstead Park has begun to be explored to fund some habitat management and historic feature protection.
39. The annual Basic Payment Scheme application was submitted for the whole Open Spaces Department in mid-May. This is the first year that income will start to be reduced by the government in its phased approach to ending this Scheme under the Agriculture Act 2020. The expected income in 2021 will be around 18% lower than in 2020 falling by around £33,000 from approximately £185,000 to £152,000. However, despite the drop in this financial year, the income provides important support for grassland management work.

### **Defra visit**

40. Looking forward to future grant opportunities and previewing the possibilities that new UK environmental policies may provide for the Forest and Buffer Lands, your officers met with senior Defra officials and the Knepp Estate project on 9<sup>th</sup> April. Defra's Deputy Director (Climate) and Director of Environmental Strategy both attended. The site visit looked at wood-pasture restoration in the Forest and future proposals for parkland and wood-pasture creation at Copped Hall.
41. Several new avenues for working together with the Knepp Estate project on research were identified and the Defra officers provided an overview of the possible grant landscape and provided links to senior officials in Landscape Recovery and Biodiversity Net Gain with the aim of integrating the Forest conservation work into these new Policy themes.

### **Grazing**

42. As highlighted at paragraphs 3 and 32, a lack of "April showers" and cold night-time temperatures has resulted in a subdued spring with low vegetation growth across the Forest. Animals left their winter housing at Great Gregories Yard and started grazing from mid-April with the majority held back on the Buffer Lands until vegetation heights on Forest sites start to increase.
43. Grazing has been re-introduced at Yardley Hill / Yates Meadow / Daisy Plain with six cows equipped with the new, grant-funded GPS collars. This area has not been grazed for many decades, apart from a trial in 2003, which ended abruptly after a short period due to vandalism to the electric fence used to contain them and the escape of the cows.
44. The re-introduction of grazing on these sites is incredibly important for their sustainable, long-term management and wildlife diversity. The conversion of vegetation to dung, helps support a huge array of life below and above ground. Above ground insects that feed on, and are attracted to dung, also provide food for birds and small mammals. The range of vegetation heights resulting from extensive grazing creates habitat for insects to breed, hunt and perch with short areas of grass providing basking spots. The shorter turf areas also double as areas where birds, like Starlings, can land and feed.

## **Heritage**

45. Following approval by your Committee, the Copped Hall Parkland Management Plan was published and circulated to various stakeholders. In addition, a meeting was held in May with Historic England and Natural England senior advisors to consider survey requirements and funding options for managing the important heritage features of this historic parkland landscape.

## **Forest Protection and planning matters**

### **Town & Country Planning**

46. The SAC Mitigation Oversight Group met twice during this period to continue its examination of governance proposals, financial arrangements and, in particular, the SAMMS package of measures for recreational pressure mitigation on the Forest. The meetings continue to be chaired by Natural England (NE), with coordination of information also by the GLA officers and with Epping Forest District Council (EFDC), six London Boroughs and the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC) attending.
47. In terms of the SAMMS package, this was revised at these meetings and additional costings on unsurfaced pathways were presented to the authorities. The package requires further revision in relation to hubs versus Forest-wide proposed expenditure. The aim was to conclude the discussions and filtering of measures by July so that they would be ready for presentation to each of the authorities' members, including your Committee. The current timetable is for these measures and the governance and finance arrangements to be ready for sign-off by members by October this year.
48. London Borough of Redbridge (LBR) and London Borough of Waltham Forest (LBWF) agreed to work together to commission legal opinion on the issue of 'in perpetuity' and how this period should be agreed for the current round of developer tariffs.
49. **Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) Local Plan:** there was limited further liaison with EFDC over this period. However, at a Cabinet meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> April, EFDC approved a district-wide Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy, which included two appendices concerning alternative natural greenspaces (SANGS). Comments on the SANGS approach would need to be made during the forthcoming Planning Inspector's Main Modifications consultation.
50. **London Borough of Waltham Forest (LBWF)** officers arranged a day-long visit to all potential SANGS sites with Natural England and your officers. The review of sites and discussion around SANGS were instructive and wide-ranging and the conclusions from the meeting will help LBWF revise its Green & Blue Infrastructure and also its Local Plan Habitats Regulations Assessment. Both of these important documents were the subject of significant proposed amendments by your officers and Natural England at LBWF's Local Plan Regulation 19 Consultation in December 2020.

### **Town & Country Planning – Development Control**

51. Comments were submitted to Planners for this reporting period as follows:

- Former LBWF Court buildings LBWF 210776 (slide 70) this will see the demolition of the former magistrate's court buildings and replacement with five new residential blocks ranging from 5- 9 storeys comprising of 433 residential units (205 affordable). The application was opposed due to its proximity to the Forest (1km) and poor SANGS provision, in addition to its position between Fulbourne Rd (approved) and Jubilee Park, which was provided as a SANG for the now approved later development.
- The Plains, 3 Crescent Rd, Chingford Green – within 50m of SAC and made no mention in planning statement.
- Knoll House Bury Rd, EFDC 0775/21 (additional dwelling) (this focused on whether EFDC could account for this within their windfall numbers) if approved would require a deed of grant easement.
- 76 Algers Rd (6 flats in replacement of single dwelling). (this focused on whether EFDC could account for this within their windfall numbers)

52. In addition to those planning applications that were commented on, three significant developments were previewed during this period which will require future detailed responses:

- Whipps Cross University Hospital residential-led re-development for 1,500 homes, within 500m of the Epping Forest SAC, was submitted in April but the hundreds of documents were only provided in the second week of May as a result of their complexity.
- A smaller development proposal of 21 units at Whitehouse Farm, Hawksworth, Chingford was significant being adjacent to the SAC boundary and will require liaison with LBWF officers under the Habitat Regulations HRA requirements.
- A proposed retirement village within the curtilage of the West Essex Golf Course, on the western flank of the SAC boundary.

### **Land Registration, Access Audit & Wayleaves**

53. Work is continuing, in partnership with Savills plc, on the valuation of commercial wayleaves and the response to a Court Mediation process associated with litigation.

### **Operations**

#### **Insurance works**

54. Unusually, there has been a second tree failure which came down on a three-storey block of flats at Roebuck Green this year. The saturated ground and unseasonal high winds may have been contributory factors. An independent assessment of the tree and its management is being undertaken as part of the Corporate liability response.

55. During the period, there have been three liability claims, one related to a car park and two linked to recent tree failures and the consequent damage to buildings. There have also been five claims for tree-related subsidence on buildings with

one claim on its third iteration. In all the claims cases, robust defences have been submitted and the outcomes are still with the insurance companies.

### **Risk Management Works**

56. Oak Processionary Moth (*Thaumetopoea processionea*) (OPM): Spraying for OPM was undertaken in the period with two sessions 2 weeks apart 28-29 April and 10 May when around 100+ trees across ten sites being sprayed. This will be followed up by nest surveys and their subsequent manual removal over the next few months.
57. Tree Safety: There has been a considerable increase in tree safety tasks assessed for the current year with 1,300 trees identified for work, double the usual amount. It would appear that the increase in the lethal Sooty Bark Disease (*Cryptostroma corticale*) (SBD) on Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), following the previous dry years has been the main cause for the increase. Arborist teams will be focusing on the most high-risk, Red + and Red, tree safety zones in the first instance this year. There is a distinct possibility that amber-listed tasks may not be completed this year due to staff shortages and increased workload.
58. Large Raised Reservoir: The biannual inspection of the reservoirs by the Supervising Engineer from Dams and Reservoirs (Ltd) was undertaken during the period. Apart from Baldwins Pond and Birch Hall Park (Deer Sanctuary), where improvement works are in development. The Supervising Engineer found the dam embankments to be good to satisfactory in condition with the requirement to keep engaged with current maintenance schedule and inspections. The responsibility for the routine maintenance of Pumps, Penstock Gates and Valves remains the subject of discussion between the City Surveyor and the Department of Built Environment.

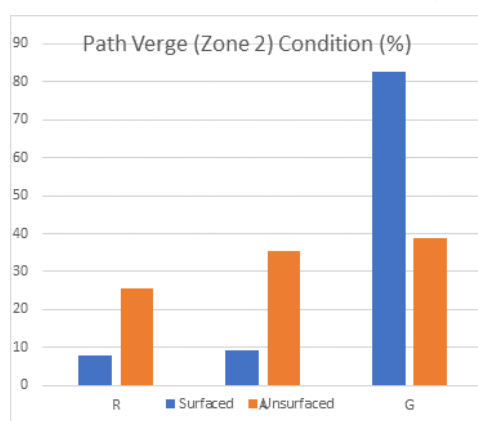
### **Access Works**

59. Work has started on an inaugural item for the built natural play area in Wanstead Park with the arrival of two large logs. The logs had been felled as part of routine tree safety works. To transport the logs specialist help was needed from a grab loader lorry contractor. With the valued help of fund raising by local residents the first item of play equipment should be in place from the end of July.
60. In a new development this year 30km of Forest path verge cutting was specified along with the retendered highway verge cutting contract programme. This work will focus on the busier public access areas of the Forest and will begin to progress improvements to path management outlined in the Path Management Policy Development Note approved by your Committee. The further use of contractors will also help to release skilled staff time to undertake the Countryside Stewardship Schemes implemented directly by Epping Forest staff.
61. During the period, a Red, Amber, Green (RAG) assessment of the condition of the 198km of the managed path network across Epping Forest and the Buffer lands was completed. The RAG assessment was based on a system pioneered by the National Trust at Hatfield Forest and along each path three zones were RAG assessed, namely:
- 61.1 Zone 1 - the pathway which is typically up to three metres wide.

61.2 Zone 2 – path verge which is typically up to four metres from the path edge on both sides of the path.

61.3 Zone 3 – wider indeterminate accessible area beyond the immediate path verge of Zone 2.

62. Surfaced paths fared the best with 4.5% of the path surfaces (Zone 1) in the red compared with 49.5% of the unsurfaced paths in the very poor red category. Overall, 17% of surfaced path verges (Zone 2) ) and 61% of the unsurfaced path verges were in the R and A categories and it is estimated that in total permanent verge damage (Zones 2 and 3) on unsurfaced paths is 82.5 ha. The equivalent figure for the unsurfaced paths is 10 ha. A full report on the survey and the costs of restoration with ne brought to November Committee.



### Wanstead Park Ponds Project

63. The further study into the interaction of the River Roding and the Large Raised Reservoir Ornamental Water at Wanstead Park has now been awarded to Dams & Reservoirs Ltd. It is anticipated that the study will be completed by the end of the summer.

### Birch Hall Park Pond (Deer Sanctuary)

64. Following the successful award of planning consent, a quotation for the pond access haul track works to Birch Hall Pond from the City of London term contractor has exceeded allocated budgets. The works will now be tendered externally, with the aim of undertaking works this summer, whilst ground conditions are usually good.

### Visitor Services

#### Learning and Education (Learning Team)

65. The OS Learning Team have been delighted to welcome schools back to Epping Forest following the lifting of COVI-19 restrictions. Schools have participated in a variety of outdoor learning activities where they can develop their understanding of local history, explore habitats and biodiversity and build their confidence and skills. Over the Easter holidays the team also ran a successful 'nature and wellbeing' programme for families, developed in response to concerns over the impact of the pandemic on mental health, as well as facilitating an Epping Forest

visit for children and young people from Newham who had been suffering from anxiety and depression over lockdown.

### **Chingford Golf Course**

66. Since reopening on 29 March, the golf course has remained busy. Total income generated from green fees and shop related sales amounted to £142,983.00 for April and May compared to £30,846.00 the previous year (noting that the golf course was closed in 2020 from 1 April – 17 May), an increase of £112,137.00. Online bookings increased this financial year compared to the previous year by £46,590.50. The grounds staff have been carrying out regular cutting duties & setting the course up ready for play. A total of 5 sprays were carried out on the greens to help speed up the recovery from winter disease and damage.

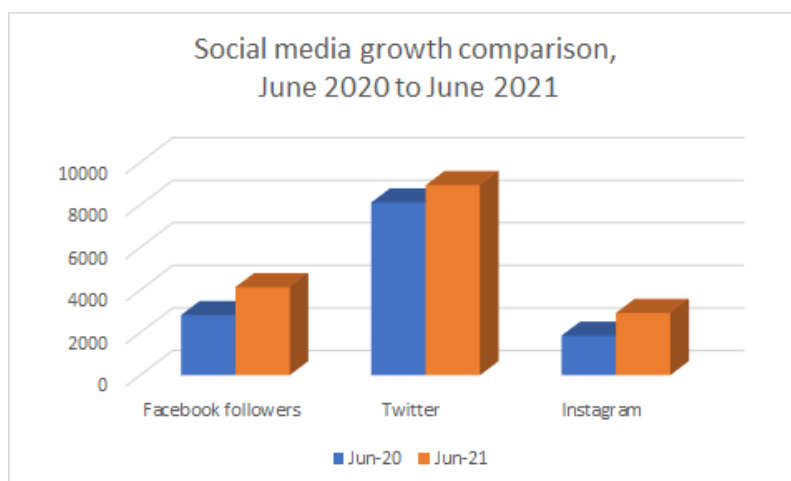
67. The new staff welfare facilities were completed, and staff have moved into the building and the portable facility has been removed.

### **Communications**

68. As of 10 June 2021, Epping Forest social media following is:

- Twitter followers: 8,926 (10% increase)
- Facebook followers: 4,136 (47% increase)
- Instagram followers: 2924 (58% increase)

69. The chart shows a comparison of our social media followers at the same point in 2020 and 2021:



70. Epping Forest news monthly continued to be delivered via a digital edition of Forest Focus, in place of the printed magazine which had to be temporarily stopped due to the pandemic. This continues to be well-received and is an effective method of communicating seasonal messaging and allows update messaging around how to visit the Forest in light of COVID-19 restrictions according to most up to date government guidance.

71. The Top social media posts for April and May 2021 related to messaging around visiting over the Easter period.

72. The social media activity relating to the felling of a much-loved tree in the James Lane area of Epping Forest (near Leyton Flats) was successful and appreciated by the local community.
73. Signage for the recently implemented car park charges have been successfully delivered and installed and are now operational.
74. New noticeboards are being installed in the car parks where charges have been introduced and work is progressing to ensure that appropriate and seasonal messaging is well-presented within these new noticeboards, ready for their installation.

### Wanstead Flats

75. Despite the Football Association arbitrated extension to the football season, grassroots clubs chose not to play over April in May reflecting the cancellation of the earlier part of the season as part of COVID-19 restrictions.
76. The grounds staff have been carrying out regular cutting duties, pitch repairs & increased litter picking duties due to the increase of visitors. Work to clear overgrown vegetation and trees around Capel Road compound were also carried out.
77. While technically Parkrun at Wanstead Flats has been able to run since 29 March, the organisation had selected a later start in June.

### Horse Riding

78. Total income from horse riding licences for April & May 2021 amounted to £6,585.53 compared to £2,440.97 the previous year. The figures showed an increase of £4,144.56 given that in the previous year the first national lockdown was in place with British Horse Society guidance recommending that horse riders should restrict their activities to stable facilities.

### Visitor Numbers

79. Visitor Figures for April – May 2021 & 2020

Visitor Number s	QEHL 2021	2020	View 2021	2020	Temp le 2021	2020	High Beach 2021	2020	Total 2021	Total 2020
April	0	0	442	0	0	0	0	0	442	0
May	20	0	1170	0	0	0	0	0	1190	0

80. The Visitor Centre at Chingford (The View) reopened on the 13 April. Comparison with 2020 is still in the period in which the visitor centres were closed due to national restrictions on indoor spaces.



81. Figures are circa 10% of the 2019 number for April and circa 25% of the 2019 figure for May. Visitors still seem reluctant to visit indoor spaces, while the building has a limited capacity this has not been reached at any time.

### **Major incidents**

82. None.

### **COVID-19 National Health Emergency**

83. The four-step plan to ease England's lockdown published by Government on 22 February, eased further on 17 May as Step 3 was implemented following satisfactory progress with a number of public health indicators. Most legal restrictions on meeting others outdoors were lifted, although gatherings of over 30 people remained illegal. Most businesses in all but the highest risk sectors were able to reopen.

### **Paul Thomson**

Superintendent of Epping Forest

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## **EPHING FOREST CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**

**Wednesday, 16 June 2021**

**Minutes of the meeting of the Epping Forest Consultative Committee held at remotely at 7.00 pm**

### **Present**

#### **Members:**

Graeme Doshi-Smith (Chairman)	George Lund, Epping Forrest Transport Action Group
Benjamin Murphy (Deputy Chairman)	Gordon Turpin, Highams Park Planning Group (inc Snedders)
Judith Adams, Epping Forest Heritage Trust	Tim Wright, Orion Harriers
John Sharpe, Friends of Wanstead Parklands	Carol Pummell, Epping Forest Riders Association
Elizabeth Burn, Theydon Bois and District Rural Preservation	Steve Williamson, Royal Epping Forest Golf Club
Susan Creevy, Loughton Residents Association	Verderer Nicholas Munday
Valerie Jones, West Essex Ramblers	Verderer Paul Morris
Tim Harris, The WREN Group	
Andy Irvine, Bushwood Area Residents Association	
Francis Baker, Lee Valley Youth Cycling Club	
Nick Owen	

#### **Officers:**

Richard Holt	- Town Clerk's Department
Lorraine Brook	- Town Clerk's Department
Paul Thompson	- Superintendent, Epping Forest
Colin Buttery	- Director of Open Spaces
Jeremy Dagley	- Head of Conservation, Epping Forest
Geoff Sinclair	- Head of Operations, Epping Forest
Jacqueline Eggleston	- Head of Visitor Operations, Epping Forest
Martin Newham	- Head Forest Keeper, Epping Forest
Sarah Reid	- Community and Engagement Officer, Epping Forest
Fiona Martin	- Management Planning Assistant, Epping Forest

### **1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Robert Smith and Bruce Mackie. It was noted that Francis Baker would be attending as a named substitution for Bruce Mackie as the Lee Valley Youth Cycling Club representative.

The Chairman welcomed the new Members of the Committee to their first meeting.

### **2. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

There were no declarations.

3. **MINUTES**

The Committee considered the minutes of the previous meeting of the Epping Forest Consultative Committee held on the 10<sup>th</sup> of February 2021.

A Committee Member requested that the attendance of his named substitute for the last meeting be added to the record.

**RESOLVED-** That, subject to the correction specified, the minutes of the Epping Forest Consultative Committee held on the 10<sup>th</sup> of February 2021 be approved as an accurate record.

4. **MINUTES OF THE EPPING FOREST & COMMONS COMMITTEE**

The Committee received the draft minutes of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> of May 2021.

**RESOLVED-** That the draft minutes be noted.

5. **EPPING FOREST - SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE FOR FEBRUARY TO MARCH 2021 (SEF 19/21)**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Open Spaces providing the Superintendent's update for February to March 2021.

Responding to query from a Committee Member the Director of Open Spaces explained that the report only dealt with the period up to March 2021 because of an issue of the committee meeting's timing and that usually the Consultative Committee received two reports both on two month periods.

Following a question from a Committee Member the Director of Open Spaces explained that the successful grant for the Epping Forest Heritage Trust to promote the Centenary Walk had been provided from the Bridge House Estates Charity Fund and not the Epping Forest Local Budget.

A Committee Member commended the Epping Forest management team for the success of the temporary fencing at Wanstead Flats which had allowed skylarks and quail to use the area.

The Director of Open Spaces, responding to a Committee Member's question, provided the Committee with an update on the issue of car parking in Epping Forest.

The Committee discussed how best for Members to suggest items of business for committee agendas to allow for the meetings to be more open a forum of discussion. It was noted that this would be explored further going forward.

The Director of Open Spaces, responding to a query from a Committee Member, provided an update on the City of London Corporation's response to the Epping Forest District Council Local Plan. It was noted that a further report will be provided to the Epping Forest and Commons Committee in July.

**RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

6. **CHINGFORD INDIVIDUAL SITE PLAN (SEF 26/21)**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Open Spaces on the Chingford Individual Site Plan. The Director of Open Spaces introduced the report and highlighted the central elements.

The Committee discussed instances of anti-social behaviour by cyclist in Chingford. The Director of Open Spaces confirmed that most cyclists used Epping Forest in a manner that doesn't negatively affect the Forest however there were issues with the behaviour of some cyclists. It was noted that the representative of cyclist groups on the Epping Forest Consultative Committee would be helpful to discuss these issues.

The Committee commented on the access concerns for Chingford and Epping Forest more generally. A Committee Member observed that Chingford, Loughton and High Beech access concerns were evidently linked. It was noted that guided walking routes within the Forest were also to be considered.

A Committee Member commented on the issue of signage that it was possible for signs to appropriately sized but not adversely impact the natural environment.

**RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

7. **COPPED HALL PARKLAND MANAGEMENT PLAN (SEF 27/21)**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Open Spaces on the Copped Hall Parkland Management Plan. The Director of Open Spaces introduced the report and thanked colleagues for their contributions.

A Member of the Committee acknowledged the wonderful work completed on this report and highlighted the original role of the buffer land in protecting the Forest which now has the opportunity, through carbon sequestration to make an even more significant contribution to Epping Forest. In addition, it was suggested that thought be given to how best to chronicle this project as an important part of the history of Epping Forest. The Director of Open Spaces agreed that the project represented an exciting opportunity and informed the Committee that the funding of the project included hiring new staff that will be asked to consider the question of how best to record the work.

Following concern raised by a Committee Member the Director of Open Spaces confirmed that Copped Hall would not be considered as a formal SANG. In addition, responding to an expression of concern by a Committee Member it was explained that the issue balancing car access at Copped Hall was due to be considered by the Epping Forest and Commons Committee later in the year.

A Member noted that the report was originally produced in 2018 and questioned if the funding for the Carbon Removals project was likely to be approved. The Director of Open Spaces explained that the delay had been caused by other Officer responsibilities and, in part, due to the effective of

COVID. Furthermore, it was confirmed that details on the funding of the project were included in Appendix 7 and that further reports on this matter would be considered over the next eighteen months.

A Committee Member commented that there was no reference to horse riders within the report and that they felt that the horse riders were being forced out of Epping Forest. The Chairman thanked the Committee Member for informing of their views and noted that it was good to see the Consultative Committee being used as a forum to discuss these concerns. The Director of Open Spaces confirmed that the City of London Corporation aims to make the Forest more user friendly for all users including horse riders.

**RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

8. **WANSTEAD PARK PERMISSIVE CYCLING EXTENSION (SEF 28/21)**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Open Spaces on the Wanstead Park Permissive Cycling Extension.

A Committee Member expressed interest in working to circulate the code of conduct for cyclists to relevant stakeholders. The Director of Open Spaces explained that the City of London Corporation was looking to secure funding for further cycling infrastructure and would be happy to discuss how best to circulate the Cycling Code of Conduct to stakeholders.

**RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

9. **TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT & FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2019/20 - EPPING FOREST**

The Committee received a joint report of the Director of Open Spaces and Chamberlain on the Epping Forest Trustees Annual Report and Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2020.

**RESOLVED-** That the report be noted.

10. **QUESTIONS**

Responding to a question from a Committee Member the Director of Open Spaces confirmed that the City of London Corporation had not yet been invited to the Epping Forest District Council's stakeholder group for the Council's Local Plan but noted it was a requirement for the Council to be compliant with relevant legislation.

Following a question from a Committee Member the Committee discussed the implementation of the fencing at Wanstead Park to protect bluebell plants in the area. It was noted that this fencing was generally seen this fencing as a success however Officers were aware that there was a different opinion expressed on social media. It was noted that the signage should be reassessed for its effectiveness.

In response to a Committee Member's question the Director of Open Spaces confirmed that an updated link for reporting instances of fly tipping in Epping Forest would be provided.

**11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no further business considered.

**20:35**

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Chairman

**Contact Officer: Richard Holt**  
**Richard.Holt@cityoflondon.gov.uk**

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<b>Committee(s)</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Epping Forest Consultative – For consultation	16/06/2021
Epping Forest and Commons – For decision	12/07/2021
<b>Subject:</b> Chingford Individual Site Plan (SEF 26/21b)	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	<b>1, 2, 11, 12</b>
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Colin Buttery, Director of Open Spaces	<b>For Decision</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Geoff Sinclair, Head of Operations, Epping Forest and Fiona Martin, Management Planning Assistant	

## Summary

A Strategy and Management Plan for Epping Forest for the period of 2020-30 is being developed alongside a 2020-23 Business Plan. Given the relative size of the Forest and the marked variety of the landscapes and habitats, there is a need to describe the discrete management of key areas.

This report outlines the Individual Site Plan (ISP) that has been prepared for the Chingford area. The legal and statutory context and significant management considerations described in the ISP have been outlined, along with the management strategy proposed for the area.

## Recommendation(s)

Epping Forest and Commons Committee Members are asked to:

- i. Note the comments from the Epping Forest Consultative Committee
- ii. Adopt Option1 where it is proposed that the Chingford ISP be adopted as the operational plan for the Chingford Area.

## **Main Report**

### **Background**

1. On the 18 November 2019, your Committee approved the Epping Forest Management Strategy for the period of 2020-29. As part of the strategy, existing operational activity in main geographical locations and for key activities is being reviewed.
2. The review process comprises a reappraisal of the Epping Forest Charitable Trust's property management issues alongside other significant management considerations, to provide an overview of current practice and an outline of longer-term aspirations.
3. This report outlines the Individual Site Plan (ISP) for the Chingford area that has been prepared as part of the review.

### **Current Position**

4. The Chingford area encompasses an extensive tract of varied terrestrial and aquatic habitats, occupying a wide, gently sloping plain to the south of High Beach, between the valleys of the rivers Lea and Ching. Parts of the Chingford area, such as Barn Hoppitt, have an especially high conservation value for the scarce habitats and species present, and the abundance of ancient Oak pollards; much of the Chingford area is included in the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC), a statutory designation of international importance.
5. Connaught Water, Queen Elizabeth Hunting Lodge and Chingford Golf Course are of important amenity value, attracting a wide spectrum of visitors from beyond the immediate locality. The Visitor Centre at Chingford and Butler's Retreat café, both adjacent to Queen Elizabeth Hunting Lodge, and the Holly Trail café next to Bury Road car park are popular with visitors. Queen Elizabeth Hunting Lodge, a unique Tudor building of national historic importance, is the stand-out heritage feature of the Chingford area, but a number of other buildings and monuments are of historic importance, as is Chingford Golf Course, established in 1888.
6. Substantial housing growth is planned in the surrounding districts under a number of Local Plans, with consequent predicted additional visitor pressure. As part of the development of these Local Plans, a SAC Mitigation Strategy is being developed, which will have significant influence on the Chingford area. The SAC Mitigation Strategy is being developed by Epping Forest District Council and the London Boroughs of Waltham Forest, Redbridge and Newham to mitigate the anticipated effects of new housing developments on Epping Forest.
7. This Individual Site Plan details programmes of work, many of which are building on long-established plans and strategies, lists current management considerations and site-specific issues that the wider mitigation strategy will need to address, and vice versa. The ISP will need to be revised regularly to reflect changes to other plans, including the forthcoming SAC Mitigation Strategy.

## Proposals

8. The ISP first outlines the legal and statutory context for the Chingford area, followed by the significant management considerations impacting on the area, before presenting a management strategy and outline management program. A more detailed operational work activity plan is presented in the appendices, along with an indicative management map and additional background information.

### Management Strategy

9. In addition to the need to discharge its obligations with respect to the legal and statutory context, the ISP identifies a 10-year management strategy for the Chingford area, summarised as follows:
  - a. To identify a programme of conservation measures that builds on existing management and further contributes towards improving the condition status of the Epping Forest SAC and SSSI in the Chingford area.
  - b. To ensure that COL offers a visitor experience to the Chingford area that meets the needs of the surrounding communities today and into the future, in a sustainable and welcoming way.
  - c. To finance an Infrastructure Improvement Programme for the Chingford area, partly derived from income generated locally.
  - d. To seek to mitigate the impact of additional visits from new developments within Epping Forest SAC's Zone of Influence, through a range of measures including improved landscaping, alternative routes and destinations, alongside more and improved interpretation and orientation.

### Management Considerations

10. There are a wide range of management considerations given in the report and these have been summarised below:
  - a. Ecological: The Chingford area is of outstanding conservation value and includes most of the high nature conservation value habitats of Epping Forest, including ancient semi-natural woodland, scrub, acid grassland, heathland, marsh and open water. An ancient oak population of over 350 trees makes Barn Hoppitt of national importance in its own right. Key habitats and species in this area are detailed in the ISP and include:
    - i. *Acid Grassland and wet and dry Heathland*: UK Biodiversity Action Plan habitats, habitats for which the Forest is partly notified under the SSSI and the heathlands are SAC habitats. As such, they are a top priority for wildlife conservation nationally. The acid grassland is being adversely impacted by the historic decline in grazing, increasing visitor impacts and air pollution.
    - ii. *Wood pasture and ancient/keystone pollards*: Barn Hoppitt is unique in Epping Forest, being the best example of Oak wood pasture in Epping Forest, whilst a significant proportion of Bury Wood comprises ancient Hornbeam pollards. Bury Wood and Barn Hoppitt have been the focus for veteran tree and wood

pasture management for over 30 years, with some coupes in Bury Wood on their third repollarding since initial working. The fungi and invertebrate assemblage are of international significance, with numerous nationally scarce species. There are significant pressures impacting on this nationally important habitat, outlined in the report.

- iii. *Lowland calcareous grassland*: Yardley Hill is the only location in Epping Forest with lowland calcareous grassland. It is being adversely impacted by scrub and secondary woodland invasion over many decades. If the calcareous species associated with this outcrop of chalky boulder clay are lost, these calcareous species would also be lost to Epping Forest as a whole.
  - iv. *Neutral grassland*: Much of Chingford Plain is tussocky neutral grassland with patches of scrub cover, providing excellent habitat for many birds. The historic decline in quality of the neutral grassland on Chingford Plain is being addressed by a reinstated grazing regime, however there is still a significant issue with trampling/compaction of grassland by visitors in the wetter months.
  - v. *Spring lines, rivers/streams and ditches*: The River Ching issues from Connaught Water where it is met by the Cuckoo Brook. Several ditches drain water from the hills to the north of Connaught Water and at times have given rise to flooding problems. Overall, these watercourses provide valuable habitat for plant and aquatic invertebrate species of conservation interest but are typically over-shaded and trees have invaded their margins.
  - vi. *Open Water*: Connaught Water is the largest water body in the Chingford area, with several permanent and ephemeral ponds also through the area. Connaught Water is incredibly important for the local bat population with significant numbers of up to ten species foraging over the lake. The invasive non-native species New Zealand Pygmy is a concern in some ponds.
  - vii. *Fungi*: The fungi of the area are diverse, with many uncommon species, including the rare Oak Polypore, for which Epping Forest is a UK stronghold, and the Zoned Rosette, both species legally-protected under Schedule 8 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
  - viii. *Invertebrates*: Extensive survey of Barn Hoppitt between 1995 and 2010 confirmed that the area is of international significance for its saproxylic fauna (invertebrates that are dependent on dead or decaying wood); these invertebrates are associated with the ancient oak wood pasture habitat.
- b. *Heritage and landscape*: The Chingford area has a rich and varied history, though the prominence of QEHL may have eclipsed other aspects of the heritage of the local area. The QEHL is a Grade II\* listed Tudor 'hunt standing' built in 1543 for Henry VIII. Ownership of the building passed to COL as part of the Epping Forest Act 1878 which

specified that it be 'preserved and maintained by them (the Conservators) as an object of public and antiquarian interest'. The Chingford area has also long been a prominent visitor location and during Victorian times, Jubilee Retreat and Butler's Retreat on Chingford Plain provided entertainment such as helter-skelters, merry-go-rounds, donkey rides and non-alcoholic refreshments from tea rooms that could seat up to 3000 people. The view from Pole Hill is one of the most dramatic in Epping Forest and it is also a location with its own rich history, including a connection with TE Lawrence and being associated with the establishment of the Greenwich Meridian.

- c. *Access*: The area is well connected to public transport, with Chingford Station 5 minutes' walk away and where a number of bus routes also terminate. The area hosts seven car parks; however, there are significant issues at busy times of on-road car parking, eg by Connaught Water, leading to congestion and road safety concerns. The forthcoming overarching Sustainable Visitor Strategy will aim to address the issues concerning visitor access to the popular locations of QEHL, Connaught Water, the Visitor Centre and Butler's Retreat.
- d. *Chingford Golf Course*: This is an 18-hole public golf course run by Epping Forest Charitable Trust as part of Epping Forest; there is a small shop in the Caddy House building opposite the golf course, adjacent to the Holly Trail café. The course was established in 1888 and later redesigned by William Dunn (Jnr), the first course professional, and then James Braid in the 1920s. It is currently laid out in two returning loops, and plays a maximum 6342 yards, par 72. The course hosts two golf clubs - Royal Epping Forest Golf Club and Chingford Golf Club.
- e. *Local Plans*: The Local Plans for both Epping Forest District Council (EDFC) and the London Borough of Waltham Forest (LBWF) are being revised and all are planning a significant increase in housing and employment space. Chingford is a very well-known and popular location amongst visitors with growing negative impacts on the features of conservation interest of the Epping Forest SAC. The developments arising out of the new Local Plans are likely to add further negative impacts to the Chingford area.

#### Property Management Context

11. The main property management issues, additional to the normal actions such as tree safety management which are undertaken through the Forest, and for which action will be required at Chingford have been identified as:
- a. *Statutory Designations*: Much of the area lies within the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Four of the seven compartments were assessed by Natural England (NE) as 'unfavourable – recovering', one compartment as 'unfavourable-no change' and two as 'Favourable'. Notwithstanding the unit condition assessment outcomes, Natural England states that there remains a very significant issue relating to air quality and many veteran trees within the area display clear symptoms of stress. The area also lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt with QEHL

and the area around QEHL designated as Archaeological Priority Areas. QEHL is a Grade II\* Listed Building, whilst Butler's Retreat and the Ordnance Survey granite obelisk on Pole Hill are Grade II Listed Buildings.

- b. *Flood Risk*: Under the Reservoirs Act 1975 as amended 2010, Connaught Water is classified as a Large Raised Reservoir. Connaught Water also floods at the upstream end of the lake each winter, which in turn floods the Easy Access Path, impeding access. Winter flooding also occurs along the Red Path from the main ditch draining into Connaught Water, which drains the hills to the north.
- c. *Invasive / Alien Species*: New Zealand Pigmyweed (*Crassula helmsii*) is present in Butlers Retreat Pond, Warren Pond and the Golf Course Pond. Oak Processionary Moth (*Thaumetopoea processionea*) is increasingly prevalent on open grown oaks across the site and poses a risk to human health. Other INNS of concern in the area include Canada Goose, Ash Dieback, Cherry Laurel and Terrapin.
- d. *Utilities*: An easement was granted to South Essex Waterworks Company (now Thames Water) to lay a water main pipeline across Epping Forest land in the Chingford area. An analysis of 2019 aerial photography along the pipeline route shows that, in several locations along the pipeline, the vegetation needs further work to maintain the area as grassland.
- e. *Properties*: There are several significant City Corporation properties in the Chingford area, including three Heritage Listed Buildings/Structures. These are detailed in Appendix 3 of the report. The Charitable Trust also licences the operation of two Cafés and a cycle hire facility in the Chingford area. The Orion Harriers running club headquarters rent part of Jubilee Retreat from COL.

### Outline Management Program

- 12. The ISP presents a 5-year outline management program which is then further detailed in Appendix 1 of the report (see the Operations Plan spreadsheet). This will be reviewed and updated yearly to monitor the progress of the management program and ensure that it continues to deliver the outcomes set out in the 10-year management strategy.
- 13. As well as works to be undertaken using existing resources, potential enhancement projects requiring additional support are also identified.

### **Options**

- 14. Your Committee are asked to consider two options:
- 15. **Option 1**: It is proposed that the Chingford ISP be adopted as the operational plan for the Chingford area.
- 16. The plan translates the Epping Forest Management strategy into practical management options for the Chingford area and forms part of the

developing business plan for the Epping Forest. **This option is recommended.**

17. **Option 2:** Do not approve the Chingford ISP.

18. This would result in the continuation of the largely reactive management process and reduce our ability to address significant property and management considerations impacting on the Chingford area. **This option is not recommended**

## **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

### Strategic implications

19. City of London Corporate Plan 2018 - 2023: the restoration and maintenance of the internationally and nationally important habitats of Epping Forest directly underscore the *third pillar* of the Corporate Plan, which is to “*shape outstanding environments*”. The development of ISPs and PDNs form part of the operational planning to achieve this aim of the Corporate Plan.

20. Open Spaces Department Business Plan 2020-21: The proposals in the ISP contribute towards meeting the following outcomes of the plan: 1,3,4,5,7,8,9 and 11.

21. Mitigating the impact on the Epping Forest SAC of increased development arising from Local Authority Plans is currently under review. As one of the busiest and most environmentally sensitive locations in Epping Forest, the outcome of this review has important implications for the Chingford area.

### Financial implications

22. The outline management program has been framed to fit within existing levels of local risk spend at Chingford.

23. Several projects have been identified which will only be progressed if additional financial and practical support can be obtained.

### Legal implications

24. Subject to the provisions of the Epping Forest Acts 1878 & 1880 the Conservators are under a duty at all times to keep Epping Forest uninclosed and unbuilt on as an open space for the recreation and enjoyment of the public. They are also under a duty at all times as far as possible to preserve the natural aspect of the Forest.

25. The Chingford ISP provides the information and guidance to help the COL to meet its requirements under the above Acts.

### Charity Implications

26. Epping Forest is a registered charity (number 232990). Charity Law obliges Members to ensure that the decisions they take in relation to the Charity must be taken in the best interests of the Charity.

### Risk implications

27. None

Equalities implications

28. No negative equality impacts were identified for this proposal.

Climate implications

29. None.

Security implications

30. None.

### **Epping Forest Consultative Committee**

31. Members of the Epping Forest Consultative raise the following issues:

- a. The Royal Epping Forest Golf Club pointed out that the Club had made a pre-application for a much smaller development in order to fund a new clubhouse and secure the finances of the club for the next 100 years, but that the local Borough Council had put a much larger proposal into the emerging Local Plan. The text in the ISP has been left unchanged as this refers to what has been said in the Local plan.
- b. Lee Valley Youth Cycling Club (LVCC) expressed the view that the impact of cyclists on the Forest should not be considered under the anti-social behaviour section of the report. The report section has been retitled to 'Visitor Management'.
- c. LVCC also requested more information on the nature and location of areas sensitive to cycling use so this can be disseminated to cyclists. It was also raised that better onsite signage might also be helpful to educate cyclists.
- d. Epping Forest Heritage Trust (EFHT) noted that we propose to remove the small car park at the front of the Visitor Centre, but made the point that this will need some thought to continue to accommodate deliveries to the VC and also EFHT staff picking up stock from the VC to take to the VC at High Beach. They were also keen on a review of the brown tourist signs.

### **Conclusion**

32. An Individual Site Plan (ISP) has been prepared for the Chingford area. This identifies the legal and statutory context and other significant management considerations that should be considered when approaching the management of this area, and which have drawn on the consultation and support of local stakeholders to develop.

33. A management strategy for the next 10 years is presented along with an outline management program and detailed work proposals. These proposals highlight works that can be achieved through existing Local Risk resources, but also where additional support will be required.



## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Chingford Individual Site Plan
- Appendix 2 – Figure 1a: Chingford Area Locations – Northwest  
Figure 1b: Chingford Area Locations – Southeast  
Figure 1c: Chingford Area Locations – Northeast  
Figure 1d: Chingford Area Locations - QEHL

## **Report authors**

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# CHINGFORD



## Individual Site Plan

Date	23 June 2021
Version Number	v3.2 (EF&CC copy)
Review Date	
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# Chingford

## INDIVIDUAL SITE PLAN

### 1. SUMMARY

The Chingford area is roughly the mid-point in the north-south 14-mile crescent that is Epping Forest today. It encompasses an extensive tract of varied terrestrial and aquatic habitats, occupying a wide, gently sloping plain to the south of High Beach, between the valleys of the Lea and Ching, with three high points. Parts of the Chingford area, such as Barn Hoppitt, have an especially high conservation value for the scarce habitats and species present, and the abundance of ancient Oak pollards; much of the Chingford area is included in the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC), a statutory designation of international importance. The SAC status and the SAC conservation objectives (Natural England, 2018 & 2019a), as well as the SSSI condition, will be central to considerations of future management options.

Connaught Water, Queen Elizabeth Hunting Lodge and Chingford Golf Course are of important amenity value, attracting a wide spectrum of visitors from beyond the immediate locality. The Visitor Centre at Chingford (formerly known as The View/The View Visitor Centre) and Butler's Retreat café, both adjacent to Queen Elizabeth Hunting Lodge, and the Holly Trail café next to Bury Road car park are popular with visitors. Queen Elizabeth Hunting Lodge, a unique Tudor building of national historic importance, is the stand-out heritage feature of the Chingford area, but a number of other buildings and monuments are of historic importance, as is Chingford Golf Course, established in 1888.

The honeypot location of Connaught Water is not accessible by public transport, whilst walking routes from local public transport connections to Queen Elizabeth Hunting Lodge / Visitor Centre / Butler's Retreat complex are not obvious to those visitors not familiar with the local area. This results in some of the COL car parks being of insufficient size to cope with demand.

Substantial housing growth is planned in the surrounding districts under a number of Local Plans, with consequent predicted additional visitor pressure. As part of the development of these Local Plans, a SAC Mitigation Strategy is being developed, which will have significant influence on the Chingford area. The SAC Mitigation Strategy is being developed by Epping Forest District Council and the London Boroughs of Waltham Forest, Redbridge and Newham to mitigate the anticipated effects of new housing developments on Epping Forest. This Individual Site Plan details approved programmes of work, many of which are building on long-established plans and strategies, current management considerations and site-specific issues that the wider mitigation strategy will need to address, and vice versa. The ISP will need to be revised regularly to reflect changes to other plans, including the forthcoming SAC Mitigation Strategy and other Forest-wide strategies.

### 2. INTRODUCTION

Individual Site Plans (ISPs) aim to review and collate the City Corporation's property management considerations at specific locations, to give an overview of long-established as well as current practice and outline longer term plans. An important part of the process is to work with key local stakeholders to ensure that we capture the management issues

impacting each site. Site selection is based around areas of Epping Forest that have a high number of competing issues and/or high visitor numbers.

The ISPs reflect the current level of activity at each site; however, an important part of each ISP is the identification of any potential improvement and enhancement projects that require additional resources, including support from external operational stakeholders, for example in the form of grant funding or volunteer person-hours. The information gathered in each report will be used by the City Corporation to prioritise work and spending on each site as part of the development of the 'London's Great Forest' 2020-30 Management Strategy.

Each ISP will aim to follow the same structure, outlined below:

- **Background** – a brief description of the extent of the site covered by the ISP;
- **Property Management Context** – a list of property management constraints such as statutory obligations directly relevant to the management activity or location;
- **Management Considerations** – a list of identified management considerations for the site, with respect to ecology, conservation, community, heritage, landscape, protection and any other identified management issues;
- **Management Strategy** – a summary of the key overall objectives for managing the site, as identified by the audit;
- **Outline Management Programme** – a summary of the management actions identified for the site as a result of the audit and consultation process, with anticipated timelines for completion;
- **Potential Enhancement Projects Requiring External Support** – a list of projects that would enhance the quality of one or more aspects of the site, for which additional support would be required;
- **External Operational Stakeholders** – a list of external stakeholders who have an operational input to the site, who have been consulted as part of the compilation of the Individual Site Plan;
- **Bibliography** – a list of existing reports (if available) that have formed part of the audit for the ISP; and
- **Appendices** – including a detailed activity plan.

### 3. BACKGROUND

#### 3.1 Introduction

The Chingford area is roughly the mid-point in the north-south 14-mile crescent that is Epping Forest today. It encompasses an extensive tract of varied terrestrial and aquatic habitats, occupying a wide, gently sloping plain to the south of High Beach, between the valleys of the Lea and Ching. There are three high points - Yardley Hill and Pole Hill in the west, which slope steeply west down to the Lea valley, and Dannet's Hill on which Queen Elizabeth Hunting Lodge (QEHL) is situated, a unique Tudor hunt standing of national historic importance.

Parts of the Chingford area, such as Barn Hoppitt, have an especially high conservation value for the scarce habitats and species present, and the abundance of ancient Oak pollards; much of the Chingford area is included in the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC), a statutory designation of international importance. Other areas, such as Connaught Water, QEHL and the Chingford Golf Course are of important amenity value, attracting a wide spectrum of visitors from beyond the immediate locality. The Visitor Centre at Chingford and Butler's Retreat café, both adjacent to QEHL, and the Holly Trail café next to Bury Road car park are popular with visitors.

The Chingford area comprises five Forest management compartments (24, 25, 26, 27 and 29) covering a total area of 420 hectares (17.5% of Epping Forest). Compartment 27, most of compartment 24, the northern half of compartment 25 and a wedge of compartment 26 are within Epping Forest District Council (EFDC), whilst the majority of compartment 26 and the southern half of compartment 25 are in the London Borough of Waltham Forest (LBWF). Compartment 29 is split into three Local Authorities: the LBWF to the west of the River Ching, EFDC to the east of the River Ching, and the London Borough of Redbridge to the east of the River Ching southwest of Tuttlebee Lane and a ditch that runs parallel with this Public Right of Way.

From the Chingford area, Epping Forest extends north into Fairmead and Whitehouse Plains (compartment 22), east across the Epping New Road (A104) to Strawberry Hill (compartment 23) and Warren Hill/Powell's Forest (compartment 28) and south into Hatch Forest & Plain (compartment 30). To the west, the Lea Valley Regional Park is an extensive area of mixed terrestrial habitat, canals, river, backwaters and two large reservoirs (King George's and William Girling), whose boundary is only about 150m from the Epping Forest boundary at its closest, west of Yardley Hill.

The hamlet of Sewardstonebury lies to the north of Chingford Plain between areas of open farmland and a golf course, whilst immediately to the south of Rangers Road lies the conurbation of Chingford Green (population 10,287 in 2011). Further east and south of Rangers Road, the suburbs of Chingford, Woodford and Buckhurst Hill squeeze Epping Forest into a narrow stretch of semi-natural habitat between build up areas.

There are approximately 38 km of COL managed paths within the Chingford area as detailed in the Path Policy Development Note (COL, 2020a).

Figures 1 a-c show the locations of the Forest management compartments in the Chingford area, with features of interest mapped, whilst Figure 1 d shows the honeypot locations around QEHL in more detail, along with the many features of interest in this area.

### 3.2 Chingford Plain and Dannel's Hill

The heart of the Chingford area is an expanse of Epping Forest known as 'Chingford Plain' (compartment 26). Chingford Plain is, as the name suggests, a largely flat plain lying on London Clay, but rising to the south up Dannel's Hill, capped by fluvial gravels, towards a busy road (Rangers Road, the A1069). The plain is the remnant of a former medieval hunting ground, marked on the Chapman and Andre 1777 Map of Essex as 'Chingford Fairmaid Bottom'; it is a rare example in the area of grassland with a recorded ancient history. Queen Elizabeth Hunting Lodge (QEHL), a former royal 'hunt standing', is located at the brow of this hill, from which there are extensive views north across the Plain. Adjacent to QEHL are the Epping Forest Visitor Centre at Chingford, Butler's Retreat café, and a Brewers Fair public house and Premier Inn Hotel (the Royal Forest pub, owned by COL).

To the west and down the hill from QEHL, the Bury Road car park is a large COL car park adjacent to the Chingford Golf Course clubhouse and car park, which also has a small café, the Holly Trail Café, and a cycle hire business, Go Further Cycling. To the west of Bury Road lies the Chingford Golf Course. Further north along Bury Road, the former Jubilee Retreat now hosts the Golf Course yard and staff room for COL golf course personnel, and the headquarters for a local running club, the Orion Harriers.

Queen Elizabeth Hunting Lodge is one of Epping Forest's most important heritage assets; it was built for Henry VIII in 1543, when it was known as the 'Great Standing' (and subsequently as 'Great Hunt Standing'). QEHL is a Grade II\* listed building (Historic England, 1954).

This part of Epping Forest is rich in heritage and it is also one of the Forest's most popular locations. In order to better cater for visitors, the Epping Forest Visitor Centre and Museum at Chingford was opened in 2012 as part of an HLF funded project ('Branching Out'), in converted 20<sup>th</sup> century stable buildings. As part of the same HLF project, Butler's Retreat café was refurbished; the café building is a former barn dating from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century and a Grade II listed building (Historic England, 1986).

Chingford Plain is thought to have had an open aspect since before Queen Elizabeth Hunting Lodge was built. Part of the area is currently mown for amenity use, with an area set aside for flying model aeroplanes. Much of the remainder is a mosaic of tussock grassland and scrub patches, providing excellent habitat for many species of birds. There is a central drainage ditch with a band of dense scrub growing along it; a band of secondary woodland to the north of the open plain is included within this compartment because, historically, it was part of the plain.

There is one pond within the management compartment, Butler's Retreat Pond, adjacent to Butler's Retreat café.

### 3.3 Barn Hoppitt and Whitehall Plain

On the southern side of Rangers Road, Barn Hoppitt and Whitehall Plain (compartment 29) are open areas of wood pasture and grass, historically contiguous with Chingford Plain. Barn Hoppitt is unique in Epping Forest, being the best example of Oak wood pasture in the Forest, with well-spaced ancient Oak pollards over sparse grassland with many anthills and a mosaic of scrub patches; it is ideal habitat for bats and rare species of beetle. The River Ching meanders through the compartment from north to south and there is a large pond, Warren Pond. The ancient pollards and associated habitat in the Barn Hoppitt area are of outstanding international conservation importance.

Barn Hoppitt has a small car park off Rangers Road, opposite the Visitor Centre, and a further small car park adjacent to the Connaught Tennis Club (COL, 1987); consequently, the area is easily accessible. Additional visitors come from the Visitor Centre at Chingford and Butler's Retreat café across Rangers Road. The Barn Hoppitt area and, to a lesser extent Whitehall Plain, are popular with visitors, who appreciate the opportunity to walk in varied habitats, in particular among the ancient pollards, within close proximity of the visitor facilities across Rangers Road, and to combine such a walk with a visit to the historic Queen Elizabeth Hunting Lodge.

### 3.4 Connaught Water

Connaught Water (compartment 27) lies to the northeast of Chingford Plain; its main feature is the large lake, which was constructed in 1881 and enlarged in 1893; it is named after the Duke of Connaught, the first Ranger of Epping Forest. This shallow lake was designed by William D'Oyley and was constructed to help drain Fairmead Plain which lies to the north; it forms the headwaters of the River Ching, which flows south across Barn Hoppitt and Whitehall Plain. Until the 1980s, paddling and boating were allowed on Connaught Water and a boat house (no longer present) is shown on the Ordnance Survey 25 Inch Series (1892-1914). The lake is still hugely popular with visitors for its scenic quality, the presence of an easy access path, car park and opportunities for picnicking and feeding the ducks. The lake is also a short walk of around 850 m from the Visitor Centre at Chingford, Butler's Retreat café and Queen Elizabeth Hunting Lodge, which further enhances its appeal to visitors.

Much of the remainder of the compartment is a mosaic of scrub, small glades and well-developed secondary woodland over former very open Oak wood pasture, with a few ancient pollards. The Red Path is a surfaced path linking the car park at Connaught Water with Fairmead Plain; a deep ditch runs parallel to the path, which takes drainage run-off from the hills to the north and feeds into Connaught Water.

### 3.5 Bury Wood

To the north of Connaught Water and Chingford Plain lies Bury Wood (compartment 24), an area of predominantly Hornbeam-Oak pollard woodland, with woodland glades, several surfaced paths and numerous unsurfaced paths, on land that slopes gently upwards to the north. This part of the Chingford area is less heavily frequented by visitors than the honeypot locations around the Visitor Centre, QEHL and Butler's Retreat café and Connaught Water, but those looking for a longer walk or cycle do use the many paths in this area, for example along Jubilee Ride from Bury Road car park to Connaught Water. Two waymarked trails are signposted in Bury Wood, one beginning at Connaught Water and the other at the Holly Trail café / Chingford Golf Course.

Grimston's Oak, situated around 300m north of Connaught Water, is a significant tree in Epping Forest, which stands in a clearing at the junction of three Forest paths. The tree has a girth of around 16 feet (4.8m) with wide spreading branches and is thought to be at least 350 years old. It is included in Epping Forest District Council's 'Favourite Trees' project, which aimed to celebrate the importance of trees within the district (Epping Forest District Council, 2008). The tree appears to be named after the Honourable Robert Grimston, a distinguished 19<sup>th</sup> century cricketer; the Cuckoo Oak and Bedford's Oak are two alternative names for the tree.

Past extraction of gravel in Bury Wood has resulted in hummocks and hollows within this part of Epping Forest; the Cuckoo Pits are the only former gravel pits to hold water year round – they are particularly important for invertebrates and amphibians. The Cuckoo Brook drains hills to the northwest of Bury Wood; the brook cuts across Bury Wood to the southeast, joining with the River Ching as it flows out of Connaught Water, via a ditch on Chingford Plain.

### 3.6 Yardley Hill and Pole Hill

The western fringes of the Chingford area (compartment 25) comprise a mixture of grassland, scrub, ancient woodland with Hornbeam pollards, secondary Oak infill, and green lanes. There are two high points, Yardley Hill and Pole Hill, linked by Daisy Plain. Yates Meadow is the continuation of Yardley Hill. Gilwell Lane is a green lane on the northern edge of the compartment; once upon a time, the lane would have given access to the fields on Yardley Hill from Gilwell Farm (not part of Epping Forest) to the north. Woodman's Ride is the only official surfaced path in the compartment; together with a Public Right of Way on Yardley Lane, the ride links Bury Road with Sewardstone Road. Further official unsurfaced paths connect the various parts of the compartment.

Yardley Hill has patches of chalky boulder clay, the only location in Epping Forest where this type of calcareous geology is uppermost; the grassland in this location supports lime-tolerant plant species not found elsewhere in Epping Forest.

Hawk Wood is the only ancient woodland in the compartment; it extends across the north-western slope of Pole Hill. The remainder of Pole Hill was once open grassland, but considerable scrub and secondary woodland invasion of the grassland has occurred, merging with the original footprint of Hawk Wood. The Greenwich Meridian passes through the apex of the hill - an Ordnance Survey obelisk and triangulation point mark the spot. Part of Pole Hill was formerly owned by T. E. Lawrence; a building from there was removed to the Warren Yard.

Yardley Hill, Pole Hill and Yates Meadow are somewhat remote from the honeypot locations of the Chingford area and are comparatively quiet; local residents appreciate the views of the surrounding countryside from the top of Yates Meadow, as well as its flora in late spring/early summer.



## 4. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT CONTEXT

### 4.1 Statutory Designations

- Special Area of Conservation (SAC): All of Bury Wood and Connaught Water are within the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation, as is the majority of Barn Hoppitt, with only The Birkbeck at the southern end of the compartment and a sliver to the west of Forest Side not included. Most of Yardley Hill and Pole Hill is included within the SAC, apart from small slivers at the northern and southern ends. The eastern half of Chingford Plain is within the SAC, but the western half and Chingford Golf Course are excluded.
- The Chingford area within the Epping Forest SAC forms part of an internationally important site within a network of such sites across Europe, specially protected under UK law by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). The qualifying features of Epping Forest SAC are wet heathland with Cross-leaved Heath, dry heath, Beech forests on acid soils and the presence of Stag Beetle. The SAC is regularly assessed for its “favourable conservation or condition” status to ensure that the wildlife habitats support the range of scarce species for which it was designated. Condition assessments are undertaken on a unit (compartment) basis by Natural England, who assess unit condition against both SAC and SSSI condition targets - see below for a summary of unit conditions.
- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI): In the Chingford area, the SAC designation overlaps exactly with the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) designation, though the area immediately east of Bury Road, including Dannet's Hill, is not within the SSSI/SAC. The ecological condition of each SSSI unit has been assessed by Natural England (NE), as detailed below. For all seven SSSI units, notwithstanding the unit condition assessment outcomes, Natural England states that there remains a very significant issue relating to air quality and the related deposition of acidity and of nitrogen. Many veteran trees within [each of] the unit[s] display clear symptoms of stress, bryophytes are sparse and species-poor, grassland areas show excessive growth of grass compared to broad-leaved species, and there are dense stands of nettles along roadsides and ride edges.
  - Compartment 24 (Bury Wood, NE unit 124): assessed as ‘favourable’ in January 2010 (Natural England, 2010), on the basis of survey data and the effect of all the ongoing and planned management works. However, notwithstanding the assessment, Natural England states that *‘the anticipated recovery in the condition of the grassland areas is reliant upon continuation of the extensive grazing regime.’*
  - Compartment 25 (Hawk Wood and Yardley Hill, NE unit 125): assessed as ‘unfavourable – recovering’ in January 2010 (Natural England, 2010), on the basis of survey data and the effect of all the ongoing and planned management works. However, notwithstanding the assessment, Natural England states that *‘there is excessive growth of bramble and the anticipated recovery in the condition of the grassland/heathland areas will not take place unless an extensive grazing regime is re-introduced as planned.’*
  - Compartment 25 (Pole Hill, NE unit 225): assessed as ‘unfavourable – no change’ in January 2010 (natural England, 2010), on the basis of survey data and having taken into account the effect of all ongoing and planned management works. Woodland and scrub management are underway. However, the acid grassland areas are currently undermanaged, resulting in poor floristic diversity and shading of anthills. This is due to be addressed by management but is considered to be a lower priority than some other areas. Natural England states that *‘the anticipated recovery in the condition of the grassland areas will not take place unless management continues to take place as planned’.*
  - Compartment 26 (Chingford Plain, NE unit 126): assessed as ‘unfavourable – recovering’ in January 2010 (Natural England, 2010), on the basis of survey data and the effect of all the ongoing and planned management works. However, notwithstanding the assessment, Natural England states that *‘the anticipated*

*recovery in the condition of the grassland areas is reliant upon continuation of the extensive grazing regime. Some of the water bodies within the unit are also in a sub-optimal condition, which may affect the unit's long-term ability to provide supporting habitat for the assemblages of Odonata and of amphibians.'*

- Compartment 27 (Connaught Water, NE unit 127): assessed as 'favourable' in January 2010 (Natural England, 2010), on the basis of survey data and the effect of all the ongoing and planned management works. However, notwithstanding the assessment, Natural England states that *'Connaught Water is in a sub-optimal condition due to eutrophication, which may affect the unit's long-term ability to provide supporting habitat for the assemblages of Odonata and of amphibians.'*
- Compartment 29 (Barn Hoppitt, NE unit 129): assessed as 'unfavourable – recovering' in January 2010 (Natural England, 2010), on the basis of survey data and the effect of all the ongoing and planned management works. However, notwithstanding the assessment, Natural England states that *'the anticipated recovery in the condition of the grassland/heathland areas will not take place unless an extensive grazing regime is re-introduced as planned. Warren Pond is also in a sub-optimal condition, which may affect the unit's long-term ability to provide supporting habitat for the assemblages of Odonata and of amphibians.'*
- Compartment 29 (Whitehall Plain, NE unit 229): assessed as 'unfavourable – recovering' in January 2010 (Natural England, 2010), on the basis of survey data and the effect of all the ongoing and planned management works. Natural England states that *'the anticipated recovery in the condition of the grassland areas will not take place unless management continues to take place as planned'.*
- All the SSSI condition assessments are over 10 years old and may no longer reflect the current position and a review by Natural England is pending.
- Metropolitan Green Belt: The whole of Epping Forest within both Epping Forest District Council and the London Borough of Waltham Forest is designated Metropolitan Green Belt. Chapter 13 of the National Planning Policy Framework (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2019) sets out the fundamental aims of the Metropolitan Green Belt policy and the framework for its protection from urban sprawl.
- Site of Importance for Nature Conservation: The majority of Epping Forest land within the London Borough of Waltham Forest, except for slivers of Chingford Golf Course, is designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). These sites are of particular importance to wildlife and biodiversity in the London Plan, which receive a high level of protection from development within the planning system.
- Local Wildlife Site: Yardley Hill Meadow is a local wildlife site, designated by Essex Wildlife Trust in 2009 for its floristic diversity and a species assemblage which suggests that it is old grassland.  
(<http://www.essexwtrecords.org.uk/LoWS/Ep8>)
- GLA 59 - Pole Hill Locally Important Geological Site (potential): Pole Hill LIGS consists of London Clay capped by Claygate Beds. South of the Pole Hill obelisk, a brickworks was established in the mid-19th century and the pit exposed Claygate Beds consisting of alternating layers of sand and loam that were deposited on the floor of a shallow, subtropical sea, around 50 million years ago (London Geodiversity Partnership, 2014).
- Queen Elizabeth Hunting Lodge: A former hunting lodge, QEHL is a Grade II\* Listed Building (Historic England, 1954), described as *'Early C16, much restored. Exposed timber framing; plaster infill. Pitched tiled roof to eaves. 'L' shaped plan with staircase in south wing. 3 storeys. 3 x 2 bays with 2 x 2-bay stair wing. Mullioned windows, mainly 2-light. Windows and decorative features mostly late C19. Interior having open queen post roof with windbraces. Early and rare example of this building type.'*
- Butler's Retreat: A Grade II Listed Building (Historic England, 1986), described as *'Detached house. Probably early C19. Timber framed, weatherboarded, on brick base. Old tiled roof, steeply pitched to eaves. 2 storeys. 3 bays with 1-storey lean-to bay to left. Exposed timber posts between bays. Central square-headed entrance, planked door.'*

*Square-headed casement windows, with timber hoods. Rear facade similar but with long central window. Exposed rafters. Included for group value.'*

- Ordnance Survey Obelisk, Pole Hill: Grade II Listed Building (Historic England, 1987). Described as '*Granite monolith, 1824. Above eight feet high with battered sides and flat top. Inscribed plaque inset. Erected to mark the direction of the true north from the Royal Observatory at Greenwich. The meridian was changed in 1850 and the point of zero now passes 19 feet to the east of the Obelisk.*'
- Archaeological Priority Areas: London Borough of Waltham Forest has recently reviewed the Archaeological Priority Areas (APAs) in the borough (LBWF, 2020).
  - Tier 1 APA: Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge APA is classified as Tier 1 because it contains the best-preserved example of a timber-framed building as a royal standing for hunting and its immediate setting in England. Butler's Retreat and the Royal Forest Hotel represent later nineteenth century iterations of the usage of this area of Epping Forest for recreation and refreshment. In addition, the APA represents an open and undeveloped area which contains heritage assets of archaeological interest dating to the prehistoric period.
  - Tier 3 APA: Epping Forest APA has recently been classified as Tier 3 because it covers surviving portions of the ancient Epping Forest and can provide an insight into the use of the forest during the medieval and post- medieval periods. In addition, the APA represents a large, open and undeveloped area which has potential for heritage assets of archaeological interest dating to the Prehistoric, Roman and Saxon periods.

## 4.2 Flood Risk

- Connaught Water: Connaught Water is of irregular shape, extending to a maximum length of about 300 metres between the northern and southern extremities, and contains four islands. The reservoir dam is located along the southwestern side of the reservoir and contains the overflow works to the River Ching, which initially flows in a south-south-westerly direction.
- National Flood Risk: Under the Reservoirs Act 1975 as amended 2010, Connaught Water is classified as a Large Raised Reservoir. There are statutory requirements placed upon COL to monitor and maintain the Connaught Water dam and associated infrastructure to standards set out in the Acts.
- Reservoir Inspection: On 24 March 2016, Atkins (2016) undertook an inspection of the reservoir and dam for the purposes of the Reservoirs Act 1975 as amended 2010; such inspections are required every 10 years. Recommendations arising from this inspection are detailed in Appendix 2.
- There are three substantial pieces of repair work to the dam structure that are outstanding as of June 2020:
  - the revetment (wharfing and geotextile) on the upstream slope be replaced as and when necessary;
  - leakage through the overflow weir should be stemmed; and,
  - any scour damage to the path should be repaired and a low bund erected to ensure the flow goes to the forest and not along the toe of the dam.
- Connaught Water also floods at the upstream end of the lake each winter, which in turn floods the Easy Access Path, impeding access. Winter flooding also occurs along the Red Path from the main ditch draining into Connaught Water, which drains the hills to the north. A study of the hydrology of the area is required to tackle this issue, looking at potential actions in the ditches further upstream to hold back and slow down the water flow, for example by creating leaky dams, sluice gates and/or new ponds.
- Warren Pond: This pond is a former gravel excavation with a constructed bund, though the pond is not sufficiently large to fall under the Reservoirs Act 1975 as amended 2010.

### 4.3 Tree Safety

- Tree Safety: There are four different tree safety zones identified for each of the five compartments in the Chingford area:
  - Red + Zone Trees along main roads, around car parks, the heavily frequented areas around the Visitor Centre at Chingford, Queen Elizabeth Hunting Lodge and Butler's Retreat café, along the easy access path at Connaught Water, the Grimston's Oak clearing, the access road to the Connaught Club and a heavily visited clearing with ancient trees to the east of the Connaught Club; all areas are surveyed annually by specialist external tree safety consultants.
  - Red Zone Trees alongside minor highways, around the Jubilee Retreat building and immediately east of Barn Hoppitt car park are surveyed every two years by specialist external tree safety consultants.
  - Amber Zone Trees in areas highly frequented by the public, including the whole of Chingford Gold Course, and where trees abut properties, are surveyed every three years by specialist external tree safety consultants.
  - Green Zone Trees alongside the official path network as identified on the Epping Forest visitor map are surveyed by City Corporation Forest Keepers on a five-year rotation.

### 4.4 Wildfire Risk

- Barbeques and fires, although against the byelaws, are still used by some visitors and pose a significant risk to the important veteran tree habitats of the SAC, as well as the wider environment and neighbouring properties and roads. Wildfire is more prevalent and more likely to become out of control in open grass, scrub and heathland habitats where the fuel-load (particular vegetation types and structures) is also high. Fires and barbeques within the woodland on the fibrous peaty soils are a serious concern because of their direct proximity to the ancient trees and that the fires can burn underground unseen.
- The key habitat in the Chingford area requiring a wildfire risk assessment is the rough grassland and scrub of Chingford Plain. COL are in the process of preparing site-specific risk assessments but also site-specific wildfire management plans and wildfire response plans (the latter required by Essex Fire & Rescue Service and the London Fire Brigade) for all areas of Epping Forest deemed to be at risk of wildfires. The fire risk assessment and wildfire management and response plans for Chingford Plain are due to be finalised by the summer 2021.

### 4.5 Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS)

- Oak Processionary Moth (*Thaumetopoea processionea*): The larvae of the non-native Oak Processionary Moths are a risk to human health and they are present throughout Epping Forest. Oak Processionary Moths prefer open grown Oak trees; nests have been found in recent years in trees around Connaught Water, adjacent to the Visitor Centre at Chingford and Queen Elizabeth Hunting Lodge, and besides the Warren Pond. Future responses will involve removal of the nests, especially at lower levels, with some pesticide treatment in limited cases, such as in high visitor access areas, e.g. around the Visitor Centre and QEHL.
- New Zealand Pigmyweed (*Crassula helmsii*): This non-native species is present in Butler's Retreat Pond, Warren Pond and Chingford Golf Course lower/new pond. Currently, there is no specific control of *Crassula helmsii* in these ponds.
- Ash Dieback (*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*): This highly destructive fungal disease has the potential to cause significant damage to the Ash trees of Epping Forest, with implications for woodland biodiversity and ecology; there is no

known cure. Local spread (up to 10s of miles) of the fungal spores can be caused by wind dispersal, though spores can also be spread between woodland sites by the mud on walking boots and wheels (bikes, wheelchairs, pushchairs).

- Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis*): Canada Geese, a non-native species, are heavy grazers of aquatic and waterside vegetation, their droppings increase nutrient levels in water bodies and soils and their trampling can exacerbate bankside erosion. The Canada Goose population at Connaught Water requires ongoing management. As Connaught Water is within the Epping Forest SAC, the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs general licence (Defra, 2020) relied upon to control these birds is invalid and an individual licence from Natural England is required to undertake Canada Goose control.
- Other INNS present in the Chingford area compartment are:
  - Cherry Laurel in compartment 25;
  - Sycamore and Terrapin in compartment 27; and,
  - Parakeet, Muntjac and Grey Squirrel in all compartments.
- An Invasive Species and Biosecurity Policy (COL, in prep) will review the high-risk species and prioritise monitoring and controlling INNS and other invasive species in Epping Forest. Biosecurity policy will be developed alongside the INNS policy, and biosecurity protocols developed for each species or location as required.

#### 4.6 Infrastructure

- Connaught Water dam: A Reservoirs Management Policy Development Note (COL, in prep) will detail the maintenance schedule.
- Information boards/signposts: There are a large number of COL signs in the Chingford area, of various ages, designs and functionality. Signage and interpretation are being reviewed across Epping Forest and a strategy should be complete in 2021. The issues around signage are considered in detail in the Access and Visitor Services sections of this ISP.
- Boardwalk and fishing platforms: A boardwalk and two accessible fishing platform were installed by Epping Forest staff with volunteer help, as part of the HLF Branching Out project. Maintenance inspections of these structures are undertaken once per year by EF staff. The structures are approximately halfway through their working life and there is a need to plan for their eventual replacement.
- Forest Furniture:
  - Picnic tables and benches: A number of wooden picnic benches and benches are provided by COL in the Chingford area; these are positioned close to the Visitor Centre, around Butler's Retreat café and adjacent to QEHL.
  - Rubbish bins: Rubbish bins are provided throughout the Chingford area, concentrated around those locations with the highest visitor numbers. However, there remains a significant litter problem in the Chingford area, which is a combination of a number of inter-related issues that will be addressed as part of a future review of litter management.

#### 4.7 Property / Boundaries

- COL properties on Epping Forest land exist on a sliding scale of responsibility between COL Epping Forest and COL City Surveyors (CS) departments, as dictated by the specific lease agreements for each property. These are collated in a 'Division of Responsibilities' document for each property.

- Appendix 3 lists the buildings and structures within the Chingford area of Epping Forest, with further notes on the buildings, their occupancy, heritage listing (if any) and whether the building/structure has a Conservation Statement or Conservation Management Plan.
- Queen Elizabeth Hunting Lodge (QEHL): QEHL is of particular importance, as the Tudor 'hunt standing' is a historic building, built in 1543 for Henry VIII. Ownership of the building passed to COL as part of the Epping Forest Act 1878. It is a Grade II\* listed building (Historic England, 1954) and regular assessments of the fabric of the building are undertaken by specialist contractors to monitor its condition.
  - A spreadsheet of planned costed maintenance works for QEHL was created in 2016 (COL, 2016), to cover the following 20 years.
  - Conservation Statement and Conservation Management Plan (CS and CMP): A *Conservation Statement* (CS) is a concise document presenting the current understanding of a building or heritage site, its significance and its conservation issues. A *Conservation Management Plan* (CMP) is a more detailed document that helps to develop the management strategy for historic assets, sites and places. It explains the significance of the asset and examines how any future use, management, alteration or repair will be carried out in order to retain that significance. It informs the way an asset is conserved and managed.
  - A draft Conservation Statement (Martin Ashley Architects, 2018 *in draft*) is available. The report made recommendations for remedial works required; these recommendations need to be reviewed to ascertain the current status of planned remedial works.
  - Despite being a Grade II\* listed building, Queen Elizabeth Hunting Lodge does not currently have a Conservation Management Plan; commissioning a CMP for QEHL should be a priority.
  - An assessment of timber condition, monitoring of timber moisture content and beetle numbers was made on 27 April 2018 (FloydConsult, 2018). Conclusions from the report and unresolved issues are as follows:
    - Beetle numbers: The report was unable to draw any conclusions from the numbers of recorded Deathwatch beetles and elytra (wing casings) found during the survey (FloydConsult, 2018).
    - Moisture monitoring system: Data logging by the moisture management system was insufficient to draw conclusions at the time of the April 2018 assessment (FloydConsult, 2018).
    - Timber condition: There is some deterioration of the section of sole plate adjacent to the west entrance. However the emerging beetles will not be able to infest other parts of the building as it is generally well maintained, with water able to effectively run off the external surfaces of the framework (with the exception of the sole plate adjacent to the west entrance). The localised decay and increased moisture levels are not unusual, low down on south and west facing positions. No repairs are necessary yet (FloydConsult, 2018).
- Wayleaves: There are 352 private property accesses across Forest land in the Chingford area, as follows:
  - Compartment 24 – 12 accesses;
  - Compartment 25 – 209 accesses;
  - Compartment 26 – 7 accesses;
  - Compartment 27 – 0 accesses; and,
  - Compartment 29 – 124 accesses.
- An Access Audit (COL, in prep) is currently ongoing, which will audit all third-party access on Forest land in the area and determine the future wayleave agreement requirements.



## 4.8 Highway Verges

- All the verges in the Chingford area suffer from significant encroachment from parked cars, especially at weekends and Bank holidays, creating hazardous conditions along the roads. Illegal parking along Rangers Road is a particular problem, with the number of visitors frequently exceeding the number of official car parking spaces at the Connaught Water car park. Roadside parking along Bury Road also occurs, though to a lesser extent as the Bury Road car park capacity is greater.
- Sightlines at car park entrances and road junctions are cut annually by COL in June/July.

## 4.9 Utilities

- Thames Water pipeline: An easement was granted to South Essex Waterworks Company (now Thames Water) to lay a water main pipeline across Epping Forest land in the Chingford area, from Kings Head Hill (A110) in the west to the Epping New Road (A104) and beyond in the east.
  - The Deed of Grant (COL, 1962) states in Paragraph 3 of the Second Schedule (Restrictions and stipulations to be observed and performed by the Conservators) that *'Nothing shall be built erected constructed laid placed planted or grown in under or upon the said land which would render the exercise of the rights and easements hereby granted or any of them substantially more difficult or costly or which may be in any way diminish interfere with or damage the purity or flow of water coming to or carried by the said pipes.'*
  - An analysis of 2019 aerial photography along the pipeline route shows that, in several locations along the pipeline, the vegetation has not been maintained as grassland. Over time, these sections have been invaded by scrub and trees. Appendix 4 shows aerial photographs for the locations of concern, and actions to address the issue are in the Outline Management Plan table of this ISP.

## 5. MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

### 5.1 Ecological

- Outstanding conservation value: Epping Forest is a unique landscape, distinct from the surrounding countryside as a result of over a thousand years of sustainable management by people and their domestic animals. *"In 1878, Epping Forest was a complex and balanced system, every acre the product of centuries of peculiar land uses, and a thing of distinction and beauty; with its combination of pollards and heather, there was probably nothing quite like it in the world"* – taken from Oliver Rackham's *The History of the Countryside* (1986). The resulting wood pasture habitat with ancient pollards is a landscape of immense conservation value due to its rarity. It is one of a few remaining large-scale examples of wood pasture in England and encompasses one of the largest populations of ancient trees in any site in Europe.
- This wood pasture also supports outstanding assemblages of invertebrates, fungi and amphibians, and an important breeding bird community. The Chingford area includes most of these high nature conservation value habitats, including ancient semi-natural woodland, scrub, acid grassland, heathland, marsh and open water.
- Global climate emergency: The City of London Corporation (COL) has adopted a radical Climate Action Strategy (CAS) as its contribution to addressing the Global Climate Emergency (COL, 2019a). The Climate Action Strategy 2020-2027 sets out how COL is committed to reducing its contribution to the factors that cause climate change, as well as adapting to the impact of a changing climate and the extreme weather events, such as storms and flooding, that are likely to increase in frequency and severity. The CAS sets out the steps towards achieving net zero carbon emissions, building climate resilience and championing sustainable growth.

- The global climate emergency is an over-arching and increasingly serious problem, which needs to be factored into management decisions for the site and, particularly, the protection of its scarce habitats and species. The effects of the climate emergency will increase the susceptibility of the trees and vegetation to diseases and drought.
- Favourable Condition of the SSSI compartments/units – Site Improvement Plan (SIP): Management work will need to try to address the two key problems for favourable condition identified by Natural England: air pollution and recreational pressure (Natural England, 2016). To address the former, a close working relationship is required with other stakeholders, particularly Epping Forest District Council and the London Borough of Waltham Forest, through the updating of their Local Plans and their highways and development proposals. Recreational pressure also needs to be considered and this ISP outlines possible management proposals that will help address the issues of visitor numbers and help to protect habitats such as the wood pasture with its ancient pollards and acid grassland. Natural England also specifically mentions the continuation or reintroduction of extensive grazing as planned is key to the anticipated recovery of several of the management units in the Chingford area. Furthermore, the water bodies in the Chingford area are in sub-optimal condition, which may affect the ability of the management units to provide supporting habitat for Odonata assemblages and amphibians.

#### Lowland wood pasture<sup>1</sup>

- The UK Habitat Action Plan (UK HAP) defines lowland wood pasture ‘as areas that have been managed by long-established tradition of grazing, characteristically with at least some veteran trees. The tree component can occur as scattered individuals, small groups, or as more or less complete canopy. Depending on the degree of canopy cover other semi-natural habitats, including grassland, heath, scrub etc may occur in a mosaic with woodland communities.’ The density of trees, therefore, ranges widely across sites and could be as low as 1 per hectare, with Epping Forest at the higher density end of the scale.
- Epping Forest has been grazed by cattle and ponies and other animals including deer for over 1,000 years. Unlike the other Essex Forests of Writtle or Hatfield, Epping Forest has always been un-compartmented and Commoners’ cattle were free ‘to wander all over the Forest’ (known as inter-commonage). However, grazing of Commoners’ cattle ceased in 1996 following the outbreak of mad cow disease (Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy, BSE).
- Since 1993, with the development of the first (COL, 1998) and second (COL, 2004) Epping Forest Management Plans, there have been a series of reports approved by the Epping Forest and Open Spaces (now Commons) Committee which have aimed at supporting and re-introducing grazing to Epping Forest in incremental steps. Each step has built on the previous ones and the approach to grazing on the Forest has gradually taken shape leading to the current Grazing Strategy (COL, 2008a); the aims of the grazing strategy have been reiterated in the most recent Epping Forest Management Plan (COL, 2019b).
- Key to the restoration of extensive grazing across Epping Forest, but particularly in the Chingford area, has been the Higher Level Stewardship Scheme (HLS) agreement, which ran from 2008-2018 (COL, 2008b), in which large areas of wood pasture were partially restored.
- In addition, a Heritage Lottery Funded project (‘Branching Out’) ran from 2006 (COL, 2006a); the project had a wide remit, but included the installation of infrastructure, such as invisible fencing, wooden fencing along major roads and cattle grids, to facilitate the expansion of grazing across Epping Forest’s wood pasture habitat.

<sup>1</sup> For background on the importance of Woodpasture please see the video narrated by the Epping Forest Head of Conservation <https://ptes.org/wpnpn-videos-launch/>



- Much of the Chingford area is now in a 10-year Countryside Stewardship Scheme (CSS) agreement (COL, 2019c), in order to further support continued wood pasture restoration and extend cattle grazing to other key areas of Epping Forest, including Yardley Hill, Yates Meadow and Daisy Plain. Wood pasture restoration has been ongoing in Barn Hoppitt since 2003, and grazing of the compartment will be included in a subsequent CSS application, which will cover the remaining areas of Epping Forest.

### *Barn Hoppitt*

- Barn Hoppitt is unique in Epping Forest, being the best example of Oak wood pasture in Epping Forest, with 343 large open grown Oak pollards in about 30 hectares of wood-pasture, with relatively low densities of Hornbeam (37 pollards) and a concomitantly large area of remnant ant-hill-covered grassland, now mostly infilled with young and maturing trees.
- There are only 38 known sites with more than 100 ancient trees in the UK; of these only 10 have more than 1,000 ancient trees. Barn Hoppitt, which contains more than 350 ancient trees, is therefore a nationally important site for ancient trees on its own merit. Given the evidence from Europe of the importance of the UK for large old Oaks, the compartment's special saproxylic (dead-wood) fauna (see Invertebrates below), its old-growth characteristics and dead wood, Barn Hoppitt on its own is undoubtedly of international conservation importance (Dagley, J.R. and Froud, A., 2006).

### Ancient/veteran trees

- Pollard management across Epping Forest went into decline in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Consequently, Oak and Beech veteran pollards have grown beyond the optimal stage for re-pollarding, though these trees can be worked to stabilise their crowns and extend their life with the use of specialist tree surgery.
- One aspect of the HLF 'Branching Out' project (COL, 2006a) focused on specialist veteran tree management work on 1050 keystone Beech and Oak pollards within Epping Forest. The keystone trees were chosen as those in most need of specialist management, from 24,508 ancient trees that were mapped and recorded as part of the project (COL, 2008c). A proportion of these keystone trees will require further management in the next ten years.
- Hornbeam pollards have been shown to respond very well to re-pollarding when correct management techniques are implemented - Bury Wood has been a significant focus for veteran tree management for over 30 years, to restore both veteran Hornbeam pollards and the associated wood pasture habitat, with over 800 Hornbeam pollards restored back into a pollarding cycle. Some coupes (small areas within a compartment that are worked as a unit) are now on their 3<sup>rd</sup> pollarding cycle. At the top of Daisy Plain/Pole Hill/Hawk Wood (compartment 25), over 100 Hornbeam pollards have been re-pollarded, with a further 15 Hornbeam on Chingford Golf course re-pollarded.
- Over a thousand additional Hornbeam and Oak pollards were haloed (the removal of young, competing trees from around ancient trees) during the 10 years of Higher Level Stewardship, in preparation for 1,300 veteran trees to be worked within Bury Wood under the current Countryside Stewardship Scheme, over the next 10 years.
- Within Barn Hoppitt (compartment 29), the management of Oak pollards has been on-going since 2003, where 242 trees have received crown management to extend their life; these trees, along with another 100 Oak pollards have received halos.
- Health and condition monitoring of Oak pollards has been conducted annually on over 600 ancient pollards, including those at Barn Hoppitt, for nearly a decade.
- Threats to longevity of veteran trees include:
  - A lack of management until late into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when veteran tree management was started;

- Shade from secondary infill trees, especially for Oak;
- Climate change, leading to increased instances of drought and storm events;
- Atmospheric pollution;
- Pests and diseases, to which trees stressed by climate change and pollution are more susceptible;
- Visitor pressure, which has led to two situations that adversely impact ancient trees in the area:
  - Soil compaction and erosion, resulting in root exposure, damage and death, arising from the trampling pressure of visitors. Soil compaction and erosion reduces the ability of water to move through the soil, so there is inadequate movement of oxygen to roots, and reduces soil organisms such as earthworms, which reduces soil fertility and causes the loss of beneficial mycorrhizal fungi. In dry periods, compacted soils can become so hard that root systems cannot grow through the soil, leading to poor root systems.
  - Tree safety requirements in response to the red hazard category of busy public access areas has resulted in recommendations for interventions that potentially undermine the conservation value of some ancient trees, e.g. through dead wood removal in the tree crown, or removing defects that are potential bat roost features. Barbastelle bats use trees (dead or alive) with loose bark; they have also been shown in national studies to use up to 30 different roost sites throughout the year. Tree safety works can have a significant impact on Barbastelle, especially when felling dead trees.
- In 2019, a fencing trial was implemented around one tree in the High Beach area, to test the effectiveness of this approach for protecting ancient trees in a cost and landscape effective way. Materials used were round posts with a green polypropylene rope running through a hole in the top, with explanatory signage. This low cost approach appears to be successful, with the barriers remaining intact and little evidence of the public entering the enclosures, and may be considered for use in Barn Hoppitt, where there is both a concentration of ancient trees and high visitor footfall.

#### Acid grassland

- Acid grasslands are so-called because they are characterised by nutrient-poor (low nitrogen and phosphorus content) and acidic soils (those with a low pH – sandy/gravelly). The low nutrients and acidic conditions favour a wide diversity of specialist native plants that can thrive where the more common, faster-growing grasses cannot easily survive. Acid grassland is a UK Biodiversity Action Plan habitat, for which the Forest is partly notified under the SSSI. As such, they are a top priority for wildlife conservation nationally and, in the Chingford area, are represented by the following locations:
  - Barn Hoppitt (compartment 29) has open areas with short sparse acid turf on well-drained gravelly soil. Many anthills occur; Sheep's Sorrel and Cat's-ear are typical, whilst Tormentil *Potentilla erecta* and Trailing Tormentil *P. anglica* are both present.
  - Warren Wood Fields, now called Warren Wood Slope (in compartment 29, Barn Hoppitt), was formerly part of the golf course. It has a relatively rich acid and neutral grassland flora, including Grass Vetchling (*Lathyrus nissolia*) and an important population of Lady's Bedstraw. The wetter areas at the bottom of the slope support longer swards, including Wild Angelica (*Angelica sylvestris*).
  - Chingford Plain golf course (compartment 26) which, although excluded from the SSSI/SAC, nonetheless supports acid grassland, with Mat-grass (*Nardus stricta*) and Heath Grass (*Danthonia decumbens*), and many anthills in the roughs. Some attempts were made to integrate conservation management with golf course management in the late 1990s and this work could be revived and targeted on re-opening the glades that supported acid grassland flowering species.

- The quality of the acid grassland in the Chingford area is being adversely impacted by the following significant issues:
  - Decline in grazing: Natural England has made it clear in its condition assessments that grazing needs to be reinstated on a much more widespread basis in order for management compartments to be returned to 'favourable condition' (Natural England, 2010). There are plans to graze Barn Hoppitt with Epping Forest's herd of English Longhorn cattle. The roughs around Chingford Golf Course are currently cut as part of the golf course management. Warren Wood Slope is managed by grazing and cutting.
  - Visitor impact: Increasing visitor pressure compacts the soil in heavily frequented locations, such as in Barn Hoppitt. The prescriptions of SSSI/SAC management preclude turning over the soil to loosen and aerate it in order to encourage grass growth, so once the soil has been compacted, the acid grassland flora does not recover. Newly developed desire lines have appeared over the past 18 months. There is also a marked yearly growth in desire line width, most noticeable on inclines on grassland.
  - Air pollution: Deposition of nitrogen pollutants from the air is causing a rise in soil fertility, allowing more competitive plant species to dominate the less competitive specialist acid grassland plant species.
  - Nutrifaction by dogs: Dogs contribute to nutrient enrichment of infertile habitats through defecation and urination. These effects are generally concentrated around car parks, café areas, paths and at site entrances, with observed symptoms of enrichment being the dominance of nutrient-loving species, resulting in the reduction of plant species diversity.
  - Health issues with dog fouling: The excretion of veterinary medicines with dog faeces is detrimental to the invertebrate fauna of the Forest, as the active ingredients of flea and worming treatments (for example neonicotinoids) are also agricultural insecticides. Dogs infected with *neospora* (a parasite) can harm cattle grazing on Forest land if they ingest the contaminated faeces; similarly, the infected faeces can become incorporated into the haylage harvested from Forest grassland areas.

#### Lowland calcareous grassland

- Lowland calcareous grasslands develop on shallow lime-rich soils, characterised by nutrient-poor soils (low nitrogen and phosphorus content) with a high pH. The low nutrients and calcareous conditions favour a wide diversity of specialist native plants that can thrive where the more common, faster-growing grasses cannot easily survive. Within Epping Forest, Yardley Hill is the only location with calcareous grassland plants, which are found on patches of chalky boulder clay from remnant Lowestoft Formation glacial till, characterised by its chalk and flint content, and a carbonate content of around 30%.
- The OS six inch map (Ordnance Survey, 1888-1913, Appendix 5) shows that Yardley Hill was once farm fields and hedgerow before it was acquired by COL in 1898. By 1945, aerial photography (Appendix 5) shows Yardley Hill partly invaded by scrub, though the hedgerows are still visible.
- A major scrub clearance (several hectares) was carried out in 1999, which brought back a number of species of the chalky boulder clay, including Spiny Restharrow (*Ononis spinosa*) and Burnet-saxifrage (*Pimpinella saxifraga*). This area has been maintained since by the grass cutting team whilst also protecting the ant-hills. The scrub higher up the slope is much longer established and dense with thorn and Oak scrub, though the old field hedgerows can still be detected by the raised banks and the presence of flora such as Dog's Mercury (*Mercurialis perennis*).
- Going forward, the most recent Countryside Stewardship Scheme agreement (COL, 2019c) will support grazing of the open chalk boulder clay areas, with the use of the new GPS collars. Where there is currently dense scrub further up-slope, glade creation linked to the footpaths and unsurfaced horse-ride access would allow cattle to move easily between the more open areas and reduce the need for mowing every year.

- The quantity and quality of chalky boulder clay grassland on Yardley Hill is being adversely impacted by the same issues as those described above for acid grassland, though loss of grassland habitat through scrub and secondary woodland invasion over many decades is by far the most significant. If the calcareous species associated with this outcrop of chalky boulder clay are lost, these calcareous species would also be lost to Epping Forest as a whole.
- Currently, COL CityMaps (GIS mapping system) for Epping Forest does not allow the underlying geology to be superimposed on compartment boundaries, which makes it more difficult to target management in those areas of Yardley Hill where the patches of chalky glacial till are present (British Geological Survey, 2020, and Appendix 5).

#### Neutral grassland

- Ridge and furrow ploughing occurred on the neutral grassland of Chingford Plain east of Bury Road, which was fertilized and limed in the 1950s and 1960s. Part of the area, formerly football pitches, is mown for amenity reasons but still supports a fairly good turf with some Sneezewort. One area is set aside for flying model aeroplanes; the club maintains a runway strip of short mown grass.
- Much of the remainder of Chingford Plain is tussocky neutral grassland with patches of scrub cover, providing excellent habitat for many birds. These areas were grazed until the outbreak of mad cow disease (Bovine spongiform encephalopathy, BSE) in 1996 - at the time, Chingford Plain supported Skylarks.
- Chingford Plain is one of only two large areas of open grassland in Epping Forest, the other being Wanstead Flats; the only other equivalent large area of open grassland in Essex on clay soils is Hatfield Forest.
- There are records of small-scale grazing of parts of Chingford Plain from 2006. This was extended to include the area between Butlers' Retreat and the ditch line to the north as part of the Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) scheme agreement (COL, 2008b). Grazing of the whole of Chingford plain has been initiated as part of the most recent Countryside Stewardship Scheme (CSS) agreement to further restore habitat diversity and build on the success of previous grassland management.
- The use of Epping Forest's own herd of Longhorn cattle is critical to successful grazing (COL, 2008a), as the older 'matriarch' cows have knowledge of edible vegetation that is passed on to younger members of the herd; the Epping Forest herd are also habituated to the level of disturbance the Forest experiences from members of the public.
- The decline in quality of the neutral grassland on Chingford Plain is being addressed by the reinstated grazing regime (COL, 2008b), but there is still a significant issue with trampling/compaction of large swathes of grassland by visitors in the wetter months, and particularly between the Bury Road car park, QEHL and Visitor Centre and Connaught Water, which is detrimentally affecting the grassland quality.

#### Spring lines, rivers/streams and ditches

- The River Ching issues from Connaught Water and heads southwest through Barn Hoppitt and Whitehall Plain. The woody flora along the river is probably the richest area of scrub anywhere in Epping Forest, including Purple Willow, Buckthorn, Spindle, Dogwood, some Hazel and young Wych Elm, and much Blackthorn.
- The Cuckoo Brook issues just northwest of Epping Forest's boundary in Bury Wood, after which it flows southeast through Bury Wood (compartment 24) to join the River Ching south of Connaught Water. This brook has a diverse

flora in patches, including Wood-sorrel, Dog's mercury, violets, several fern species and Goldilocks. Water shrews were generally present towards the western end.

- The water courses are at risk of over shading and tree/scrub invasion.
- Several ditches drain water from the hills to the north of Connaught Water, including the main ditch alongside the Red Path. The flow rate of these ditches is having an impact on the compartments within this ISP and the ditches need highlighting for appropriate flood risk management (see Section 4.2 of this ISP).

#### Open Water

- Connaught Water (compartment 27) is the largest water body in the Chingford area, constructed in 1881 and enlarged in 1893, and now designated a Large Raised Reservoir (see Flood Risk section, above).
  - Aquatic vegetation surveys undertaken in Connaught Water have found the following submergent vegetation - Water Net (*Hydrodictyon reticulatum*), Pointed Stonewort (*Nitella mucronata*), Small Pondweed (*Potamogeton bechtoldii*, Essex scarce), Horned Pondweed (*Zannichellia palustris*) and Fennel Pondweed (*Potamogeton pectinatus*). Emergent vegetation is mainly Reed Mace and Common Reed, with some Yellow Flag *Iris pseudacorus*; further planting of emergent vegetation was undertaken as part of the HLF Branching Out project.
  - Connaught Water is incredibly important for the local bat population; there are significant numbers of bats foraging over the pond and this increases during the maternity season.
- The Cuckoo Pits (compartment 24) consist of shallow ponds, two of which are permanent. They are important as the only site for Marsh Cinquefoil in Epping Forest. *Carex nigra* and Purple Loosestrife grow beside the water. Fish are not present in the ponds, so they are very important for toads and have all three species of newt including Great Crested Newt, as well as being important for invertebrates.
- Chingford Golf Course has two permanent ponds (middle pond and lower/new pond); Common Reed dominates middle pond (10<sup>th</sup> tee pond), whilst the lower/new pond (18<sup>th</sup> hole pond) has been colonised by *Crassula helmsii* since its creation in 1999 (see Invasive Non-Native Species section). Great Crested Newts are recorded from both ponds.
- Butler's Retreat pond is thought to be a former gravel pit, which fills with water in winter and reduces in size in summer. *Crassula helmsii* is present (Native Landscapes, 2019).
- Warren Pond is a former gravel excavation, with a small island and a constructed bund along its southern edge. There is an outflow pipe through the bund.
  - By the late 1990s, much of the pond surface had been lost to Sallow and *Typha* invasion. These are difficult to clear without breaching the bund and draining the pond, but some limited vegetation and silt clearance took place in 1994.
  - The banks of the pond are very eroded, but photographs suggest that this has been the case for decades.
  - The pond is the only Forest site for Mare's-tail (*Hippuris vulgaris*).
  - There is evidence of erosion from footfall along the top of the bund, which should be inspected regularly for wear and tear, along with the outflow pipe.
- Fish surveys of the main aquatic bodies in Epping Forest are undertaken regularly by COL staff.
  - Connaught Water was last surveyed on 9 March 2018, and found to contain mostly Perch and Tench, with a few Pike, Roach, Bream and Common Carp. Apex predators were observed to be healthy, there appears to be good recruitment of young due to availability of vegetation cover, and few plastic bags

were seen (these are associated with bread feeding by visitors) (COL, 2018a). Suggested actions from the survey can be found in Appendix 6.

- Warren Pond was last surveyed on 15 February and 9 November 2015, and found to contain Pike, Roach, Rudd, Tench. There were a healthy number of large Roach, thought to be due to the consistent removal of smaller Pike over several years (COL, 2015a & 2015b). Suggested actions from the survey can be found in Appendix 6.
- Butler's Retreat pond has not been formally surveyed for fish since 14 February 2006, at which point the only fish were Spined Stickleback and a feral goldfish that was removed (COL, 2006a). Catherine Bickmore Associates (2014) recorded the presence of fish in the pond, but the report did not comment on species or numbers. The pond is prone to very low water levels in the summer months.
- An amphibian survey was undertaken on the ponds and lakes within Epping Forest in 2013 (Catherine Bickmore Associates, 2014) to assess their suitability for amphibians and make management recommendations.
  - Cuckoo Pits East and West Ponds, and Chingford Golf Course middle and lower/new ponds all have records of Great Crested Newts. Consequently, all four ponds are rated as being of high importance for amphibians and high priority for management.
  - Great Crested Newts were not recorded from Warren Pond, Butler's Retreat Pond and Connaught Water; these three areas of open water were assessed as being of medium importance for amphibians and low priority for management for these species. Further details of the survey and specific management recommendations are in Appendix 6.

### Bats

- Bat surveys of Chingford Plain (compartment 26) have recorded Serotine, Noctule, Brown long-eared, Daubenton's, Noctule, Leisler's, and Soprano, Common and Nathusius' Pipistrelle. Bury Wood (compartment 24) and Yardley Hill and Pole Hill (compartment 25) have not been surveyed for bats but are likely to support the same species.
- Surveys have confirmed ten bat species within Barn Hoppitt (compartment 29) including Barbastelle, one of the UK's rarest woodland bat species (in 2009), and Leisler's and Serotine, which are both scarce declining species. Nathusius' Pipistrelle, previously thought to be a migratory species in the UK, use Oak pollards as advertisement roosts (male Nathusius' Pipistrelles sing from a specific location to attract a mate, similar to many bird species). The species has been recorded foraging along the River Ching in this compartment. Surveys have shown that all ten species are found to use the wood-pasture habitat, in comparison to the 2-3 species that use the dense high canopy woodland areas.
- Light Pollution from the Connaught Club has been shown to be having a negative impact on the local bat population, especially around the Warren Pond (Froud, A, pers. comm.).
- Connaught Waters was extensively surveyed for bats in the period 2003-2007 (COL, 2007). The surveying data showed the lake and the immediate trees surrounding it, to be rich in species, activity and especially numbers. At that time, there were six confirmed species (Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle, Nathusius' Pipistrelle, Noctule, Serotine and Daubenton's). More recent surveys by EF staff have recorded Brown Long-eared, Natterer's and Leisler's.
- More recently (COL, 2020b), the Barbastelle was recorded for the first time at Connaught Water. This is currently the third location for this species within the Forest. This is a rare species within the UK and is listed as Near



Threatened on the global IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Confirmation of the presence of Barbastelle brings the number of bat species recorded at Connaught Water to ten, the same as Barn Hoppitt.

- The survey data from COL (2007) also showed that bat numbers utilising Connaught Water dramatically increased when insect abundance within the forested areas was low. This underlines the importance of the open water not only for its local bat population but also for wider bat community. With the area around Connaught Water containing large numbers of bats and veteran trees, bat roost potential throughout the compartment is extremely high (COL, 2007), notwithstanding that roost potential across the Chingford area is high.

### Birds

- Open water:
  - Numbers and species of waterfowl are well documented for Connaught Water. The lake attracts a large number of waterfowl species, including Shoveler, Mandarin, Teal, Smew, Goosander, Pochard, Garganey, Gadwall, Shelduck, Coot, Moorhen, Great Crested Grebe, Little Grebe, Tufted Duck, Mute Swan, Cormorant and Mallard. However, some species such as Canada Geese can cause significant nuisance problems (see INNS section above).
  - Little Grebes currently breed on Butler's Retreat Pond along with Moorhens and Coots. Warren Pond is an important winter roost site for Mandarin Duck, with the willow carr there also sheltering other wildfowl including regular Shoveler and Teal.
  - Kingfishers are regularly observed hunting not only around Connaught Water but also along the feeder stream and the River Ching, which runs southwest from the Water. This legally protected bird (Schedule 1) breeds reasonably close by, making Connaught Waters an integral part of its feeding territory (COL, 2007). The provision of an artificial nesting wall could allow this species to breed at Connaught Water – and this remains a possible future project.
  - Herons have recently made nesting attempts on the Connaught Water islands and it remains to be seen whether these are isolated pairs.
- Woodlands: The woodland north of Chingford Plain and the mosaic of habitats around Connaught Water once supported Nightingales, last recorded in the early 2000s. The last Nightingale record for the western part of the area was in 2007 on Yardley Hill, by a member of the public. The woodlands also have a good population of Tawny Owl, Nuthatch, Stock Dove and Bullfinch. Lesser spotted woodpecker (UK RED LIST), a species in serious decline, is still holding on in small numbers within the woodlands.
- Grassland and scrub mosaic:
  - The grassland and scrub mosaic of Chingford Plain is incredibly important for breeding songbirds, including Song Thrush and Mistle Thrush (UK RED LIST), and the habitat mosaic is important for wintering Woodcock, Fieldfare and Redwing. Chingford Plain once supported breeding Tree Pipits, Skylarks and Meadow Pipits. The last Tree Pipit territory was recorded in 2001, and Skylarks last bred in 2011, although there have been males singing in late winter in two years since then (see section on Neutral Grassland above).
  - Despite these losses, the Chingford Plain scrub-grassland mosaic remains one of the most important breeding bird areas in the Forest, supporting many migratory species, such as warblers, including the declining Willow Warbler. It was a Cuckoo stronghold in the Forest, with Dunnocks as the probable main host, and in 2020 a Cuckoo returned to the area for the whole spring. The ant-hills are an important food source for Green Woodpecker, a species emblematic of the wood-pasture habitat. Kestrels, now a red-

listed species due to severe recent declines across the UK, is a key breeding bird here that relies on the extensive grassland habitat.

- After Wanstead Flats, Chingford Plain, is the second-most important stop-over habitat for migrating passerines, especially in autumn and, with losses on migration becoming a critical issue, this is an important feature of the Forest given its north-south orientation between the Lee and Roding Valleys.

### Invertebrates

- The whole of the Chingford area is important for a huge range of invertebrate species, much like the rest of the Forest. However, of particular note due to the prominence of the Oak wood pasture of Barn Hoppitt, is the saproxylic invertebrate diversity (saproxylic invertebrates rely on dead or decaying wood for their lifecycle). Extensive survey work between 1995 and 2010 confirmed the importance of Barn Hoppitt, with a saproxylic Index of Ecological Continuity (IEC) (English Nature, 2004) which demonstrated that Barn Hoppitt, alone, was of international significance for its saproxylic fauna. Species reliant on decaying wood, such as Cardinal Click Beetle, *Batrissodes adnexus* (a weevil that predate on the Brown tree ant nests) and *Lymexylon navale*, are amongst a diverse range of species at the site.
- The ant hills of Yellow Meadow-ant (*Lasius flavus*) are an important ecological component of old grassland in the Chingford area, both on the open plains and in wood pasture; they are a main food source for Green Woodpecker (*Picus viridis*). Ant hill grassland ideally requires extensive grazing to maintain an open aspect whilst avoiding damage to the ant hills, or alternative careful mowing with small machinery between the ant hills. Remnant ant hills are still present in parts of Barn Hoppitt wood pasture; further south in the compartment, an area of acid grassland with Tormentil had ant-hills with active Yellow-ant colonies in 2006 (Dagley, J.R. and Froud, A., 2006). There are further areas of ant-hills in the remaining open areas of Yardley Hill, as well as on the open grassland of Chingford Plain.
- The dragon and damselfly assemblage of the Forest is nationally important and the Chingford area supports many of these species, including the hairy Dragonfly and the recent coloniser, Willow Emerald Damselfly.

### Fungi

- The fungi of the Chingford area are diverse, with many uncommon species, including the rare Oak Polypore, for which Epping Forest is a UK stronghold, and the Zoned Rosette, both species legally-protected under Schedule 8 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

## **5.2 Heritage and Landscape**

- The name 'Dannets' Hill, on which Queen Elisabeth's Hunting Lodge (QEHL) is situated, is derived from 'Danherth', which was in use in 1498 (<http://epns.nottingham.ac.uk/browse/id/532858b6b47fc40a980001a8>).
- Until the 17th century, the kings of England frequently hunted deer in the Forest. Henry VIII converted part of the Forest in the north of Chingford and the south of Waltham Holy Cross into Fairmead Park, furnishing this with 'standings' or grandstands. In February 1543, £30 was paid towards finishing the Great Standing in the new park and making paddocks there. A few months later, a further payment was made for the work, and in the same year Sir Richard (later Lord) Rich was appointed keeper of the new park. It is not clear whether the park was completed, but it had been 'disemparked' by 1553. The king's short-lived project did, however, leave its mark on



local topography. The name survives in Fairmead Bottom and the Great Standing is an outstanding Grade II\* Listed Building (Historic England, 1954), now called Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge.

- QEHL was one of three original 'hunt standings' in the local area and is a unique example of a surviving timber-framed hunt standing. The 'Little Standing' was incorporated within Warren House in the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Alan Baxter, 2015). Fairmead Standing was in use as Fairmead Lodge (one of many Retreats across the Forest serving refreshments to visitors) but was demolished in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Fairmead Oak, adjacent to the location of the former hunt standing, is a massive, ancient but still living tree, likely to be at least 500 years old (see Appendix 7 for an old photograph of both Fairmead Lodge and the Fairmead Oak).
- The location of QEHL is unique in that it is still partly surrounded by its ancient landscape of 'Chingford Fairmaid Bottom', comprising the area that was disafforested for emparkment by Henry VIII and the remaining ancient Oak trees, which are as old, if not older than, the QEHL building itself (see Chapman and Andre Map of Essex, 1777 – the areas now known as Chingford Plain and Barn Hoppitt). This unique landscape is as much the heritage of the area as the immediate curtilage of QEHL, and this landscape setting is of utmost importance, as evidenced by the Archaeological Priority Area (APA) designation of the wider landscape of Chingford Plain and Barn Hoppitt by the London Borough of Waltham Forest (LBWF, 2020).
- Ownership of QEHL passed to COL as part of the Epping Forest Act 1878, which specified '*Queen Elizabeth's Lodge, with the garden thereof, is hereby vested in the Conservators [COL], for all the estate and interest of the Crown therein and shall be preserved and maintained by them as an object of public and antiquarian interest*' (Epping Forest Act 1878). The interior of QEHL currently hosts exhibitions on Tudor food and social history, whilst allowing visitors to soak up the atmosphere of a unique building nearly 500 years after it was built.
- A granite obelisk was erected at the top of Pole Hill in 1824, under the direction of the Reverend John Pond, MA, Astronomer Royal. It was placed on the Greenwich Meridian; its purpose was to indicate the direction of true north from the transit telescope of the Royal Observatory and the obelisk was crowned with a long pole (see Appendix 7 for photo). The Greenwich Meridian, as changed in 1850 & adopted by international agreement in 1884 as the line of zero longitude, now passes 19 feet to the east of this pillar; an Ordnance Survey trig point stands more accurately on the Meridian, but the original granite obelisk remains, though without the pole (Barker Associates LLP, 2015a). The view from Pole Hill to Greenwich has been obscured over time by vegetation.
- On the Chapman and André 1777 map of Essex (<https://map-of-essex.uk/>), Pole Hill is named as 'Hawke Hill'; presumably the hill came to be known as Pole Hill some time after the erection of the flagpole on top of the granite pillar. The original hill name is remembered in the name for the area of ancient woodland north of the apex of Pole Hill (The Hawk Wood); the former Hawkwood Estate (now commercial premises) also lies to the northwest of Pole Hill, just beyond Forest land.
- The name for the Forest compartment known as Barn Hoppitt derives from an enclosure that was made on Dannets Hill, the word '*hoppitt*' meaning an enclosure. The Connaught Club was established in the enclosure in 1885, to provide facilities for tennis and croquet for the Royal Forest Hotel and the club still in existence on the same site.
- Adjacent to Butler's Retreat café, there is a granite fountain, surmounted by an obelisk and standing on two octagonal granite base steps. The fountain dates from 1899, with '*The gift of Sir Edwin Durning-Lawrence Bart MP*' carved around the bowl. The fountain is known as the 'Durning-Lawrence Fountain' and is an unlisted heritage feature (Barker Associated LLP, 2015b).
- During Victorian times, a number of 'retreats' in Epping Forest, including Jubilee Retreat, Fairmead Retreat and Butler's Retreat, provided entertainment such as helter-skelters, merry-go-rounds, donkey rides and non-alcoholic

refreshments from tea rooms that could seat up to 3000 people. These were very popular with Londoners, who came up to Chingford Plain in horse-drawn buses and charabancs, and later by train to Chingford station.

- The opening of the railway to Chingford in 1873 gave Londoners rapid access to this part of the Forest. Chingford Plain became popular with day-trippers, for whom the railway provided an excellent service. The peak of railway travel to the Forest was probably reached immediately after the First World War. On Whit Monday 1920, 100,000 people arrived at Chingford station by a 5-minute service. The pleasure fairs on the Plain inspired part of Somerset Maugham's *Liza of Lambeth*.
- Butler's Retreat, situated on Rangers Road adjacent to QEHL, was established in 1878 in a former barn dating from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century and is now a Grade II listed building (Historic England, 1986). The Butler family ran the retreat from 1890 until the 1970s, and the retreat continued to serve refreshments until it closed in 2009. The COL reopened Butler's Retreat as a café in 2012, having refurbished the building as part of the 'Branching Out' project (Gibberd, 2008).
- The Coach House and stables to the Royal Forest Hotel were built on Epping Forest land immediately to the east of the Royal Forest Hotel (completed 1878). The Coach House originally projected forward of the main building, but this section was demolished in the 1930s. The building was eventually leased to a motor coach company in the late 1970s; when the company relocated, parts of the building were used for museum accommodation for QEHL. As part of the 'Branching out' project, the Coach House was refurbished and now houses the Epping Forest Visitor Centre at Chingford (Gibberd, 2008).
- To the west of Bury Road lies the Chingford Golf Course, laid out on part of the former medieval hunting grounds of Chingford Plain. The course was established as 9 holes in 1888 by Royal Epping Forest Golf Club and, a year later, a further 9 holes were added, designed by William Dunn (Jnr), the first course professional. Some alterations were made in 1927/28 by a member of West Kent Golf Club. In the mid 1950's, the holes on the east side of Bury Road were transferred over to west side with the new holes being designed by Les Gowers, the professional. It is currently laid out in two returning loops, and plays a maximum 6222 yards, par 71. The course is the home to two golf clubs - Royal Epping Forest Golf Club and Chingford Golf Club. In 1901, COL took responsibility for the course and public play was regulated for the first time by COL.
- In 1899, the 'Durning-Lawrence' fountain was erected on land adjacent to Butler's Retreat. It is a polished pink and unpolished white granite drinking fountain, surmounted by an obelisk. The pink granite fountain stands on two octagonal grey granite base steps. Around the bowl is a carved inscription: 'The gift of Sir Edwin Durning-Lawrence Bart MP.' The plinth part underneath the bowl bears an inscription: 'John Lobb Esq F.R.C.S./ Chairman of Epping Forest Committee 1899' (Barker Associates LLP, 2015b). Durning-Lawrence was born in London in 1837. He was a Member of Parliament for Truro; there is no known connection between him and the local area.
- A granite horse/cattle trough with drinking fountain was installed at the northern edge of Chingford Plain east of Bury Road at around the same time. The trough is inscribed on both sides with 'Metropolitan Drinking Fountain & Cattle Trough Association', and beneath the drinking fountain bowl 'In memory of Miss Isabel Constable [date illegible, could be 1899]' (Barker Associates LLP, 2015c).
- The Orion Harriers Running Club was formed in 1911 and occupied space in what is now the Epping Forest Visitor Centre at Chingford. The Club moved to its present location in 2010 and now occupies the former Jubilee Retreat on Bury Road.
- During WWI, an anti-airship gun was positioned on Pole Hill, overlooking the Lea Valley; it was one of a ring of anti-airship defences around London that aimed to combat enemy airship bombers (Green, G, 1987). Shells were brought up to the gun on rails from the end of Mornington Road, a windlass with a wire cable being used for this purpose. The crew resided in an army barracks on the hill and filled their spare time by cultivating part of the field

as allotments for vegetables. The gun emplacement was dismantled at the end of WWI; a concrete base is still in situ on Pole Hill, now obscured by dense vegetation (see Appendix 7 for an old photograph).

- T. E. Lawrence (more recently known as Lawrence of Arabia) owned 18 acres of land at Pole Hill until he sold it to COL in 1930. The 'Cloisters', an L-shaped wooden hut erected by Lawrence of Arabia and his friend Vyvyan Richards, fell into disrepair after the land was sold to COL, and the building was moved to the Warren House woodyard, where it still remains. A 'blue plaque' on the original granite Meridian obelisk records the history of Lawrence of Arabia's association with Pole Hill.
- The anti-airship gun emplacement on Pole Hill, in use during WWI, was reused in WWII as an anti-aircraft gun emplacement; an Epping Forest officer's father remembers spitfires flying past for gunners to practise sighting on.
- During WWII, part of Chingford Golf Course was used as a prisoner of war camp, then a school, which was removed in 1954. The school can be seen on a 1950s map of Chingford parish, Essex.  
(<https://maps.nls.uk/geo/explore/#zoom=16&lat=51.63680&lon=0.00591&layers=10&b=1>)
- The Chingford area has a rich and varied history, though the prominence of QEHL may have eclipsed other aspects of the heritage of the local area with some visitors. The Visitor Centre at Chingford, and the museum exhibits therein, are being reviewed (COL, in prep); as part of this analysis, the prominence or otherwise of various aspects of the Chingford area's history will be assessed.

### 5.3 Access

#### Car parking

- 66% of visitors to Epping Forest arrive by car (Liley *et al* (Footprint Ecology), 2020); however, the survey also found that 95% of visitors to Connaught Water arrived by car. COL currently offers seven car parks in the Chingford area, of varying sizes, specifications and facilities (Connaught Water, Barn Hoppitt, Barn Hoppitt summer overflow, Connaught Tennis Club, Visitor Centre, Bury Road and Bury Road Golf Course car park).
- Brown tourist signs for 'Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge' direct visitors arriving by car from the Epping New Road, along Rangers Road to QEHL. There are currently no such signs for the Epping Forest Visitor Centre, nor the Bury Road complex of visitor attractions.
- COL car parks: The Chingford area has seven car parks of varying capacity. All car parks should be vacated one hour after sunset; four of them are gated and locked each night (Connaught Water, Barn Hoppitt summer overflow, Bury Road and Bury Road Golf Course car park). Five car parks (Bury Road, Bury Road Golf Course, Visitor Centre, Barn Hoppitt and Connaught Water) have a tarmac surface, with dedicated disabled parking bays.
- Non-public car parks: Butler's Retreat has a small car park set aside by COL for the use of staff.
- The Sustainable Visitor Strategy will aim to address the issues concerning visitor access to the popular locations of QEHL, Connaught Water, the Visitor Centre and Butler's Retreat. The car parks local to these tourist hotspots are small and at capacity most days, as is the larger COL car park on Bury Road. Better pre-visit information is needed, in particular on the ease with which these venues can be reached by public transport and on foot, together with better signposting to locations of interest.
- On-road parking: There is a significant issue of on-road parking on the roads adjacent to Epping Forest, when the local COL car parks reach full capacity. The issue is particularly prominent at Connaught Water along Rangers Road and along Bury Road near to Hornbeam Lane, where parked cars impact on the width of the highway. COL are currently assessing potential solutions to the issue.
- Car Park charging: Parking charges have been introduced at COL car parks in the Chingford area in 2021.

### Public transport

- The Chingford area of Epping Forest is easily accessible by public transport from Chingford Station. As well as the train station, a number of bus routes terminate at Chingford Station from localities further into London.
- The 397 bus route from Debden Broadway to South Chingford stops on Rangers Road near the Royal Epping Forest Golf Club. However, there are no bus stops further along Rangers Road (for example at Connaught Water); as the bus route goes south via Forest Side and Whitehall Road to Buckhurst Hill and Debden.
- As part of the overarching Sustainable Visitor Strategy (COL, in prep), the connectivity between existing public transport connections (local bus stops and train/underground stations) and popular locations within Epping Forest, such as Connaught Water, will be assessed. Management works, such as signposting and waymarking, will be identified, to improve these connections and facilitate visitor access on foot or by bike.

## **5.4 Visitor Services**

- **Toilet facilities:** Toilet facilities are available in the Epping Forest Visitor Centre at Chingford during opening hours; these include a disabled access toilet. Butler's Retreat provides toilet facilities for its customers, as does the Holly Trail café/golf course, both available during opening hours. With increased promotion of the Bury Road car park as the gateway to the Chingford area, there is a need to improve toilet facilities, working with the local authority or as part of development/improvement of facilities in the area.
- **Managed Paths:** COL provide approximately 38 km of managed paths across the Chingford area with an even wider network of desire paths. The managed path network comprises the following (see Glossary):
  - 23 km of official all-weather and natural paths;
  - 2.1 km of Public Rights of Way;
  - 6.7 km of waymarked trails (easy access trail and most of the Willow and Holly trail; and,
  - 5.9 km of informal paths.
- The large number of desire and informal paths means that even with a good quality map, navigating the path network requires good local knowledge. This restricts the ability and/or confidence of many visitors to find their way from wider afield to visitor attractions on foot rather than by car and inhibits visitors from exploring further. Recently, new fingerposts have been installed in the Chingford area at key path junctions, to direct visitors towards points of interest, such as the Visitor Centre, QEHL and Connaught Water, and more are planned, subject to funding being available.
- **Waymarked Trails:** The Willow Trail is around 2.5 miles/4km long and provides mostly easy walking over a range of surfaced tracks and grassland; features of interest include Connaught Water and Grimston's Oak. The Holly trail is also around 2.4 miles/4km long and follows surfaced paths with short sections across the open grassland of Chingford Plain; the trail starts at the Holly Trail café. The Holly and Willow Trails overlap along a section of surfaced path, such that the two trails can be combined in a figure of eight to form a longer walk. Waymarking signage for both trails has been installed at the maximum spacing, which some users might find insufficiently frequent.
- **Easy Access Trail at Connaught Water:** This easy access trail is one of three provided by COL across Epping Forest; it is around 980m long, on broadly level ground, and is favoured by visitors for the opportunity to get close to open water; 'feeding the ducks' is a popular activity with younger children.

- COL has recently published a Cycling Code of Conduct (& No cycling locations:
  - Cycling has been banned from a section of land at the top of Pole Hill since 2006 (COL, 2006b&c); the status of this ban is currently under review.
  - There is a 'no cycling' restriction on the Easy Access Path around Connaught Water, and the link paths to it (Red Path and Cuckoo Brook path).

### Epping Forest Visitor Centre at Chingford

- This is housed in the former Coach House and stables of the Royal Epping Forest Hotel. The Visitor Centre building is owned and operated by COL; it provides information maps and leaflets on the Chingford area and QEHL, a gift shop and permanent and temporary exhibitions from the COL museum collection and local artists inspired by Epping Forest. The Visitor Centre had almost 42,000 visitors in 2018-19, and an additional 25,000 to QEHL in the same year (COL, in prep); the review of the Visitor Centre will explore how to update the Visitor Centre museum displays to meet the changing needs of visitors (see Heritage section above).
- The small car park in front of the Visitor Centre detracts from the overall appeal of the Visitor Centre. The review of the Visitor Centre will examine whether the car parking spaces could be better used, for example, by creating a space for picnic tables with sympathetic screening/planting from the road and adjacent hotel, thereby encouraging dwell time in the vicinity of the Visitor Centre and associated shop.
- The flagstones at the entrance to the Visitor Centre are not capable of withstanding the weight of heavy plant such as tractors – this needs to be borne in mind when operations are carried out. At the back of the Visitor Centre, there is a fence with a removable panel, to allow heavy machinery to be brought on site without going over the flagstones.
- A large colourful frontage has been installed at the entrance to the Visitor Centre, to increase its visibility from Rangers Road. However, the building cannot be seen by visitors arriving at the Bury Road car park, due to vegetation growth and the lack of signage on the wall of the Visitor Centre that faces down towards the Bury Road car park. This hampers connectivity between the two sites, and opportunities are missed for visitors to access both sites in the same visit. The back wall of the centre, if cleared of vegetation would also provide a useful backdrop for promotional banners rather than the intrusive location at the back of the fence currently used.

### Queen Elizabeth Hunting Lodge

- As well as being an historic building, QEHL is registered as a venue available for weddings and civil ceremonies.
- The review of Visitor Centre at Chingford will also explore the potential development of both the Visitor Centre and QEHL as commercial venue hire locations.

### Chingford Golf Course

- Chingford Golf Course is an 18-hole public golf course run by COL as part of Epping Forest with a long history (see Heritage section); there is a small shop in the Caddy House building opposite the golf course, adjacent to the Holly Trail café.
- The course is laid out in two returning loops, and plays a maximum 6342 yards, par 72. In 2019, just under 25,000 rounds of golf were played; 2020 was significantly higher due to the uptake of golf during Covid-19.

- The course is home to two golf clubs - Royal Epping Forest Golf Club and Chingford Golf Club. In addition, visitors to Epping Forest can book a round of golf directly with COL via the golf shop on Bury Road (pay and play) – green fees vary across the week/time of day.
- A Golf Course Management Plan (COL, 2001) set out management prescriptions to integrate the management of the golf course with the natural aspect of the Forest, including the existing veteran trees, pond with Great Crested Newts and the grassland 'roughs' and scrub. The management plan is now 20 years old; an update to the plan would ensure that it remains aligned to the current Epping Forest Management Strategy (COL, 2019b).
- The facilities in the current Caddy House building, particularly the toilet provision, are insufficient to meet current and projected future visitor demand.
- Vegetation management issues associated with the golf course operation are detailed below.
  - The 10<sup>th</sup> tee pond is overgrown with tall reeds that block golfers' view of the fairway and green, creating a hazard, particularly as walkers regularly cross the fairway. This pond has Great Crested Newts (European Protected Species), so sensitive and properly timed management is required.
  - There are a number of Poplar trees to the sides of the fairways; these have a short lifespan and as they age, the risk of branches falling increases. The Poplars are in need of crown reduction and ultimately replacement with a more suitable tree species. Ideally, only one new tree would be planted for each group of 2-3 Poplar trees currently in situ.
  - A large oak at the 13<sup>th</sup> hole has been crown-reduced recently – this tree needs to remain at this size going forward or the hole will become unplayable.
- The golf course suffers from a variety of anti-social behaviour issues, which are detailed in the 'Anti-social Behaviour' section of this ISP. Potential solutions to some of these problems can be found in the Outline Management Programme table of this ISP.
- The budget for the golf course maintenance is currently not tied to the number of rounds played – if the increased number of rounds played in 2020 continues in future years, the golf course maintenance activity will need to increase to maintain standards.
- A new irrigation control system was installed in 2019 to allow automatic watering of the tees and greens at night.
- A surfaced path, originally installed to provide golfers with access to tees, forms a partial looped walk around the golf course and is accessed by walkers from the local area. This route could be enhanced with better waymarking, to link the path back to Bury Road in a full loop, thereby reducing the number of people walking across the fairways.

## 5.5 Community

### Catering facilities

- There are two COL tenanted catering facilities in the Chingford area:
  - Butler's Retreat: This café, situated adjacent to QEHL and Visitor Centre at Chingford, is very popular throughout the year. However, the outdoor space around the café suffers from muddy conditions during the wetter months, which needs addressing.
  - Holly Trail café: This café is adjacent to the Chingford Golf Course and pro shop, as well as Go Further Cycle Hire, and is popular with visitors making use of these facilities, as well as visitors looking to explore Chingford Plain. The café toilet facilities are for the golf course and café users only, though these are used by visitors to the wider Chingford area and, in busier months, the original design capacity is being



stretched due to this wider use. Public toilets are available during opening hours at the Visitor Centre, less than 400m away on foot.

- Ice cream vans: COL currently (2020) licences two ice cream vans, one in the Connaught Water car park and one in the Bury Road car park; both are popular with visitors. From the start of the 2021 season, ice cream vans will be expected to comply with ULEZ (ultra-low emissions zone) standard, to support the City of London Corporation's Air Quality Strategy (COL, 2019a).

#### Other community activities

- Fishing: Fishing is allowed in Connaught Water, Warren Pond and Butler's Retreat Pond to those holding an Environment Agency rod licence, but not in any of the other ponds in the Chingford area.
- Public event spaces: The whole of Epping Forest has potential for events; individual locations are judged on their suitability for the nature and size of the event proposed, as per COL's Events Policy (2018b).
- The Orion Harriers: The Orion Harriers are an all-inclusive running and athletics club. Members make use of Epping Forest for training runs and races; club members also train on the athletics track at Waltham Forest Feel Good Centre. There is a membership of over 300 women and men aged from 18–86, plus a vibrant juniors' section aged 8-18 with an additional 300 members.
- Royal Epping Forest Golf Club: Membership of the club is open to both men and ladies and has a youth section. Membership allows access to the clubhouse opposite the 18<sup>th</sup> green of Chingford Golf Course; members have access to preferred tee-times on Chingford Golf Course.
- Chingford Golf Club: A men only club; members play on Chingford Golf Course and the clubhouse is based in Station Road, Chingford. Social membership is open to ladies.
- Chingford Model Flying Club: The club is one of the oldest in England, established around 1936. The club maintains a flying strip on Chingford Plain; in addition to the membership fee, members require a licence from COL to fly, and a CAA Drone Registration Scheme fee may also apply.
- Love North Chingford: A Facebook community organisation with around 3500 members; the Facebook page publicises local events, businesses and charities.
- Our Place – Chingford: Waltham Forest is one of five boroughs, and the only one in London, to be part of a government pilot scheme which aims to better connect communities and improve social integration. There is a dedicated team of Network Managers, one of whom is based in Chingford, to support fellow residents and volunteers in building an integrated, supportive and safe community, where every resident and local organisation is empowered to help make Waltham Forest a better place to live. The Chingford page of the website mentions the wildlife and ancient woodland of Epping Forest and the historic QEHL as positive reasons to live in the Chingford area (<https://ourplacewf.org/chingford>).
- Event location: Chingford Plain hosts travelling circuses/fun fairs several times a year, and has been used for large scale events for many years, including the COL-hosted Forest Festival and LBWF 'Borough of Culture' festivities; the area has the potential to hold future large scale events, subject to the relevant permissions.

## **5.6 Visitor Management**

- The Chingford area is adversely impacted by a large number of relatively low-level (compared to some other parts of Epping Forest) anti-social behaviour problems, all of which add up to a significant level of nuisance for those visitors who comply with the byelaws and for local residents, as well as damaging the natural aspect of the

Forest. Of note are littering, unlicensed spontaneous social events, fire-setting, fly-tipping and illegal metal-detecting/digging up potential finds.

- Fire hazard reduction and management measures across Epping Forest, including access and habitat management, are being enhanced as part of a Major Incident and Emergency Response Plan (COL, in prep.)
- Golf course:
  - Disruption of play by walkers crossing the fairways; dog-fouling and digging on the greens and tees.
  - Unauthorized play on the course on mid-summer evenings, once the golf shop has closed at 7pm.
  - In the summer months, informal football is played on the fairways and people picnic on the short turf, disrupting golf play.
  - At night, the golf course is used for illegal motorcycling, drinking, drugs and courting couples wanting a 'private' space. These activities result in large quantities of litter and damage to the fairways, greens and tees. The layout of the golf course, with tree and shrub screens, facilitates this anti-social behaviour, but removing these vegetation screens would fundamentally alter the nature of the golf course and the 'natural aspect' of it as part of Epping Forest.
- Dogs:
  - The vast majority of dog walkers act with consideration of other visitors, keeping their dogs under control. Nonetheless, a small proportion allow their dogs to negatively impact on other visitors (e.g. by not picking up dog faeces), golfing activities, COL cattle grazing and wildlife (e.g. swimming in the ponds, which disturbs wildfowl and causes neonicotinoid pollution).
  - Historically, ground-nesting Skylark bred on Chingford Plain; it is thought that disturbance from dogs contributed to their decline and eventual loss from the Plain.
- Cycling:
  - Most cyclists follow the cyclists' code of conduct (COL, 2021). However, a small proportion cause damage to the Forest by cycling off the main paths and in sensitive habitats, creating obstacle courses with fallen timber and/or by digging up the ground, damaging fences and gates that are in place to prevent cattle from straying onto the major road network, and cycling at speeds that do not take other visitors to the Forest into consideration.
  - There is an issue with visitors who cycle down towards Chingford from Fairmead along the Red Path. These cyclists arrive at Connaught Water wanting to go on further but are presented by the 'no cycling' easy access trail, with no obvious way to progress further south. Options to solve the issue could include better signage further north to ensure cyclists bypass Connaught Water.
- Motorcyclists: Motorcyclists are not permitted within Epping Forest but access Yates Meadow and the golf course, causing damage to the grassland habitat.
- Fishing: Connaught Water and the other larger ponds suffer from issues such as people fishing without a licence, fish being taken away and non-native species being introduced.
- Drone use: Unofficial drone use on Chingford Plain causes noise pollution and may interfere with the legitimate flying of model aircraft by members of Chingford Model Flying Club.
- Rough sleeping: The Chingford area is not particularly prone to rough sleeping, though it has occurred most recently in the dense scrub and secondary woodland on Pole Hill. Staff work actively with a range of government and local services to help vulnerable people rough sleeping on the Forest to find a better outcome.



- Management to reduce anti-social behaviour: The COL will be working with stakeholders including the Police Services and Epping Forest District Council to develop an Anti-Social Behaviour Management Plan for 2021/2022, which this ISP anticipates and dovetails.

## 5.7 Local Plans

- Local Plans: The Local Plans for both Epping Forest District Council (EDFC) and the London Borough of Waltham Forest (LBWF) are being revised and both are planning a significant increase in housing and employment space (see Appendix 8 for detailed information), as does the London Borough of Redbridge (LBR) Local Plan 2015-2030, which was formally adopted on 15 March 2018. The Chingford area of Epping Forest SAC straddles all three administrative districts/boroughs.
- The northern half of Epping Forest SAC is wholly within Epping Forest District Council; as such, a strategic Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is required for EFDC's new Local Plan. In addition, other Local Plans will also involve review by strategic HRAs, including the forthcoming Local Plan of the London Borough of Waltham Forest (LBWF) that, as drafted, would increase significantly the number of houses within 3km of Epping Forest. The adopted Local Plan for LBR includes a policy requiring any development within a mitigation buffer zone of 6.2km will require a screening assessment and an HRA unless there are no adverse effects on the Epping Forest SAC.
- EFDC Local Plan Submission Version Examination-in-Public: Following the conclusion of the examination-in-public, the Planning Inspector determined that "*I cannot conclude beyond reasonable scientific doubt (as the parties all agree that I must) that the Plan will not adversely affect the integrity of the SAC until steps have been taken towards resolving it*" (Phillips, 2019). Natural England (the statutory advisory body on matters relating to SACs and the Habitats Regulations), the Conservators of Epping Forest and EFDC, along with other relevant London Boroughs, are in the process of formulating and agreeing an SAC Mitigation Plan for the whole of Epping Forest SAC. The SAC Mitigation Plan will aim to either avoid or mitigate adverse impacts on the Forest that would be due to three identified factors: increased recreational pressure, more general urbanisation impacts and air pollution.
- SAC Mitigation Plan: There are three key aspects to the Epping Forest SAC Mitigation Plan that relate to recreational pressure on the Forest:
  - Zone of Influence (ZoI): The recreational Zone of Influence around the SAC is defined as the distance, as determined by standardised visitor survey(s), which encompasses up to  $\frac{3}{4}$  of visitors (not including holiday-makers) that travel to visit Epping Forest SAC. EFDC has recently commissioned a second Visitor Survey (Liley *et al*, Footprint Ecology, 2020) to update its HRA, which has confirmed the accepted Zone of Influence from the 2017 Visitor Survey as 6.2km.
  - Strategic (visitor) Access Management and Monitoring measures (SAMMs): Natural England and The Conservators are working with EFDC, Harlow District Council and the London local authorities to agree the management and monitoring measures necessary to avoid any negative impacts on the SAC arising out of the various Local Plans affecting the ZoI area, in order to safeguard the integrity of the SAC (LUC, 2020). The funding of these measures is also currently under review, although some monies have already been collected from developers.
  - Suitable Alternative Natural Green Spaces (SANGS): The provision of SANGS is a key aspect required to avoid negative impacts on the integrity of the Epping Forest SAC from increased recreational pressure resulting from new Local Plan developments (COL, 2020c). SANGS are, or contain significant amounts of, semi-natural habitats of a sufficient size and high quality that local residents, and those from further afield, will choose to visit them as an effective alternative to a visit to Epping Forest SAC. Such alternative

provision should have the effect of alleviating the pressure of additional visits to the SAC from the increased residential population and the subsequent impact of these visits. Natural England and The Conservators are currently liaising with EFDC and other local authorities over the provision, location and quality of suitable alternative natural green spaces.

- Honeypot locations with Epping Forest: Connaught Water (within the SAC) is already a very well-known location, with existing negative impacts on the features of conservation interest of the Epping Forest SAC. The developments arising out of the new Local Plans are likely to add further negative impacts to the Chingford area, unless there are robust SAMMs to better manage the visitors who come to the Chingford area and high quality SANGS to provide realistic alternatives to a visit to this part of Epping Forest. Long term monitoring of visitor impact is also crucial to avoid creeping, attritional damage to the integrity of the SAC in the future. The levels at which the SAC Mitigation Plan tariffs, or alternatives, are set are also critical, to ensure adequate funding for the SAMMs and in-perpetuity management of the SANGS.
- The Royal Epping Forest Golf Club, which is directly adjacent to Chingford Golf Course, is marked for development in the draft LBWF Local Plan (see <https://www.walthamforest.gov.uk/content/local-plan> for full list of Local Plan documents).

## 6. CHINGFORD AREA MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

‘London’s Great Forest’, a strategy and management plan for Epping Forest 2020-2030 sets out five key strategic priorities for Epping Forest, these being:

- A welcoming destination for all;
- A beautiful Forest, sustaining internationally and nationally important wildlife habitats in an ancient wood-pasture mosaic;
- An inspiring space for people’s health, recreation and enjoyment;
- A range of special heritage landscapes which are protected and celebrated; and,
- A resilient environment, where challenges are embraced, and opportunities explored.

Within the context of the overarching strategy and management plan for the whole of Epping Forest (above), this ISP collates current and past management and sets these into an integrated context whilst also identifying a series of local management strategy objectives for the Chingford area, to be implemented over the next 5-10 years (Table 1). Proposals to manage recreational pressure and air pollution impacts on the SAC will form part of these Chingford area objectives within a broader SAC Mitigation Strategy that is being developed in partnership with other competent authorities (e.g. EFDC) and Natural England.

The City of London Corporation will also discharge its obligations with respect to property management issues, as identified in this ISP.

**Table 1: Management Strategy Objectives for the Chingford Area**

<b>Chingford Area Management Strategy Objectives</b>		<b>Epping Forest Management Strategy Objectives</b>
<b>A</b>	To identify a programme of conservation measures that builds on existing management and further contributes towards improving the condition status of the Epping Forest SAC and SSSI in the Chingford area.	2, 5
<b>B</b>	To ensure that COL offers a visitor experience to the Chingford area that meets the needs of the surrounding communities today and into the future, in a sustainable and welcoming way.	1, 3, 4, 5
<b>C</b>	To finance an Infrastructure Improvement Programme for the Chingford area, partly derived from income generated locally.	5
<b>D</b>	To seek to mitigate the impact of additional visits from new developments within Epping Forest SAC's Zone of Influence, through a range of measures including improved landscaping, alternative routes and destinations, alongside more and improved interpretation and orientation.	1, 2, 5

## 7. OUTLINE MANAGEMENT PLAN

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timing<sup>2</sup></b> (ongoing/years/subject to funding)
City Corporation obligations, A, B	<p><i>Site safety and statutory work</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to undertake COL statutory requirements with respect to site safety and statutory work. This including managing tree safety and Forest furniture according to relevant City Corporation Policies; and,</li> <li>Liaise with COL DBE to agree the funding of a programme of repair work for Connaught Water dam, as detailed in the most recent Reservoir Inspection report (Atkins, 2016). Ensure that the repair works are completed by 2026.</li> <li>Schedule regular inspections of the Warren Pond bund and outflow pipe for wear and tear.</li> <li>Thames Water pipeline: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using the aerial photographs in Appendix 4, establish the actual extent to which tree/scrub vegetation has grown over the Thames Water pipeline via survey work;</li> <li>Prepare a works programme to remove vegetation from locations of concern and return it to grassland.</li> <li>Once the vegetation removal is complete, include the new areas of grassland in the annual grassland cutting regime for the Chingford area.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	Ongoing

<sup>2</sup> Ongoing = task is ongoing on cyclical basis in current management of the site, 2019 = first year of new task, subject to funding = additional funding required for task / project to be progressed

Objective	Action	Timing <sup>2</sup> (ongoing/years/subject to funding)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Following completion of the Access Audit (COL, in prep), complete wayleave agreements with outstanding third parties to safeguard the Forest's boundaries.</li> </ul>	
A, D	<p><i>Habitat Management</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A 10-year Countryside Stewardship Scheme programme for most of the Chingford area has recently been agreed and is underway, building on 30 years of agreed and approved management work across the whole area. Key aspects of the current cycle of management include:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protection of ancient trees, including through pollarding, crown reduction, fencing and soil condition amelioration;</li> <li>Extension of the wood-pasture landscape habitat across the Chingford area by:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertaking habitat management works to open up former wood-pasture;</li> <li>Expanding cattle grazing using Epping Forest's herd of Longhorn cattle and the new GPS collar technology; and,</li> <li>Providing additional water troughs across the Chingford area to allow the cattle to avoid busy areas and expand their grazing into new areas of the Forest.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Restoration of the calcareous grassland outcrop on Yardley Hill:                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Upgrading COL CityMaps to include a data layer on the geology of Britain from British Geological Survey;</li> <li>Using the mapped geological information to target scrub clearance on Yardley Hill to areas of chalky boulder clay, and linking these with existing open areas, to facilitate cattle movement and grazing;</li> <li>Implementing a cyclical cutting regime and/or reinstate grazing (using the new GPS collar technology) in the cleared areas to encourage the return of species rich calcareous grassland.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Preparation of an aquatic habitat management plan for the streams and their sources, ponds and ditches in the area (including the golf course, see below), using the suggested management actions in Appendix 6 of this ISP, with regard to Great Crested Newt populations.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Preparation of a vegetation management plan for the Chingford Golf Course, to include             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>tree management / replacement with more suitable tree species, scrub management and/or removal, pond and ditch management;</li> <li>consideration of safety and hazards particular to the golf course operation, as well as the 'playability' of tees and holes;</li> <li>sympathetic management of the roughs to favour the scarcer plants in these areas; and,</li> <li>realignment of the proposed new footpath across the Golf Course, as detailed in the SAC Mitigation Strategy for Epping Forest, to reduce the hazards associated with walkers crossing the golf course.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	(dates to be agreed)

Objective	Action	Timing <sup>2</sup> (ongoing/years/subject to funding)
City Corporation obligations, A, D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identification of measures, with partners through the SAC Mitigation Strategy, to reduce air pollution from road traffic impacting the SAC.</li> </ul>	(dates to be agreed)
	<p><i>Invasive species management</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor and control invasive species to ensure we meet statutory and COL agreed policies and guidelines, including:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oak Processionary Moth management, nest removal and awareness raising with visitors through signage and other communication methods; and,</li> <li>Control of <i>Crassula helmsii</i> and other INNS, with a risk-based hierarchical approach to control.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
B, C, D	<p><i>Heritage</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Queen Elizabeth Hunting Lodge:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EF staff to support COL City Surveyor's Heritage Estate Team to:                   <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review both the recommendations in the CS and progress on the planned costed maintenance works for QEHL created in 2016.</li> <li>Determine which works have been completed from the CS and spreadsheet, revise the schedule for outstanding works and identify funding to complete these tasks.</li> <li>Commission a Conservation Management Plan for QEHL.</li> <li>Continue to monitor Deathwatch beetle numbers in QEHL, and act on any reported recommendations.</li> <li>Ensure that the moisture data for QEHL is being monitored and any required actions are undertaken.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>Review the future uses of QEHL, the Epping Forest Visitor Centre and Museum at Chingford within the context of the Archaeological Protection Area (APA) designations for both QEHL and its wider landscape, and consider options for re-providing services as part of a potential new hub at Bury Road car park;</li> <li>Review the feasibility of restoring the historic view from the top of Pole Hill to Greenwich, to help meet aspirations to provide a unique and memorable visitor experience. Implement works as appropriate.</li> </ul>	(dates to be agreed)
B, C, D	<p><i>Visitor Services</i></p> <p>Within the context of the forthcoming Sustainable Visitor Strategy (due 2021), prepare an Access Statement for the Chingford area. Key aspects of this statement to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protection of the integrity of the landscape, a key feature of the Chingford area and of central importance to ecology/conservation, heritage and visitor enjoyment.</li> <li>Agreeing the approach for the SAC Mitigation Strategy with both LBWF and EFDC to ensure an integration of the priorities and proposals, as there is likely to be a mixture of SAMMS for SAC and infrastructure/SANGS toolbox for the non-SAC land across Compartment 26.</li> <li>Works to improve visitor access:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving footpath connections between visitor hotspots and the COL car parks;</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	(dates to be agreed)

Objective	Action	Timing <sup>2</sup> (ongoing/years/subject to funding)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving and waymarking foot and cycle access options for visitors to get to attractions in the Chingford area without a car, e.g. from Chingford Station/bus stop on Rangers Road to QEHL and Connaught Water;</li> <li>Habitat management works to improve the visibility of the Visitor Centre from Bury Road car park to better connect the two; and,</li> <li>Reducing damage to Forest verges along Rangers Road and Bury Road due to Forest visitor roadside parking.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving accessibility for visitors around the Chingford area:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing a path linking Bury Road car park, the Visitor Centre/QEHL and Connaught Water as part of the forthcoming SAC Mitigation Plan (see LUC, 2020); and,</li> <li>Developing a further range of waymarked routes across the Chingford area from Bury Road car park (e.g. around the golf course and beyond to Pole Hill and Yardley Hill/Yates Meadow) to meet the diverse needs of Forest visitors, to link with the wider Forest and to reduce visitor pressure on the relatively small space of Chingford Plain, an important part of protecting the SAC.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Works to enhance the welcoming setting of the Visitor Centre/QEHL/Butler's Retreat café:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Upgrading the surfacing around Butler's Retreat café in a sensitive manner, so as to protect the heritage of the building and its Archaeological Priority Area and the natural aspect of the surrounding Forest, and to ensure that any works are SUDS compliant.</li> <li>Review options for enhancing the visibility and welcoming appeal of the Visitor Centre entrance area; e.g. the adjacent car park repurposed as an area for picnic tables, with screening plant tubs.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Reviewing the brown tourist sign provision.</li> </ul>	
City Corporation obligations, B, D	<b>Enforcement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure the Antisocial Behaviour Management Plan and Enforcement Strategy (COL, in prep) reflects the operational concerns of the Chingford area.</li> <li>Continuing to undertake anti-social behaviour management in conjunction with local stakeholders and partners e.g. Police, NEPP and Local Authorities.</li> </ul>	2021  Ongoing
A, B, C, D	<b>Resourcing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop an Investment Resourcing Plan for the Chingford area in conjunction with the emerging SAC Mitigation Strategy. To achieve the required site investment, key aspects of the Plan will include:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying investment needs and potential third-parties;</li> <li>Identifying potential new on-site income generation, particularly within the Bury Road footprint;</li> <li>Reviewing Golf Course maintenance budget to ensure that existing course standard is maintained as player numbers increase over time;</li> <li>Grant-funding opportunities explored; and,</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	(dates to be agreed)

Objective	Action	Timing <sup>2</sup> (ongoing/years/subject to funding)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying income opportunities arising from the Epping Forest SAC Mitigation Strategy, resulting from the emerging Local Authority Local Plans.</li> </ul>	

## 8. POTENTIAL ENHANCEMENT PROJECTS REQUIRING EXTERNAL ADDITIONAL SUPPORT & RESOURCES

Additional support needs to be sought from local businesses and community partners to take forward the following projects:

- Visitor access infrastructure: Unquantified at present is the long-term development of the visitor access infrastructure to meet changing community needs, linked to future substantial development in the area. Works arising from such developments does not form part of the current site expenditure and additional funding will need to be identified to progress any changes and to develop plans and mitigation proposals. This includes new path construction, signage and visitor centre/Caddy house facilities improvements
- Ancient tree management: Survey of ancient / veteran trees could be undertaken by a community partner.
- The large boardwalk and fishing platforms on Connaught Water are halfway through their working lives. Extra funding will be required to replace the boardwalk, at least.

## 9. GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ACRONYMS

Term / Acronym	Definition
Acid grassland	Nutrient poor acidic soils and grassy-mossy vegetation, including sheep's sorrel, tormentil, heath bedstraw, wavy hair-grass and sheep's-fescue. This type of grassland is on a continuum from heathland habitat and consequently heathers, such as ling, bell heather and cross-leaved heather, may also be present, and the grassland may be a mosaic of herbs and shrubs.
ACPO	Association of Chief Policer Officers (replaced in 2015 by NPCC)
APA	Archaeological Priority Area
BGA	Blue-green algae
BSE	Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy
Chalybeate spring	Also known as a ferruginous spring, is a mineral spring containing salts of iron
COL	City of London Corporation
EA	Environment Agency
EF	Epping Forest
EFHT	Epping Forest Heritage Trust
Gravel workings	An area using for the extraction of gravel, often in a river valley where the water table is high, so that they may naturally fill with water to form ponds or lakes

Term / Acronym	Definition
High risk	In the context of the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, the Environment Agency classifies water bodies as being 'high risk' if an uncontrolled release of water could result in loss of life.
HLF	Heritage Lottery Fund
ISP	Individual Site Plan
Large raised reservoir	In the context of the Reservoirs Act 1975, a water body is classified as a large raised reservoir if it impounds more than 25,000 cubic metres of water
LBR	London Borough of Redbridge
LBWF	London Borough of Waltham Forest
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bi and Transgender
LoGS	Local Geological Sites, as listed by GeoEssex: <a href="http://www.geoessex.org.uk/introduction_and_best_sites.html">http://www.geoessex.org.uk/introduction_and_best_sites.html</a>
MPS	Metropolitan Police Service
NE	Natural England
NPCC	National Police Chiefs' Council (replaced ACPO in 2015)
NSNO	'No Second Night Out' (Mayor London initiative)
OPM	Oak Processionary Moth
PSE	Public Sex Environment
SAC	Special Area of Conservation (European designation)
SINC	Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (local designation)
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest (UK designation)
TfL	Transport for London
Wood pasture	An area that has been managed by a long-established tradition of grazing, allowing the survival of multiple generations of open-grown and/or pollarded trees, characteristically with some veteran/ancient trees and a mosaic of habitats including scrub.
Official All-weather Path	Paths identified on the Official Epping Forest map as all-weather paths promoted for use by horse riders, cyclists and pedestrians.
Official Natural Path	Paths identified on the Official Epping Forest map as natural paths promoted for use by horse riders, cyclists and pedestrians, usually seasonally closed.
Public Right of Way (PRoW)	Paths identified on the definitive map that the public have a legally protected right to pass and re-pass. Depending on the specific path's status, people will be able to access on foot, cycle or horseback.
Easy Access Trail	Four trails promoted as 'Easy Access' with a level, firm, non-slip surface and regular benches and passing places for wheelchairs. Located at High Beach, Connaught Water, Knighton Wood and Jubilee Pond. Cycling and horse riding are not allowed.
Informal Path	Paths that are highlighted on the Strava App heat map as well used but not already identified as an Official path. Further routes may be added to the Informal Path network if local information suggests there is enough usage to warrant the path's inclusion in this category.



Term / Acronym	Definition
Waymarked Trail	Nine waymarked circular paths established across Epping Forest and the Buffer Lands. Each trail follows official, informal and desire paths as well as Public Rights of Way (PRoW), with some on PRoW on land not managed by the City of London.

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## 11. APPENDICES

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## APPENDIX 1: Detailed Activity Plan

Operational Activity	CMPT	Location	Start Month	Year	Cycle	Description	Team
AW - Management access capital	24, 25, 26, 27, 29	Chingford area	Dec	2023	0	<b>Visitor access:</b> Improve and waymark foot and cycle access options for visitors to get to attractions in the Chingford area without a car, e.g. from Chingford Station/bus stop on Rangers Road to QEHL and Connaught Water	HVS/HOP
AW - Management access capital	26, 27	Chingford area	Dec	2027	0	<b>Visitor access:</b> Provide a new surfaced circular path linking Bury Road car park, Connaught Water and the Visitor Centre/QEHL. ( <i>SAC Mitigation Plan</i> )	HOP
AW - Management access capital	26	Chingford area - Butler's Retreat	Sep	2024	0	<b>Visitor access:</b> Upgrade the surfacing around the Butler's Retreat café, both the hard/landscaped and grass surfaced areas	HOP
AW - Management access maintenance	26, 27, 29	Chingford area	Dec	2027	0	<b>Visitor access:</b> Install structures to provide long term protection of Forest verges along Rangers Road, which is being damaged by roadside parking of Forest visitors. For example replacing the logs with bollards when the logs near the end of their life.	HOP
AW - Pedestrian access management	26	Chingford Plain: paths	Jul	2022	1	<b>Path cuts:</b> Cut managed paths across Chingford plain to maintain a 2.5m wide short grass route	G
AW - Pedestrian access management	26	Chingford Plain: paths	May	2022	1	<b>Path cuts:</b> Cut managed paths across Chingford plain to maintain a 2.5m wide short grass route	G
AW - Pedestrian access management	26	Chingford Plain: paths	Sep	2022	1	<b>Path cuts:</b> Cut managed paths across Chingford plain to maintain a 2.5m wide short grass route	G
AW - Visitor Centre management	26	Chingford area - Visitor Centre	Dec	2023	0	<b>Visitor access:</b> Habitat management works to create an obvious visual linkage between the Visitor Centre/QEHL and Butler's Retreat café	A
AW - Visitor Centre management	26	Chingford area - Visitor Centre	Jun	2022	1	<b>Grounds Management:</b> Cut grass to maintain a sward height of no more than 15cm, hedges cut to maintain height and shape, weed control of hard surfaces.	M
AW - Visitor Centre grounds management	26	Chingford area	Dec	2023	0	<b>Visitor access:</b> Habitat management works to improve the visibility of the Visitor Centre from Bury Road car park to better connect the two	A
CGC - Tree management works	26	Chingford area - Golf Course	Dec	2026	3	<b>Tree management:</b> tree management / replacement with more suitable tree species, scrub management and/or removal, pond and ditch management	A
LAW - Tree management works	25	Chingford area - Pole Hill	Sep	2023	0	<b>Woodland Management:</b> Implement works to restore historical view from top of Pole Hill as appropriate	A
NHW - Maintenance work	25	Chingford area - Yardley Hill	Sep	2024	1	<b>Calcareous grassland:</b> Implement a cyclical cutting regime and/or reinstate grazing in the cleared areas to encourage the return of species rich calcareous grassland	HOP
NWH - Invasive plant control	24, 25, 26, 27, 29	Chingford area	Dec	2023	1	<b>Invasive non-native species management:</b> Control of <i>Crassula helmsii</i> and other INNS, with a risk-based hierarchical approach to control	Vol
NWH - Invasive plant control	24, 25, 26, 27, 29	Chingford area	Dec	2022	0	<b>Invasive non-native species management:</b> Risk-based hierarchical approach plan to control <i>Crassula helmsii</i> prepared	HOP
OC - External Advisory	24, 25, 26, 27, 29	Chingford area	Dec	2023	0	<b>Planning:</b> Identification of measures, with partners through the SAC Mitigation Strategy, to reduce air pollution from road traffic impacting the SAC	HOC

## Chingford

Operational Activity	CMPT	Location	Start Month	Year	Cycle	Description	Team
OC - Internal Advisory	25	Chingford area - Yardley Hill	Dec	2022	0	<b>Calcareous grassland:</b> Upgrade COL CityMaps to include a data layer on the geology of Britain from British Geological Survey	HOC
OC - Internal Advisory	26	Chingford area - QEHL	Dec	2024	0	<b>Planning:</b> Commission a Conservation Management Plan for QEHL	CS
OC - Internal Advisory	24, 25, 26, 27, 29	Chingford area	Dec	2025	0	<b>Planning:</b> Develop a further range of waymarked routes across the Chingford area from Bury Road car park (e.g. to Pole Hill, Yates Meadow, High Beach) to meet the diverse needs of Forest visitors and to link with the wider Forest. ( <i>Chingford Access statement project</i> )	HVS
OC - Internal Advisory	24, 25, 26, 27, 29	Chingford area	Dec	2024		<b>Planning:</b> Develop an Investment Resourcing Plan for the Chingford area in conjunction with the emerging SAC Mitigation Strategy	HOP
OC - Internal Advisory	26	Chingford area - Bury Road hub	Dec	2023	0	<b>Planning:</b> Prepare an outline Business Plan for developing a new hub at the Bury Road car park, as a gateway to the Chingford area	HVS
OC - Internal Advisory	26	Chingford area - QEHL	Dec	2023	0	<b>Planning:</b> Review both the recommendations in the CS and progress on the planned costed maintenance works for the QEHL created in 2016. Determine which works have been completed from the CS and spreadsheet, revise the schedule for outstanding works and identify funding to complete these tasks	HOP/CS
OC - Internal Advisory	26	Chingford area - Bury Road hub	Dec	2023	0	<b>Planning:</b> Review Golf Course maintenance budget to ensure that existing course standard is maintained as player numbers increase over time ( <i>Golf Development Project</i> )	GC
OC - Internal Advisory	NA	Chingford area	Dec	2023	0	<b>Planning:</b> Review the brown tourist sign provision	HVS
OC - Internal Advisory	24, 25, 26, 27, 29	Chingford area	Dec	2023	0	<b>Planning:</b> Within the context of the forthcoming Sustainable Visitor Strategy (due 2021), prepare an Access Statement for the Chingford area	HVS/HOP
OC - Internal Advisory	24, 25, 26, 27, 29	Chingford area	Mar	2023	0	<b>Planning:</b> Agree a programme of conservation measures for extension of the wood-pasture habitat, with the long-term vision of creating a working wood-pasture landscape across the Chingford area	HOC
OC - Internal Advisory	24, 25, 26, 27, 29	Chingford area	Mar	2023	0	<b>Planning:</b> Agree a programme of conservation measures for the protection of ancient trees, including through pollarding, crown reduction, fencing and soil condition amelioration	HOC
OC - Internal Advisory	24, 25, 26, 27, 29	Chingford area	Mar	2026	0	<b>Planning:</b> Explore grant-funding opportunities for access and habitat management works	HOP
OC - Internal Advisory	26	Chingford area - Golf Course	Mar	2025	0	<b>Planning:</b> Preparation of a conservation tree and vegetation management plan for the Chingford Golf Course	HOP/GC
OC - Internal Advisory	25	Chingford area - Pole Hill	Mar	2022	0	<b>Planning:</b> Review the feasibility of restoring the historic view from the top of Pole Hill to Greenwich, to help meet aspirations to provide a unique and memorable visitor experience.	HOP
OC - Internal Advisory	27	Chingford area - Connaught Water	Sep	2025	0	<b>Planning:</b> Ensure that Connaught Dam repair works are completed by 2026	HOP/DBE
OC - Internal Advisory	27	Chingford area - Connaught Water	Sep	2023	0	<b>Planning:</b> Liaise with COL DBE to identify the funding of a programme of repair work for Connaught Water dam, as detailed in the most recent Reservoir Inspection report (Atkins, 2016).	HOP
OC - Internal Advisory	25	Chingford area - Yardley Hill	Sep	2023	0	<b>Planning:</b> Plan the restoration of the calcareous grassland outcrop on Yardley Hill	HOC



Operational Activity	CMPT	Location	Start Month	Year	Cycle	Description	Team
OC - Internal Advisory	24, 25, 26, 27, 29	Chingford area	Sep	2023	0	<b>Planning:</b> Preparation of an aquatic habitat management plan for the streams and their sources, ponds and ditches in the area, using the suggested management actions in Appendix 6 of this ISP, with regard to Great Crested Newt populations	HOP
OC - Internal Advisory	26	Chingford area - Visitor Centre	Sep	2022	0	<b>Planning:</b> Review options for enhancing the visibility and welcoming appeal of the Visitor Centre entrance area; e.g. the adjacent car park repurposed as an area for picnic tables, with screening plant tubs	HVS
OC - Internal Advisory	29	Chingford area - Warren Pond	Sep	2021	1	<b>Planning:</b> Schedule regular inspections of the Warren Pond bund and outflow pipe for wear and tear	K
OC - Internal Survey	25	Chingford area - Yardley Hill	Sep	2023	0	<b>Calcareous grassland:</b> Use the mapped geological information to target scrub clearance on Yardley Hill to areas of chalky boulder clay	HOP
SL - Wayleave management	25, 26, 29	Chingford area - Thames Water pipeline	Dec	2023	0	<b>Wayleave management:</b> Prepare a works programme to remove vegetation from locations of concern and return it to grassland	HOP
SL - Wayleave management	24, 25, 26, 27, 29	Chingford area	Dec	2025	0	<b>Wayleave management:</b> Following completion of the Access Audit (COL, in prep), complete wayleave agreements with outstanding third parties to safeguard the Forest's boundaries	HOC
SL - Wayleave management	25, 26, 29	Chingford area - Thames Water pipeline	Dec	2023	0	<b>Wayleave management:</b> Using the aerial photographs in Appendix 4, establish the actual extent to which tree/scrub vegetation has grown over the Thames Water pipeline via survey work	HOP
SL - Wayleave management	25, 26, 29	Chingford area - Thames Water pipeline	Sep	2024	1	<b>Wayleave management:</b> Once the vegetation removal is complete, include the new areas of grassland in the annual grassland cutting regime for the Chingford area	HOP
WMM - Pest and disease management	24, 25, 26, 27, 29	Chingford area	Jul	2022	1	<b>OPM:</b> Oak Processionary Moth management, nest removal and awareness raising with visitors through signage and other communication methods	
WMM - Wood pasture grazing work	24, 25, 26, 27, 29	Chingford area	Aug	2024	0	<b>Wood-pasture:</b> Provide additional water troughs across the Chingford area to allow the cattle to avoid busy areas and expand their grazing into new areas of the Forest	GRA
WMM - Wood pasture restoration	24, 25, 26, 27, 29	Chingford area	Dec	2021	1	<b>Wood-pasture:</b> Expand cattle grazing using Epping Forest's herd of Longhorn cattle	GRA
WMM - Wood pasture restoration	24, 25, 26, 27, 29	Chingford area	Dec	2024	0	<b>Wood-pasture:</b> Undertake habitat management works to open up former wood-pasture	A



## APPENDIX 2: Inspecting Engineer's Recommendations for Connaught Water Dam (Atkins, 2016)

Tables of recommendations are taken from Atkins (2016), an Inspecting Engineer's Report under Section 10 of the Reservoirs Act 1975 as amended 2010. The inspection took place on 24 March 2016.

No 'Recommendations as to Measures to be taken in the Interests of Safety under Section 10(3)(c) of the Act' were made with respect to Connaught Water dam (*these recommendations would be enforceable by the Enforcement Authority*).

Note on abbreviations in tables below:

- OS/EF Operations – Open Spaces / Epping Forest (Operations team)
- DBE – Department of the Built Environment

**Table A2.1:** Recommendations as to Measures to be taken under Section 10(3)(b) of the Act (Maintenance)

*These recommendations are enforceable by the Enforcement Authority but do not require Supervision by a Qualified Civil Engineer within the Meaning of the Act. To be completed within 18 months of the date of report (May 2018).*

	COL division(s) responsible	Current status of works
(i) the approach to the auxiliary weir be kept clear of coarse vegetation and saplings	OS/EF Operations	Ongoing as part of routine maintenance
(ii) repairs to the spillway outlet structure and the associated 'sand' bags be carried out	COL DBE	Completed by contractors (Mitie) in 2017
(iii) the undermined area of the end slab be filled and a new slab be poured with 'downstand' at the end	COL DBE	Completed by contractors (Mitie) in 2017

**Table A2.2:** Other Recommendations, as to Measures to be taken in Respect of Maintenance

*These recommendations are not enforceable by the Enforcement Authority and do not require Supervision by a Qualified Civil Engineer within the Meaning of the Act.*

	COL division(s) responsible	Current status of works
(i) it would be beneficial to repair the whole system in one go and certainly dig out the back of the boarding, making sure there was no exit point and placing geotextile right to the bottom of the trench	COL DBE	Completed by contractors (Mitie) in 2017
(ii) the revetment on the upstream slope be replaced as and when necessary	COL DBE	<b>Outstanding, completion due before next inspection in 2026</b>
(iii) any coarse vegetation/saplings and other woody vegetation on the upstream face be removed and any mature trees be managed so that they do not become too big or out of balance	COL EF Operations	Ongoing as part of routine maintenance <b>One large tree on downstream slope spillway requires removal</b>
(iv) areas of subsidence on the crest be filled	COL EF Operations	Ongoing as part of routine maintenance
(v) existing holes on the crest be filled in and any potholes which form be filled in	COL EF Operations	Ongoing as part of routine maintenance
(vi) the brambles and coarse vegetation to the right of the spillway be cut back	COL EF Operations	Ongoing as part of routine maintenance

	<b>COL division(s) responsible</b>	<b>Current status of works</b>
(vii) any woody vegetation, coarse vegetation and saplings be removed from the downstream face where possible if it re-establishes itself	COL EF Operations	Ongoing as part of routine maintenance
(viii) any mature trees be managed by pollarding etc so that they do not become too big or out of balance – there is one on the crest	COL EF Operations	Ongoing as part of routine maintenance
(ix) a good grass cover be encouraged and the grass cut regularly	COL EF Operations	Ongoing as part of routine maintenance
(x) leakage through the overflow weir be stemmed	COL DBE	<b><i>Outstanding, completion due before next inspection in 2026</i></b>
(xi) any debris in the overflow and overflow pipe be taken out and the pipes kept clear	COL EF Operations	Ongoing as part of routine maintenance
(xii) any scour damage to the path should be repaired and a low bund erected to ensure the flow goes to the forest and not along the toe of the dam	COL DBE	<b><i>Outstanding, completion due before next inspection in 2026</i></b>

**Table A2.3:** Measures Recommended in the Interests of Improving Monitoring and Supervision under Section 11 of the Act

	<b>COL division(s) responsible</b>	<b>Current status of works</b>
(i) the area of ponded water on the toe be watched for further flow or turbid flow	COL EF Operations	Ongoing as part of routine maintenance
(ii) the areas of leakage be watched for signs of increased leakage	COL EF Operations	Ongoing as part of routine maintenance
(iii) water levels are recorded at least monthly	COL EF Operations	Ongoing as part of routine maintenance
(iv) in periods of heavy rain, particularly in the autumn, staff visit the site on a daily basis to ensure the overflow screen is clear	COL EF Operations	Ongoing as part of routine maintenance
(v) the owner considers using the new Prescribed Form of Record	COL EF Operations	New Prescribed Form (Blue Book) now in use

The Supervising Engineer, in accordance with Section 10(4) of the Act, checks the following items twice a year:

- The Prescribed Form of Record is complete;
- The flows at the toe are watched; and,
- The spillway and approach are kept free of debris.

## APPENDIX 3: List of buildings and structures in the Chingford area

Name of building / structure	Notes	Occupancy	Heritage Listing
Queen Elizabeth Hunting Lodge	Queen Elizabeth Hunting Lodge was built for Henry VIII in 1543 and is a unique survivor from the Royal Forest period of Epping Forest. Formerly known as the Great Standing; the two upper floors of the three storey building were open at the sides to provide panoramic views of the hunt across Chingford Plain. A fine example of Tudor timber-framed architecture when English carpentry was at its peak.	COL Museum	Grade II* - Draft Conservation Statement available (Martin Ashley Architects, 2018 <i>in draft</i> ). <b>No Conservation Management Plan available</b>
Butler's Retreat	A mid-19 <sup>th</sup> C timber-framed barn of two storeys, on a brick base, with a lean-to offshoot at the eastern end. Comprises three main bays, the frames of which are expressed externally with weather-boarded infill panels between. The form is consistent with that of other surviving Essex barns, e.g. at Stapleford Tawney. Further garages / outbuildings	Café (third party lease)	Grade II – 2008 Conservation Statement available (Gibberd, 2008)
Royal Forest Coach House	20 <sup>th</sup> C stable buildings converted into the Epping Forest Visitor Centre at Chingford	COL Visitor Centre & Museum	Unlisted - 2008 Conservation Statement available (Gibberd, 2008)
Keeper's Lodge at 10 Rangers Road	Additional garage	COL Staff	Unlisted
Caddie House	Half of downstairs floor space	COL Golf Pro shop	Unlisted
Caddie House	Half of downstairs floor space	Holly Trail café (third party lease)	Unlisted
Caddie House	First floor flat with separate entrance at rear and garden attached	COL staff	Unlisted
Jubilee Retreat	Workshop and yard Base for golf course greenkeepers (maintenance). Includes main shed, water tank for irrigation system and associated control building (a shed), containers and a fuel tank.	COL staff	Unlisted
Jubilee Retreat	Orion Harriers building Includes a space for a COL staff welfare facility.	Orion Harriers running club (third party lease)	Unlisted
Forest Lodge – 1 Jubilee Retreat	First floor flat, plus a garage in a block	Third party lease?	Unlisted
Forest Lodge – 2 Jubilee Retreat	Ground floor flat, plus a garage in a block	Third party lease?	Unlisted
Forest Lodge – 3 Jubilee Retreat	Semi-detached house, plus a garage in a block	COL Staff	Unlisted
Pole Hill Obelisk	Ordnance Survey obelisk with square base of 6 stone slabs joined with cramps. Roughhewn granite plinth positioned centrally on base, surmounted by monolithic granite obelisk with battered sides and flat top. Two inscriptions, one re Greenwich meridian/true north, and other re T E Lawrence.	n/a	Grade II - 2015 Quinquennial Report available (Barker Associates LLP, 2015a)
Pole Hill Trig Point	Concrete pillar in form of square cone with bronze tripod base on top (roundel missing) and benchmark on side. Pillar stands on concrete covered brick base.	n/a	Unlisted - 2015 Quinquennial Report available (Barker Associates LLP, 2015a)

Name of building / structure	Notes	Occupancy	Heritage Listing
Durning-Lawrence Drinking Fountain	Adjacent to Butler's Retreat. Pink polished granite drinking fountain, surmounted by an obelisk, standing on two octagonal grey unpolished granite base steps.	n/a	Unlisted - 2015 Quinquennial Report available (Barker Associates LLP, 2015b)
Horse Trough, Bury Road	Granite horse trough with drinking fountain at one end. Workings of drinking fountain have been removed.	n/a	Unlisted – 2015 Quinquennial Report available (Barker Associates LLP, 2015c)
Remains of WWI anti-airship gun emplacement	Only the concrete base is still in situ. The site was reused during WWII as an anti-aircraft gun emplacement.	n/a	Unlisted

## APPENDIX 4: Thames Water pipeline – locations with potential problem vegetation

**Photo A4.1:** Southern tip of Pole Hill



**Photo A4.2:** South-eastern edge of Pole Hill, south of Chingford Golf Course



**Photo A4.3:** Southwestern corner of Chingford Golf Course



**Photo A4.4:** Northeast of QEHL





**Photo A4.5:** Either side of where pipeline crosses Rangers Road

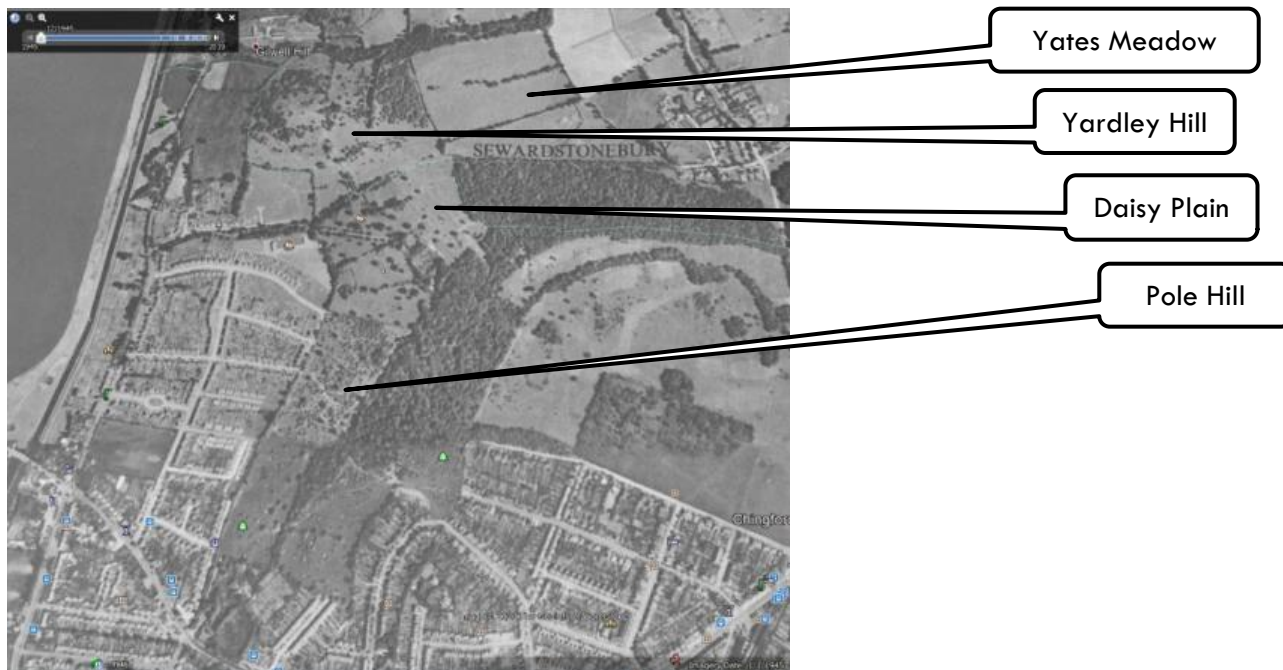


## APPENDIX 5: Yardley Hill and Pole Hill - historical information showing scrub encroachment since 1888-1913, and locations of chalky glacial till outcrops on Yardley Hill

**Image A5.1:** Ordnance Survey mapping of Yardley Hill and Pole Hill, 1888-1913



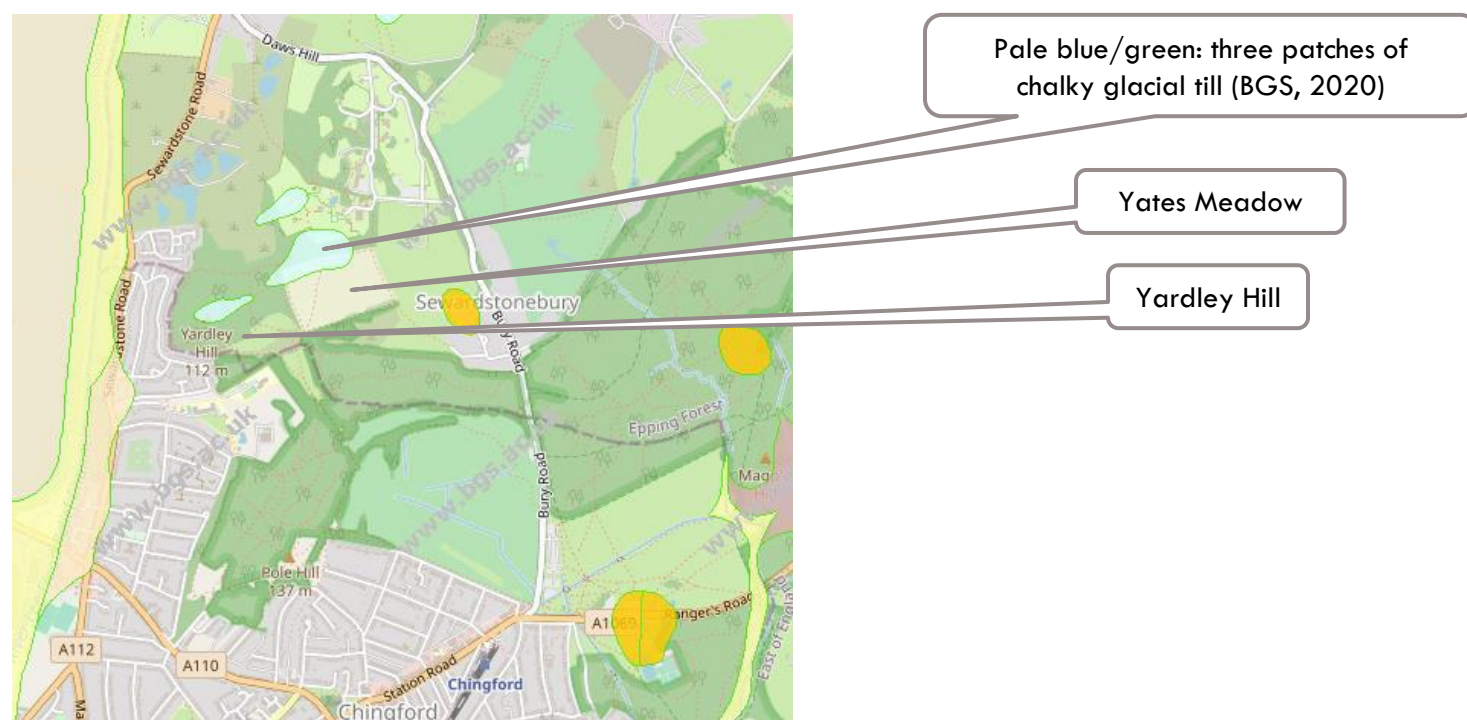
**Image A5.2:** Aerial photograph of Yardley Hill and Pole Hill from 1945



**Image A5.3:** Current (2020) aerial photograph of Yardley Hill and Pole Hill



**Image A5.4:** Extract from Geology of Britain map, showing chalky glacial till patches in pale blue/green





## APPENDIX 6: Amphibian survey results and management recommendations for ponds in the Chingford area

Catherine Bickmore Associates was commissioned on behalf of City Corporation to undertake an amphibian survey of the ponds and lakes of Epping Forest (Catherine Bickmore Associates, 2014). The first objective of the study was to categorise the ponds in terms of importance for amphibians with particular reference to great crested newt. The second was to categorise the ponds according to management priority, with recommendations for management actions for amphibians.

**Table A6.1:** Summary of results of pond survey for amphibians and management recommendations (Catherine Bickmore Associates, 2014)

Waterbody name	HIS (Habitat Suitability Index)	Invasive non-native species	Fish present (in 2013) (Y/N)	Other factors affecting suitability	Designation	Amphibians recorded	Importance for amphibians	Priority for management	Management recommendations (Catherine Bickmore Associates, 2014)
Cuckoo Pits East Pond	0.9	No	N	Lack of open water (Reedmace)	SSSI & SAC	Great Crested Newt, Smooth Newt, Palmate Newt, Common Frog	High	High	Threatened by drying. Deepen, reduce Reedmace, reduce shade, create refugia.
Cuckoo Pits West Pond	0.87	No	N	n/a	SSSI & SAC	Great Crested Newt, Common Toad, Smooth Newt, Palmate Newt	High	High	Threatened by drying. Deepen, reduce Reedmace, reduce shade, create refugia.
Chingford Golf Course middle pond	0.73	No	N	Lack of open water (Common Reed)	None	Great Crested Newt, Common Toad, Smooth Newt, Common Frog	High	High	Lack of open water – threatened by drying/reed growth. Reduce emergent, deepen, establish rough grass and refugia around pond
Chingford Golf Course lower/new pond	0.45	<i>Crassula helmsii</i>	Y	Lack of open water	None	Great Crested Newt, Common Toad, Smooth Newt, Palmate Newt	High	High	Remove fish if possible (or create new pond for GCN), establish rough grass around pond, possibly create connective rough grass terrestrial habitat & refugia to upper pond, reduce invasive aquatic plants.
Warren Pond	0.5	<i>Crassula helmsii</i>	Y	n/a	SSSI & SAC	Common Toad, Common Frog	Medium	Low	Address <i>Crassula helmsii</i> , remove reedmace, reduce shade and enhance terrestrial habitat.
Butler's Retreat Pond	0.49	<i>Crassula helmsii</i>	Y	n/a	SSSI & SAC	Common Toad, Smooth Newt, Common Frog	Medium	Low	Address <i>Crassula helmsii</i> , encourage macrophyte growth.
Connaught Water	0.31	No	Y	Lack of egg laying vegetation	SSSI & SAC	Common Toad, Smooth Newt, Common Frog	Medium	Low	Continue to encourage macrophyte growth.

Additional management suggestions for Connaught Water (COL, 2018a):

- Fencing around Lily beds could be removed;
- Fencing around bank side vegetation to be removed, in place 4+ years;
- Coir rolls along bank to be rolled back into place, placed on top of 'blocks' to allow fish to shelter below them;
- Failed floating island to be re-planted, perhaps with Water Crowfoot *Ranunculus aquatilis*, and protected from wildfowl by 'roofing' wire;
- Failed Lily plantation on the NW corner to be moved along the bank as it is in the way of Anglers. Lilies to be replanted in hessian sacks. Keith happy to advise. Use existing fence material again; and,

- Dead wood to be moved from near the bank along the East side to allow easier and safer survey works, at the same time a sweep to pick up plastic bags would be beneficial.

Additional management suggestions for Warren Pond (COL, 2015a and 2015b):

- Some swims need work to improve for anglers;
- Weed banks reduced in size on the west side;
- There is dead and live wood to be removed from the pond; and,
- Stocking with a few small Tench to ensure succession.

COL (2006) suggested desilting Butler's Retreat pond and restocking it with Tench and Rudd as a children's angling pond.

## APPENDIX 7: Old photographs

Photograph 1: Fairmead Lodge (now demolished) and Fairmead Oak (still in situ and alive)



Fairmead Lodge at Fairmead Bottom, High Beech, Epping Forest. This lodge was demolished in 1898. This picture c1890.

Photograph 2: Greenwich Meridian obelisk with pole, on Pole Hill (formerly known as Hawke Hill)



Photograph 3: World War I anti-aircraft gun emplacement on Pole Hill



This photograph shows the anti-aircraft gun on Pole Hill, Chingford. The gun was mounted on a timber tower and accommodation for the crew was provided in temporary huts. Shells were brought up to the gun from the end of Mornington Road. (Vestry House Museum, London Borough of Waltham Forest)

## APPENDIX 8: Local Plans – detailed information

- Habitats Regulations 2017 and Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC): all competent authorities (as defined by Regulation 7 of The Habs Regs) must undertake a formal assessment of the implications of any new plans or projects that are likely to have a significant effect on the designated interest features of protected European Sites (such as Epping Forest SAC) before deciding whether to undertake, permit or authorise such plans or projects (Regulation 63 of The Habs Regs). The first stage of the assessment involves formal screening for any Likely Significant Effects (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects). Where these effects cannot be excluded, assessing them in more detail through an *appropriate assessment* (AA) is required to ascertain that an adverse effect on the *integrity* of the site can be ruled out. Where such an adverse effect on the site cannot be ruled out, and no *alternative solutions* can be identified, then the project can only then proceed if there are *imperative reasons of over-riding public interest* and if the necessary *compensatory measures* can be secured.
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA): Epping Forest (EFDC), Harlow, Uttlesford and East Hertfordshire District Councils have cooperated in the production of the West Essex and East Hertfordshire SHMA (Opinion Research Services, 2017), to assess the overall housing need for their housing markets. For EFDC these housing needs must be met over the 22-year lifetime of the new EFDC Local Plan (2011 – 2033). The distribution of the housing need, identified by the SHMA, was agreed in a Memorandum of Understanding (March 2017) between the four district councils, Essex and Hertfordshire County Councils and Highways England. For Epping Forest District Council, the housing need was set at 11,400 net additional homes to be provided between 2011-2033 (EFDC Local Plan Report-on-Site-Selection (Local Plan Document EB802B) Dec 2017). This compares to a target of 2,400 dwellings for the previously adopted Local Plan (EDFC, 2008), a greater than four-fold increase in the number of new dwellings.
- Habitats Regulations Assessment: Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) commissioned a strategic Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Local Plan Submission Version (EFDC, 2017), published in January 2019 (the HRA) (AECOM, 2019). This HRA found that the Plan would be likely to have a significant adverse effect, without mitigation, upon the Epping Forest SAC in respect of both atmospheric pollution and disturbance from recreation/urbanisation. An Appropriate Assessment (AA) of its implications for the integrity of the SAC was therefore undertaken. For both pathways of impact, the AA concluded that with mitigation, the Plan would not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the SAC either alone or in combination with other plans or projects (AECOM, 2019). However, this HRA is undergoing significant revisions for reasons set out below.
- EFDC Local Plan Submission Version Examination-in-Public: At the Planning Inspector's hearing to examine the Local Plan Submission Version, both Natural England and the Conservators of Epping Forest (The Conservators) strongly challenged the robustness of the HRA in terms of its methodology and conclusions. Given the uniqueness of the Forest and its high-risk status, the Planning Inspector stated in her closing remarks that '*she could not conclude beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the Local Plan will not adversely affect the integrity of the SAC until steps have been taken towards resolving it*' (Phillips, L, 2019).
- Further work: The Planning Inspector noted at the conclusion of the public hearing that '*achieving sufficient confidence in any necessary mitigation measures is clearly challenging*'. The Inspector stated '*that physical measures (road works) to which specific benefits could be attributed would themselves harm the SAC; and while schemes for road charging and completely car-free development might warrant future consideration, they could not realistically be implemented to support this Plan*'. Therefore, the Inspector stated that '*the Council must either be clearer about the benefits of the mitigation proposed in the HRA; provide robust habitat/location specific evidence to demonstrate that*

*any effects of development would not be adverse; or avoid the effects by altering (or potentially reducing) the pattern of growth proposed in the Plan'* (Phillips, L, 2019).

- Updates to the Local Plan process: EFDC has made public a letter sent to the Planning Inspector on 21 January 2020 (EFDC, 2020a), updating the Inspector regarding progress made on the additional work required to ensure compliance with the Habitats Regulations with respect to the integrity of the SAC. Currently, further research is being undertaken on transport and air quality modelling, as well as consolidating the EFDC Infrastructure Delivery Plan. The updated timetable has been acknowledged by the Planning Inspector (Phillips, L, 2020). EFDC also issued a position statement on Epping Forest SAC on 30 April 2020 (EFDC, 2020b), reiterating the need '*to ensure that mitigation measures are in place which can be relied upon to avoid effects to the SAC*'.
- Recreational Zone of Influence: With respect to disturbance from recreation/urbanisation, Natural England, the statutory body advising competent authorities, like EFDC, on Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), has issued interim advice relating to the emerging strategic approach for the Epping Forest SAC Mitigation Strategy (Natural England, 2019b). This advice defines the recreational Zone of Influence (Zol) around the boundary of Epping Forest SAC as 6.2km, being the distance up to which more than  $\frac{3}{4}$  of visitors will travel to visit Epping Forest SAC - see also the Epping Forest Visitor Survey 2017 (Liley et al (Footprint Ecology), 2018).
- Open space provision: The northern half of the Epping Forest SAC is wholly within Epping Forest District and therefore will come under pressure to accommodate increased visitor numbers associated with new Local Plan developments within the Zol. The Planning Inspector requires 'Main Modifications' to the EFDC Local Plan Submission Version, which will need to address the issue of disturbance from recreation/urbanisation (as well as air quality, see above). One option being considered by the key stakeholders is the provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANGS) within Epping Forest District, so that adverse impacts can be avoided. The SANGs proposed will be in addition to any on-site mitigation measures agreed (see SAMMs above), and the extent of the on-site measures may be modified in the light of any effects of any future SANGs.
- Epping Forest SAC Mitigation Strategy: there is an interim Strategy which includes what are termed as Strategic (visitor) Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS). This interim Strategy, with input from Epping Forest officers, was prepared by and approved by Epping Forest District Council in consultation with the wider SAC Oversight Group in October 2018. However, a final SAC Mitigation Strategy incorporating other mitigation measures, alternative greenspace and air pollution prevention measures, for the SAC is still required to be completed. The proposed measures and costs for SAMMS have been examined in more detail by the City of London Conservators of Epping Forest with the help of specialist consultants, LUC, and were approved by The Conservators in November 2020 for negotiation with the other competent authorities (including London Boroughs) and Natural England for future agreement (LUC, 2020). The funding for the final SAC Mitigation Strategy will need to take into account these more detailed proposals, a network of suitable alternative natural green spaces (SANGS) and air pollution mitigation measures.

## **APPENDIX 9: Figures**

Figure 1 a: Locations of named features in the Chingford area (northwest)

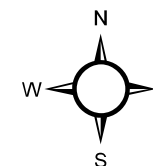
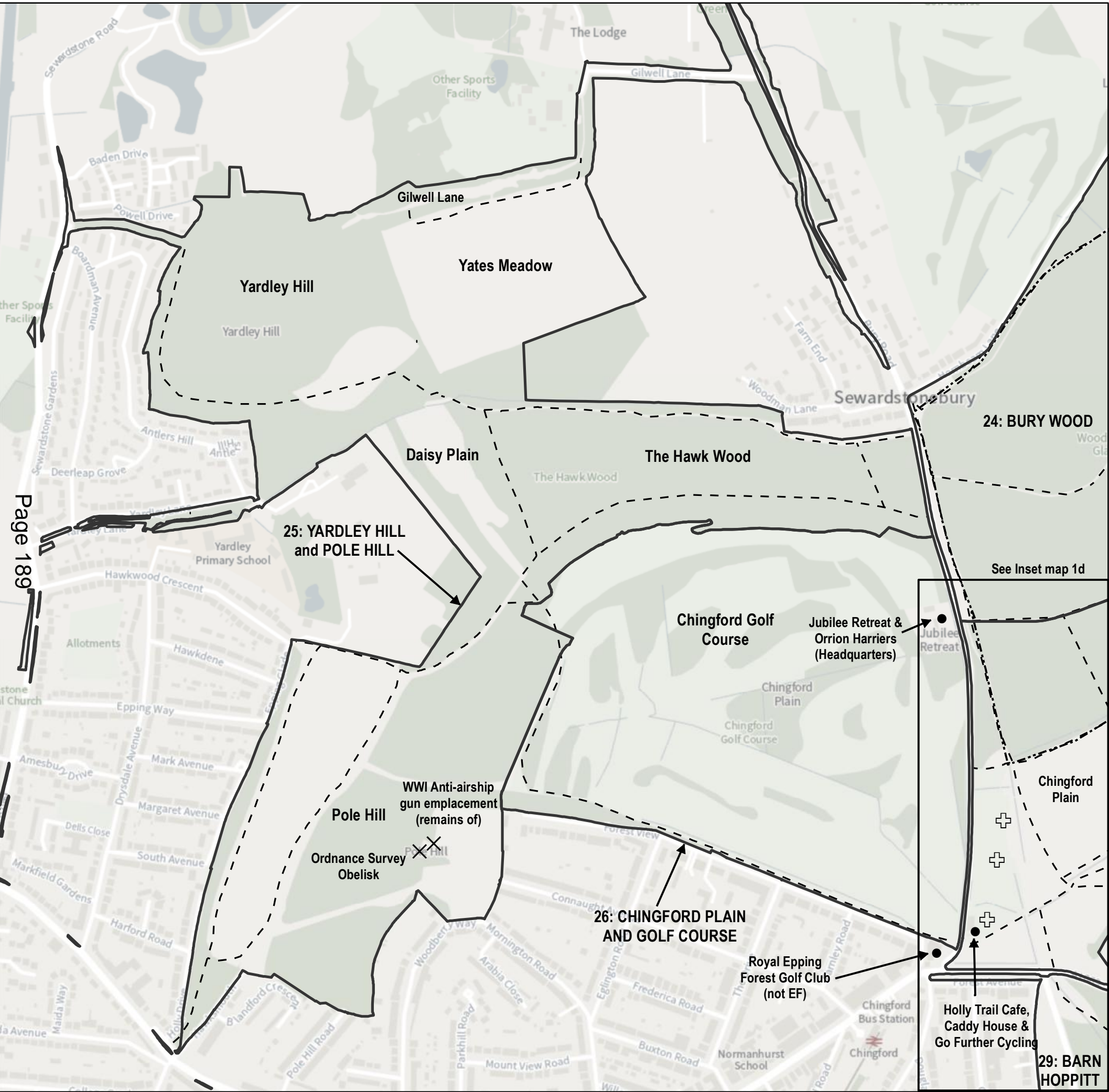
Figure 1 b: Locations of named features in the Chingford area (southeast)

Figure 1 c: Locations of named features in the Chingford area (northeast)

Figure 1 d: Locations of named features in the Chingford area (Inset around QEHL)

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**Figure 1a:**  
**Locations of named features**  
**in the Chingford area**  
**(northwest)**

- Epping Forest compartment boundaries
- 25: YARDLEY HILL & POLE HILL** Epping Forest compartment number & name
- Daisy Plain** Location mentioned in Chingford ISP
- Shared Use Trail
- Waymarked Trail
- Heritage Feature
- Building
- Car Park

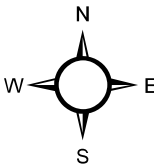
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Management Planning Assistant

Date Created:  
13 May 2021

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**Figure 1b:**  
**Locations of named features**  
**in the Chingford area**  
**(southeast)**



Epping Forest compartment  
boundaries

29: BARN  
HOPPITT

Epping Forest compartment  
number & name

Warren  
Pond

Location mentioned  
in Chingford ISP



Shared Use Trail



Heritage Building or Feature



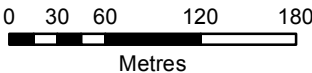
Building



Car Park

Created by:  
Management Planning Assistant

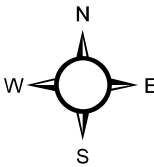
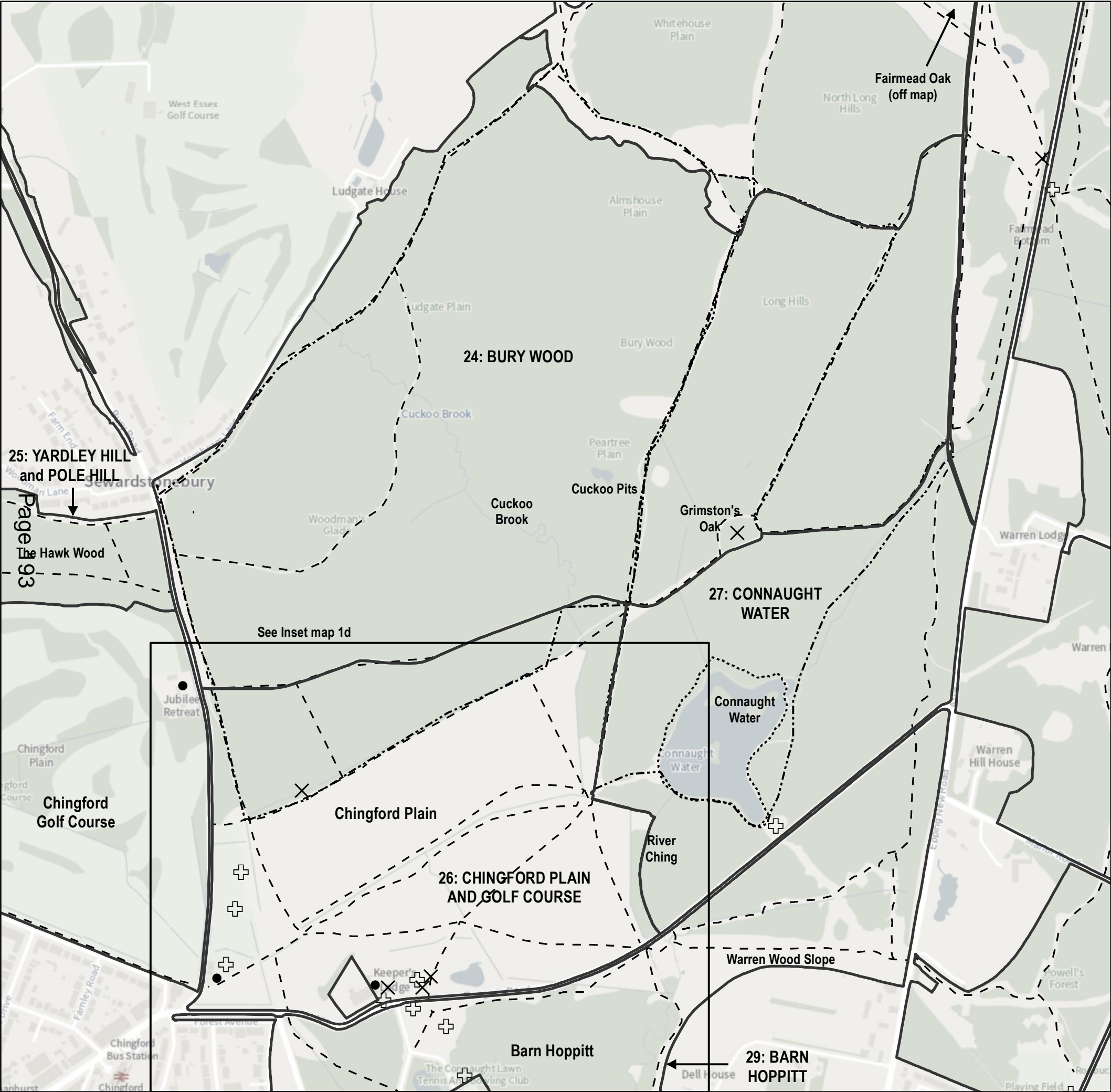
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**Figure 1c:**  
**Locations of named features**  
**in the Chingford area**  
**(northeast)**



Epping Forest compartment  
boundaries

24: BURY WOOD

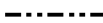
Epping Forest compartment  
number & name

Chingford Plain

Location mentioned  
in Chingford ISP



Shared Use Trail



Waymarked Trail



Easy Access Path



Heritage Building or Feature



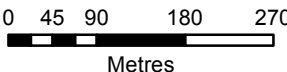
Building



Car Park

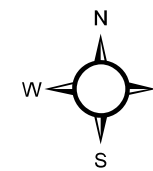
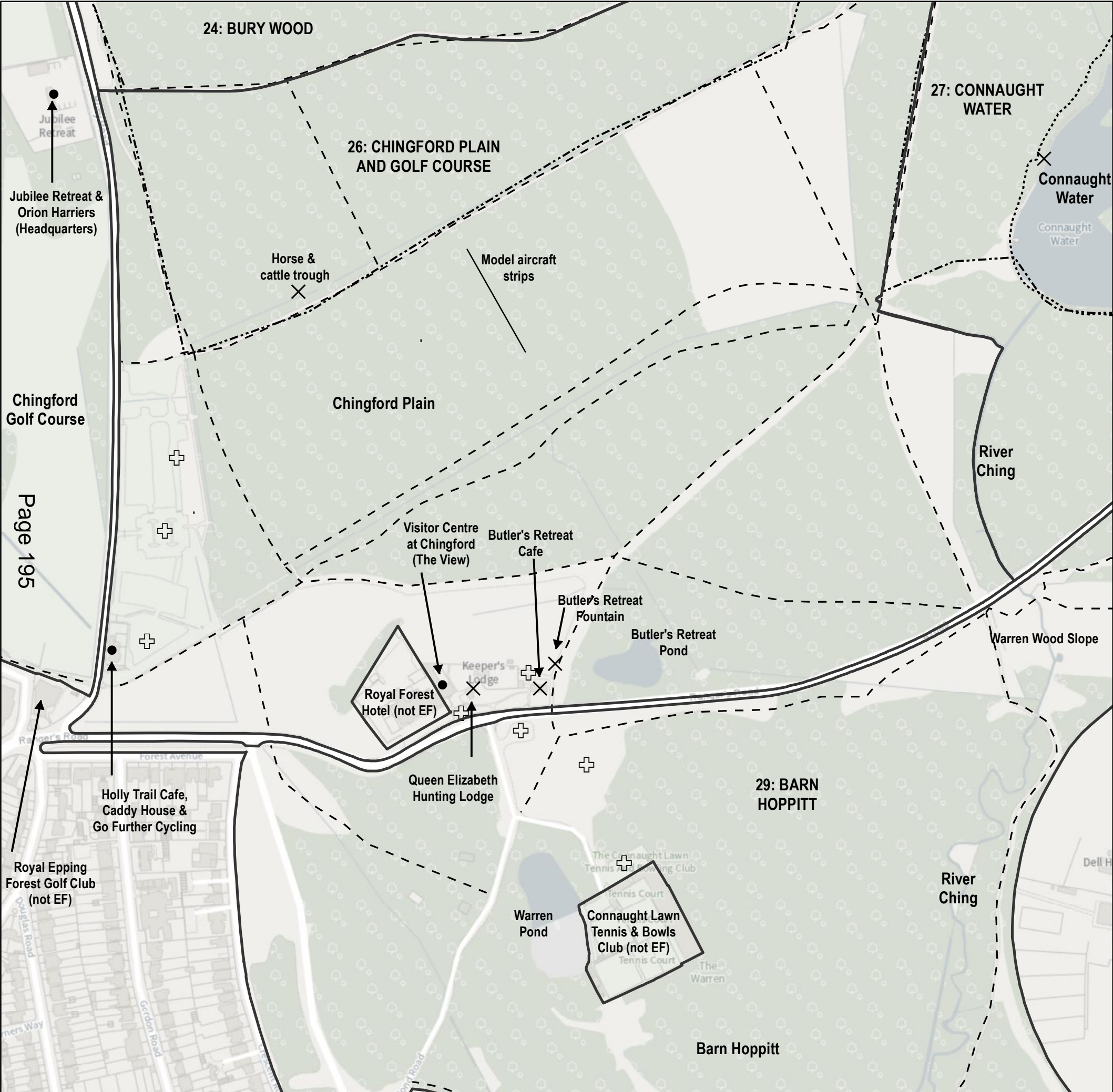
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13 May 2021



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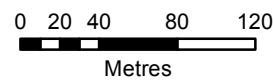


**Figure 1d:**  
**Locations of named features**  
**in the Chingford area**  
**(Inset around QEHL)**

- Epping Forest compartment boundaries
- 24: BURY WOOD** Epping Forest compartment number & name
- Chingford Plain** Location mentioned in Chingford ISP
- Shared Use Trail
- Waymarked Trail
- Easy Access Path
- Heritage Building or Feature
- Building
- Car Park

Created by:  
Management Planning Assistant

Date Created:  
13 May 2021



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<b>Committee:</b> Epping Forest Consultative Epping Forest & Commons	<b>Dated:</b> 16/06/2021 12/07/2021
<b>Subject:</b> Copped Hall Parkland Management Plan (SEF 27/21b)	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	2, 11 and 12
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	Y
If so, how much?	see Appendix 7
What is the source of Funding?	Climate Action Strategy (CAS) – Strand 9 <i>Carbon Removals</i> and external grant funding
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	Yes, CAS funding agreed from FY2021-2022; other funding to be agreed subject to future Gateway reports
<b>Report of:</b> Colin Buttery, Director of Open Spaces	<b>For decision</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Jeremy Dagley, Head of Conservation - Epping Forest	

## Summary

This report presents proposals for the reversion of arable land at Copped Hall to grassland and the creation of up to 127 hectares of new parkland and wood-pasture habitat, and over 50 hectares of grassland, to sequester carbon and provide for biodiversity net gain. It is proposed that the work, funded by the City Corporation's Climate Action Strategy (CAS) *Carbon Removals* project, would begin from Sept 2022 under CAS. Alongside this, the report proposes that a bid for external grant-aid is made under the Countryside Stewardship Scheme in its last year for applications, 2023, to start in January 2024. The work on the bid would be developed with the assistance of the new *Carbon Removals* Project Manager and Team.

This bid would seek funding for wood-pasture creation under CSS, alongside funding for access enhancement measures, and would aim to integrate the conservation of heritage features through capital grant-aid, should sufficient subsidy be made available for these. The report seeks approval to start the reversion of arable land from September 2022 funded by CAS and approval for these outline habitat creation proposals. The access and heritage proposals would be developed later as part of the CSS application to be put before Committee for approval prior to April 2023.

## Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- approve Option 1 below, to allow work to begin at Copped Hall, from September 2022, using the allocated CAS *Carbon Removals* Project funding;
- approve the development of a CSS application based on the wood-pasture and parkland proposals in, and as appended to, this report, plus further development of their detail alongside development of heritage protection proposals and additional visitor access enhancement, including a future report on car parking. The details of the application to be presented for approval at future Committee prior to any application in April 2023.

## Main Report

### Background

1. The City Corporation acquired 295 hectares (ha) of the Copped Hall Estate in 1992 in order to protect the boundaries and overall landscape setting of the Forest from development and to provide support for the Forest's wildlife. This purchase, alongside the Copped Hall Trust's acquisition of the Hall and gardens, also prevented inappropriate development of the historic parkland itself.
2. This acquisition was one of a series of Buffer Lands acquisitions during the 1980s and early 1990s made to protect the Forest in a strategy recognised and endorsed in October 1993 by Policy and Resources Committee (P&R). The criteria used to target areas of land for acquisition were set out in the reports to Epping Forest & Open Spaces Committee and P&R as:
  - i) threats of development that might damage the Forest materially or people's enjoyment of it
  - ii) land that would provide a barrier to urban development
  - iii) land that would provide "*valuable wildlife support areas*"
3. Once acquired, the purpose of Buffer Land was set out in policy documents (e.g. Buffer Lands Action Plan 1998) and later in a memorandum to the Parliamentary Select Committee on Environment, Transport and Rural Affairs in 1999 (TCP55 8<sup>th</sup> June 1999, Parliamentary copyright):

*"The purpose of Buffer land is to safeguard the rural environment of the Forest and thereby its natural aspect or feel and to provide to the Forest wildlife support and complementary wildlife habitats, thus facilitating the protection of the Forest's flora and fauna".*
4. Copped Hall Park and gardens are recorded as Grade II\* on the Historic England *Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest for England* (RPG). The boundary of the RPG Grade II\* designation straddles the M25 motorway and also covers areas outside the City Corporation's management. South of the

Motorway the land is incorporated into the Forest as Compartment 15, The Warren Plantation. The west side it in Compartment 4 of the Forest. North of the motorway Copped Hall is divided into two Buffer Land compartments Copped Hall North and South (respectively Compartment nos. 54 and 55). Much of Copped Hall South outside the wooded areas and some fields in Copped Hall North have been managed in-house as grassland since acquisition in 1992 (see map at **Appendix 1**).

5. These grassland areas, including the Deer Park, have been managed by grazing with the support of consecutive Countryside Stewardship and Environmental Stewardship grants in 1993, 2003 and 2008. The last of these agreements terminated in 2018. During this time the rest of Copped Hall North has been managed through a series of agricultural tenancies, with the fields used for arable crops.
6. The important heritage of this historic open parkland landscape had been recognised at the time of purchase, but recent research and review, through the Conservation Statement in 2015 and the Parkland Management Plan (PMP) in 2018 has brought this into sharper focus. The PMP has demonstrated the Park's Tudor origins and artefacts of "exceptional significance", overlaid with other important parkland development over several centuries (see **Appendix 2** for Committee report and the appended summary notes for the PMP).
7. The importance of Copped Hall for wildlife was also recognised in 1992 and in the subsequent approved Buffer Land policies. The Parkland contains several ancient, hollow trees and in its woods support Schedule 1 (Wildlife & Countryside Act) breeding bird species, including nesting Red Kites. The parkland and farmland also support red-listed, declining bird species, Cuckoo, Linnet, Skylark and Yellowhammer. In addition, there is a population of Barbastelle Bats, an IUCN red-listed species and UK Priority that relies on the parkland. An important local population of Brown Hare is also on site.
8. At the Consultative Committee in March 2021 (see report SEF10/21b – *Background Papers*) there was a consensus opinion that any land management changes should aim to ensure that these species were protected and retained at Copped Hall (see also paragraphs 69 – 71 below for further Consultative Committee comments)
9. Fallow Deer have a very significant impact on the landscape and especially the woodland understoreys. Their browsing has limited the woodland bird community, impacting adversely on Nightingales for example. The approved Deer Strategy will play an important part in the proposed future management of Copped Hall's habitats.

## **Current Position**

10. There is currently a 1-year Farm Business Tenancy (FBT) on the northern fields of Copped Hall (see map at **Appendix 1**), as recently approved at Epping Forest & Commons Committee in March this year (see *Background Papers Non-public* report SEF 17/21). This involves traditional arable field management with

ploughing of soils and the use of crop protection chemicals. The southern fields, including the Deer Park, are grazed by the Epping Forest English Longhorn herd, currently.

11. The PMP is clear that the vision for the Park, and its surrounding landscape, should be to protect the important heritage features, from all centuries of the parkland development, whilst making its biodiversity importance a strong focus and “guiding factor” in the restoration of the Park (see pages 189 and 190 of the PMP). For the main body of the RPG and beyond, to the historic Tudor boundaries of the parkland, the PMP recommends parkland restoration with open-grown oaks and wood-pasture, restoring open-grown trees at varying densities alongside natural regeneration and the development of valuable scrub for breeding birds and insects. These twin approaches would unite landscape heritage conservation with biodiversity enhancement at a critical moment for conservation in the area, as development pressures increase and wildlife continues to decline.
12. In addition to the Registered Park & Garden status, most of the Copped Hall Buffer Land lies within the Copped Hall Conservation Area designated under the Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) Local Plan. A Conservation Area is an “*area of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*”. The Character Appraisal for the Conservation Area (Report to Epping Forest District Council, August 2015) emphasises the importance of the Park’s development within the purview of Epping Forest and as a key part of the Forest’s ancient surrounding landscape.
13. In addition, the submission version of the EFDC Local Plan affords full protection to the Buffer Lands, including Copped Hall, as if it were part of the Forest. Copped Hall is also mentioned in the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for the Plan.
14. The City Corporation’s new Climate Action Strategy (CAS) was approved in October 2020. This emphasises the importance of the Buffer Lands, especially Copped Hall, in helping the City to meet its net zero emissions target for climate heating gases. Copped Hall, alongside several other sites in the Buffer Lands, through the CAS *Carbon Removals* project (see *Background Papers* Report SEF 10/21), provides one of relatively few places where the City Corporation can increase carbon sequestration to enable it to meet its net zero target.
15. The *Carbon Removals* Project also aims to contribute an improvement in wildlife habitats to support the Forest in recognition of the biodiversity crisis which is entwined with the climate emergency. Biodiversity Net Gain is a core element of the project’s approach to land management for carbon sequestration and storage. To enhance biodiversity, a common element shared by both the PMP’s and the CAS Carbon Removals’ objectives is the restoration and creation of wood-pasture and parkland habitats.
16. There is increasing evidence of the importance of wood-pasture and large-crowned open-grown trees, or what are now often termed silvo-pasture or agroforestry systems, in sequestering carbon alongside providing significant

biodiversity benefits. Adjacent to one of the most important wood-pasture sites in Europe, Epping Forest, this additional extensive wood-pasture habitat should increase the resilience of the Forest to future environmental change by providing a greater variety of refuges for wildlife dependent on open-grown trees and by providing a new generation of such trees as well as increasing the resilience of the Buffer Lands themselves and increasing the capacity of these sites for beneficial natural processes such as air pollution amelioration.

17. There are no car parks serving Copped Hall and most visitors enter by foot from the south over the M25 bridge and from the west from Upshire, along the two respective public rights of way (PRoWs) (see map at **Appendix 3**). There are two bus services that run along Crown Hill with a bus stop close to the southern entrance gates. In Compartment 55, which is managed as grassland in-house (see paragraph 9 above) there is also permissive public access, approved in 2004 (see *Background Papers*). In Compartment 54, which covers the tenancy as well as some grassland managed in-house, there is no general public right of access.

## Proposals

18. This report focuses on the ecological and landscape restoration required for the main body of the parkland, as well as the opportunities for enhanced sequestration and better, longer-term storage of significant amounts of carbon in the soils. The urgencies of the climate and biodiversity crises, the case made by the PMP for parkland protection and the current availability of funding from CAS and external grants provide a compelling combination for advancing this conservation work now, thirty years on from the purchases that secured the Hall and its parkland (see outline proposals Map at **Appendix 4**).
19. However, in developing these proposals important heritage and access considerations will also need to be addressed. The aim of this report is to set out the work proposed to begin the ecological restoration of Copped Hall, with the support of CAS funding, and to outline the process of seeking external funding to allow the integration of heritage and access enhancements alongside the carbon and biodiversity gains.
20. The statutory bodies protecting heritage and wildlife in England, respectively Historic England and Natural England, have made clear that they regard the PMP as the starting point for negotiations for any future Stewardship or other external grant application. The support of these two statutory bodies is essential for future grant applications under any of the government-backed schemes. The aim would be to explore grant funding for as many important elements for restoration and management at Copped Hall as possible, but the level of grant-aid and feasibility of the delivery of any restoration would be taken into account in recommending which grants are applied for.
21. Carbon targets: Copped Hall is a key part of the CAS Carbon Removals Project. CAS funding is, at the moment, for 6 years until 2027. The CAS funding would be drawn down from 2022 to:

- i. establish a cover flora in 2022, after the termination of the current arable tenancy by reverting all the arable fields by sowing seed and carrying out subsequent hay-mowing and meadow management from 2023

and from 2023 or 2024 to contribute to the costs of:

- ii. planting and care of trees and hedges,
- iii. providing tree guards (possibly both wooden and metal in keeping with the historic park setting),
- iv. erecting deer-proof fencing to protect the natural regeneration areas (see Map at **Appendices 5 and 6**)

22. **Biodiversity targets:** from 2021 through to 2023 it is proposed to work up external grant applications to provide subsidy support for the management work begun by the CAS *Carbon Removals* project. Countryside Stewardship grant-aid for wood-pasture creation is the current preferred grant because it would last for 10 years. Such an application has been encouraged by Historic England and Natural England to advance the recommendations of the PMP (see *Financial Implications* below for more detail on grant timetables and see **Appendix 7** for likely budget should CSS options be approved as envisaged on current field proposals).
23. The CAS-funded work on habitats, and any subsequent external grant-aid, would be targeted at replacing the arable management with a regenerative approach to soil and sward management to lock up the carbon stores better and begin to sequester carbon through reversion to grassland. The proposals are for over 50 hectares of grassland, including reversion from the current net carbon emitting arable management (see Map at **Appendix 4**).
24. The rationale for the reversion to grassland and scrub in the northern areas of the Copped Hall Buffer Lands is to address the requirements of the wildlife, including Cuckoos, Yellowhammers and Skylarks, severely declining, UK red-listed, species. The grassland areas would be for these target species but would also provide open vistas across the Cobbin's Brook, maintaining the historic open landscape with wooded areas (see Maps at **Appendices 4 & 6**).
25. The new grassland initially would be mown to establish a basic sward. Should a Stewardship application be successful this would allow the development of wood-pasture species-rich sward for pollinators under an extensive grazing regime.
26. The remainder of the fields would be brought into extensive wood-pasture management. This would see more formal widely spaced oak tree plantings, with protective individual tree shelters closer to the Hall (e.g. at the western end of the Deer Park). At further distances from the Hall, such as the eastern end of the Deer Park, outside of the RPG, natural regeneration would be combined with denser tree planting encouraging areas of scrub to develop to provide habitat for insects and birds and protection for the establishing trees (see indicative Map at **Appendix 6**).

27. Natural regeneration is of key importance to the proposals, where native trees and scrub develop naturally with limited intervention, thus minimising the carbon footprint in achieving landscape change. Natural regeneration, locally on the Forest at Fernhills and Trueloves and at sites further afield like the much-studied Knepp Estate in Sussex and the Ken Hill project in Norfolk, has been shown to be very important for many threatened bird species, including Nightingale that has previously bred at Copped Hall
28. Also, a key priority is the establishment of oak, of critical importance to the restoration of the landscape and biodiversity and providing a new generation of open-grown trees to replace those ancient oaks that remain as part of the historic parkland landscape (see PMP). But the plantings and natural regeneration will contain and promote a diversity of species to develop.
29. Grazing is also a key component of the landscape and ecological restoration process, but the timing of grazing in the various areas would be dependent on the progress of natural regeneration. Grazing will increase the biodiversity benefits that will result from this project.
30. The current field divisions would be softened to be in keeping with a more extensive and open parkland and lowland wood-pasture landscape, recognising the heritage importance of the original landscape as well as the biodiversity value of this habitat.
31. Heritage considerations: There are three key heritage artefacts that require to be addressed in the management of Copped Hall and in any future external grant applications. In order of priority the heritage features are:
- i. The Tudor Square Pond and Serpentine
  - ii. The Victorian ha-ha – in two sections east and west
  - iii. The two WW2 pill-boxes
32. The Tudor Square Pond requires further surveys of resident species, the waterbodies and earthworks before any management interventions are considered. It is proposed that grant-aid for such surveys be sought externally ahead of any Countryside Stewardship application. Officers have already approached Historic England for it consider how it could help resource such research work.
33. Depending on whether such surveys could be completed in time, proposals for the Tudor Square Pond and the later Serpentine component would be likely to involve Poplar tree removal. Any proposals for restoration work would be submitted as part of a Stewardship application and the capital works components could attract up to 100% subsidy depending on the work proposed. However, any inclusion in an application in 2023 would be contingent on finding funding for and completing the surveys, this may not be possible in the timeframe. Liaison with Historic England will continue throughout the next two years to establish the best approach.

34. The ha-ha has been inspected by the City Corporation's Department of Built Environment, with a condition survey completed and a full schedule of works which just require costings. The viability of any restoration would depend on the level of grant support offered for the capital works, which again could attract up to 100% funding. Such funding is determined by advice from Historic England and is at the discretion of Natural England and the Rural Payments Agency in determining any Stewardship application.
35. The management requirements to protect the WW2 Pill-boxes is outlined in the PMP. The costs of works need to be determined but would be explored during the Stewardship application preparation process.
36. Access considerations: One of the key considerations for access, apart from the park and Hall's own inherent attraction for visitors, is the proposed large growth in residential housing at Harlow and elsewhere in the Epping Forest District. The City Corporation, as The Conservators, has continued to make the case for the better protection of Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation (EFSAC) by the provision, through the Local Plans, of suitable alternative natural greenspaces (SANGS) around the Forest or other alternative destinations for the growing residential populations of the District and London Boroughs.
37. It is proposed that Copped Hall has a role to play in receiving these extra visitors thereby protecting the Forest and reducing or preventing an unsustainable growth in visitor numbers there to the detriment of its relative tranquility and its internationally important habitats. However, in playing any such role Copped Hall would need additional resources and would need to be set in a wider context of a robust network of other destination sites, in order for the parkland itself, with its significant biodiversity and heritage, not to be adversely impacted.
38. It is the current intention to create a car park in a suitable place (or places) to serve Copped Hall and this would be the subject of a separate report to both Consultative and Epping Forest & Commons Committee as the proposals for the PMP are developed for grant applications over the next 18 months. Sustainable transport options, particularly bus services, will also be examined and these and the car parking will be items for discussion with stakeholders, such as EFDC and Copped Hall Trust.
39. Currently, any resources for access or for the cohesive network of alternative destinations have yet to be made a reality under the various Local Plans encompassing the Forest, although a Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy has been approved by Epping Forest District Council recently. Therefore, early engagement with Epping Forest District Council, in particular, in relation to these matters and specifically in relation to the protection of the Copped Hall Conservation Area (see map at **Appendix 1**) will be required.
40. The existing permissive access to the southern half of Copped Hall, including the Deer Park, should be considerably enhanced by the proposed parkland tree planting near the Hall. Subject to resources, including grant-aid, for improved signage, orientation and interpretation, there should be better shielding of the M25 view, noise and pollution by a belt of tree establishment and the greater



variety of edge habitats and new vistas to explore and view (see map at **Appendix 5**).

41. For the northern parts of Copped Hall, mostly outside the RPG boundary, as part of the wood-pasture creation there is a proposal for new, additional public access to be provided in the form of a long loop walk, 3.2 km in length (see Map at **Appendix 4**).
42. This loop walk would start out from the existing public right of way (PRoW) and take a route through the proposed new wood-pasture creation, the ancient semi-natural woodland rides of Spratt's Hedgerow and the Copped Hall hay-meadow alongside the Cobbin's Brook that was created 20 years ago.
43. The loop walk would be routed carefully to ensure minimal disturbance of important breeding areas for Skylarks, Yellowhammers, birds of prey territories and Brown Hare habitat and so ensuring that good views can be obtained across the Cobbin's Brook Valley while limiting disturbance to wildlife which would be an essential consideration in the devising of any new access route. Providing a green lane-like route with hedging would be an option to be considered as details of the habitat works are developed.
44. In developing any enhanced access, attention will need to be paid to the current relative low levels of disturbance in much of the Deer Park, which allows ground-nesting Skylarks to breed successfully. Consideration will need to be given to modifying the extent or timing of access so as to protect the Skylarks and other ground/low-nesting birds, as well as preventing undue disturbance to other wildlife, including Brown Hares and birds of prey.

## **Options**

45. **Option 1:** To approve the use of CAS funding for the initial sowing of Copped Hall land to begin the process from September 2022 of ecological restoration by reverting 84 hectares of arable land to grassland ensuring more secure carbon storage in the soils and net carbon sequestration to meet the targets of the *Carbon Removals Project*.
46. To approve the development from 2021 onwards of an application seeking external grant aid for wood-pasture creation (at £409 per hectare) to supplement CAS funding with the aim of creating 127 hectares of lowland parkland and wood-pasture habitat and up to 50 hectares of grassland from 2024 onwards.
47. To approve the development of further elements for the preparation of Countryside Stewardship or other grants application involving proposals for enhanced conservation of heritage features, seeking 100% capital grants, and to approve the development of proposals as part of any application for improved access for visitors from 2024 onwards. **This option is recommended.**
48. **Option 2:** To delay the start of any restoration works under CAS until all elements of the heritage conservation are prepared with external grant-aid (and

any match-funding) achieved for the heritage elements, along with a full sustainable visitor strategy for the Buffer Lands and provision of car parking facilities to serve Copped Hall. This would delay the achievement of City Corporation's CAS targets. This strategy would also be likely to require a grant application after 2023 to the successor to CSS, such as the Environmental Land Management scheme (ELM) or some other grant funding. **This option is not recommended.**

## Key Data

49. The City Corporation owns 295ha of Copped Hall as buffer lands acquired in 1992. Of this 130ha is within the 165ha Registered Park and Garden Grade II\* (RPG).
50. The proposals for ecological restoration, biodiversity enhancement and to achieve carbon sequestration involve the reversion of 70 hectares of arable fields to grassland in the first instance.
51. Subsequently, the in-house grasslands of the southern park would be 'restored' to wood-pasture and parkland. Ultimately, the target would be to create 127 hectares of wood-pasture and parkland and up to 50 hectares of grassland for target species like Skylarks.
52. The work above would be funded by the City Corporation's CAS fund initially followed by an external grant to subsidise the work in future years and allow more CAS funding to be directed towards additional projects.

## Corporate & Strategic Implications

### Strategic implications

53. This action plan would contribute significantly to City of London Corporate Plan 2018-2023 Outcome 2 *People enjoy good health and well-being*; Outcome 11: *We have clean air, land and water and a thriving and sustainable natural environment* and Outcome 12: *Our spaces are secure, resilient and well maintained*.
54. The action plan is directly aimed at fulfilling an important element of the City Corporation's Climate Action Strategy by enhancing carbon storage and increasing carbon sequestration, alongside ecological restoration and recovery.
55. The aim of the Copped Hall PMP and its recommendations are to support the Open Spaces Department's Vision of enriching people's lives by enhancing and providing access to ecologically diverse open spaces and outstanding heritage assets across London and beyond.

### Financial implications (see also *Risk Implications* below)

56. Some of the elements of the PMP would be implemented through the *Carbon Removals* Project funding under Strand 9 of the City Corporation's Climate Action Strategy (CAS). In 2022 it is proposed to involve greater than £70,000 of

investment from the CAS to start the arable reversion to grassland and begin the process of carbon sequestration.

57. To supplement CAS funding for the project, and to allow CAS funding to be spread across further projects, any CSS grant would need to be applied for by April 2023 with final details agreed with Natural England and Historic England before August 2023. If successful, any CSS grant would start in January 2024. The current forecasted overall budget is given in **Appendix 7**.
58. Additional income from the Basic Payment Scheme will be available from 2023 until 2027 when the BPS scheme ends.
59. Other grants will also be investigated, including those forthcoming from the Forestry Commission this year. Discussions with the FC have already begun to assess the benefits of the potential grant schemes when compared with the current CSS grant rates and requirements. The publication of details is still awaited and is expected in early summer this year

#### Resource implications

60. The consultation work on the PMP and the proposals contained in this report would require significant Epping Forest officer time, both to consult local stakeholders, including Epping Forest District Council and the Copped Hall Trust, as well as to develop external grant applications (e.g. Stewardship) maintaining close liaison with Historic England, Natural England and the Forestry Commission.
61. The work would also involve further reports to Committee as the proposals and any grant applications are developed. The new *Carbon Removals* Project Manager post and the *Carbon Removals* Team (up to 3 officers) would provide the additional resources in order to achieve this work and to ensure the carbon sequestration and storage plans are expedited.

#### Legal implications

62. Tree planting will require an assessment under the Environmental Impact Assessment as required under Environmental Impact Assessment (Forestry) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999, as amended.

#### Risk implications

63. In terms of the resources required to manage risk, the *Carbon Removals* Team would provide oversight for the carbon sequestration and biodiversity elements of the project. A risk register has already been compiled for the *Carbon Removals* project overall and presented to Epping Forest & Commons Committee and Projects Sub-Committee (see SEF23/21 *non-public* Gateway 2 report in *Background Papers*).
64. Of these risks the most immediate one would be the loss of income from the termination of the tenancy from September 2022 should a Countryside Stewardship application not be accepted in 2023. However, a proportion (75%) of

this rental income would be recovered, from 2023 onwards, as the City Corporation would begin to receive the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) payments.

65. For tree planting and establishment through natural regeneration across grassland and farmland on this scale an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of the project is required to be approved by the Forestry Commission (FC). FC officers have already been contacted with regard to the aims, objectives and proposed locations for the CAS *Carbon Removals* project and a site visit to Copped Hall with FC officers is proposed for later in 2021. FC Officers are, in principle, supportive of the outline direction of travel for this project. In addition, liaison with other sites, owned by organisations carrying out similar EIA work, is currently being arranged in order to share understanding of the process.

#### Equalities implications

66. There are no immediate equalities implications from the recommendations in this report. Future access and site interpretation arrangements would need to examine equalities issues.

#### Climate implications

67. The proposed land management changes, involving the ecological restoration of Copped Hall, are of fundamental importance to the achievement of the City Corporation Climate Action Strategy 2020-2027. The *Carbon Removals* Project at Copped Hall supports the achievement of Net Zero by: increasing the carbon sequestration capacity of our open spaces, by providing environmental stewardship and advocacy, in the use of resources, emissions, conservation, greening, biodiversity and access to nature. The *Carbon Removals* Project at Copped Hall builds climate resilience by preparing our response to natural and man-made threats, providing thriving and biodiverse green spaces which enhance the capacity of the land to provide ecosystem services.

#### Security implications

68. N/A

#### Charity Implications

69. Epping Forest is a registered charity (number 232990). Charity Law obliges Members to ensure that the decisions they take in relation to the Charity must be taken in the best interests of the Charity.

#### **Epping Forest Consultative Committee**

70. Four members of the Consultative Committee made comments on the report. The Epping Forest Heritage Trust (EFHT) requested that they might be involved in some capacity with the project and were keen to assist. One suggestion was around the chronicling of the phases of work and the changes to the habitats. A separate meeting is to be held with EFHT to discuss ideas further.

71. Concern was expressed about the car parking proposal and the fact that a car park would not fit with sustainable management of the area. The car park provision also raised an issue of fair access to greenspace for those without cars and there was some discussion on the issue of fair access and who would benefit.
72. The Epping Forest Riders' Association (EFRA) raised the issue of access to the Buffer Lands for horse-riders in the future, which was linked to a concern that the Forest was now so busy that its members were seeking to ride outside the Forest in quieter areas like Warlies. As a result, EFRA is concerned that if the Buffer Lands are made into more of a general destination this will impact adversely on the already displaced horse-riders.

## Conclusion

73. The launch of the City Corporation's Climate Action Strategy requires an increase in carbon sequestration to be achieved to reach the aim of net zero of direct emissions by 2027. The Epping Forest Buffer Lands, particularly Copped Hall, provide a major opportunity to achieve increased carbon sequestration relatively early in the Strategy and thereby to increase the likelihood of achieving the net zero target. Therefore, CAS funding would be put towards the reversion of arable land to grassland and the creation of up to 127 hectares of new parkland and wood-pasture across the Copped Hall site, in line with the Parkland Management Plan recommendations.
74. Importantly, the Parkland Management Plan provides the basis for a bid for Countryside Stewardship (CSS) funding in 2023, with the likely full support of Historic England and Natural England. If successful such funding would provide a significant subsidy to the CAS *Carbon Removals* Project and allow its funds to be spread to other projects. In addition, an application to CSS would allow the development of heritage protection proposals which may attract substantial capital grant-aid, up to 100%. The CSS bid would also involve the development of access enhancement proposals, which would be subject of a further report to Committee. Nonetheless, other grant opportunities would also be explored, as new Forestry Commission-administered grants are soon to be available, and the cost-benefits need to be compared to CSS.

## Appendices

- **Appendix 1:** Map of Copped Hall RPG Grade II\* boundary and land use
- **Appendix 2:** SEF 22/21 *Copped Hall Parkland Management Plan*. Report to Epping Forest & Commons Committee 10<sup>th</sup> May 2021
- **Appendix 3:** Map of current management & heritage boundaries with PRoWs
- **Appendix 4 –** Map of proposed management and additional access route
- **Appendix 5 –** Copped Hall tree establishment proposals I (indicative only)
- **Appendix 6 –** Copped Hall tree establishment proposals II (indicative only)
- **Appendix 7 -** Projected 10-year budget balance with

## Background Papers

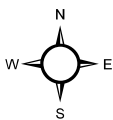
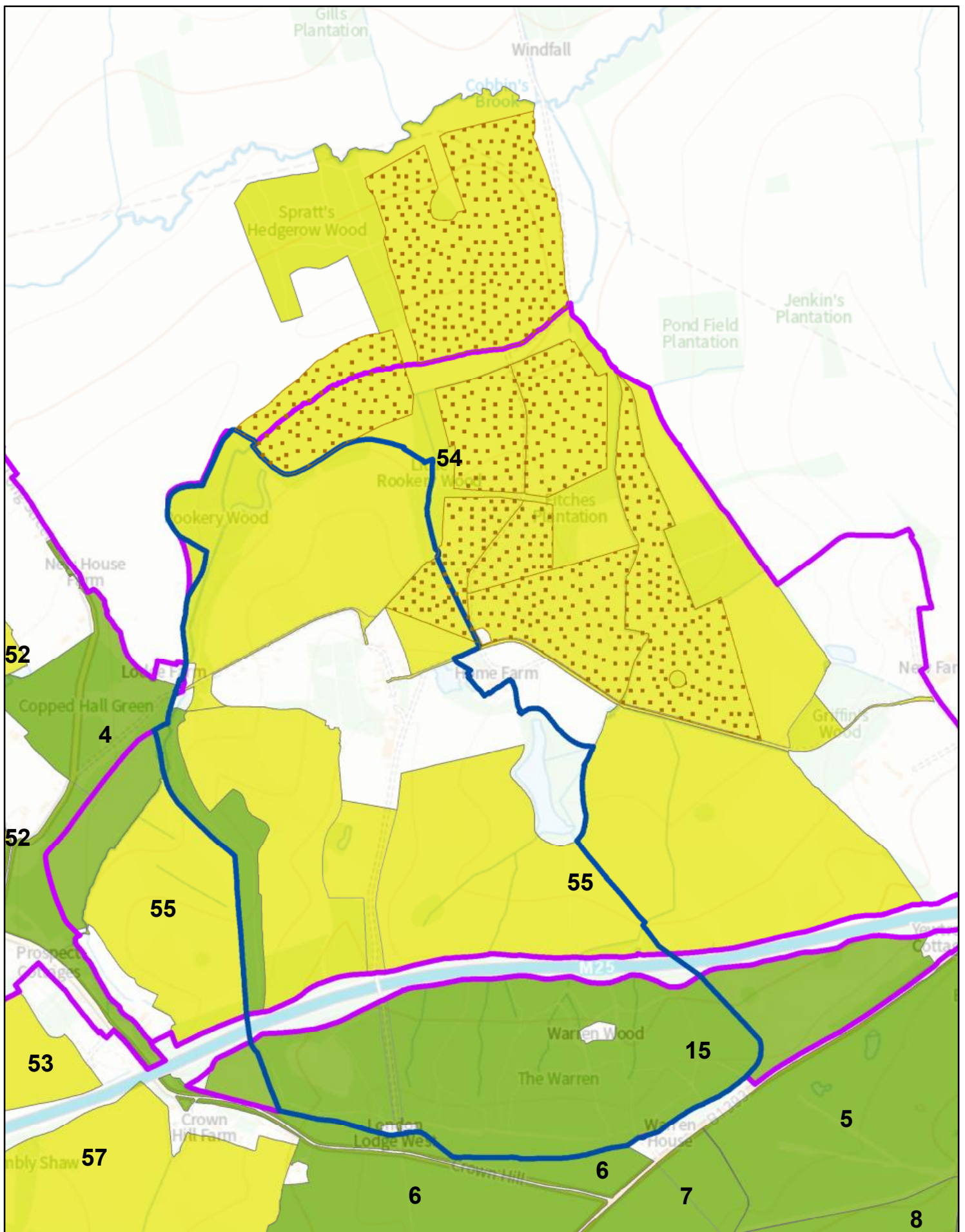
- SEF 22/21 *Copped Hall Parkland Management Plan*. Report to Epping Forest & Commons Committee 10<sup>th</sup> May 2021 (appended to this report)
- SEF 23/21 *Climate Action Strategy – Carbon Removals Project. Non-public Gateway 2* Report to Epping Forest & Commons Committee 10<sup>th</sup> May 2021 and to Projects Sub-Committee 17<sup>th</sup> May 2021
- SEF 17/21 *Farm Tenancy – Copped Hall North – future options. Non-public* Report to Epping Forest & Commons Committee 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021
- SEF 10/21 *Climate Action Strategy – Open Spaces “Carbon Removals”*. Report to the Epping Forest & Commons Committee 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021 and the Epping Forest Consultative Committee 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021.
- SEF 24/04 *Providing additional public access to Epping Forest Buffer Lands*. Report to Epping Forest & Commons Committee May 2004
- SEF 59/98 *Buffer Land Action Plan*. Report to Epping Forest and Open Spaces Committee 13<sup>th</sup> July 1998.

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## COPPED HALL DESIGNATIONS & LAND USE

- Arable Tenancy
- Registered Park and Garden
- Conservation Area
- Buffer Land
- Forest Land

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<b>Committee:</b> Epping Forest & Commons Committee – For decision	<b>Dated:</b> 10-05-2021
<b>Subject:</b> Copped Hall Parkland Management Plan (SEF 22/21)	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	2, 11 and 12
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>N</b>
If so, how much?	-
What is the source of Funding?	-
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	-
<b>Report of:</b> Colin Buttery, Director of Open Spaces	<b>For Decision</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Jeremy Dagley, Head of Conservation - Epping Forest	

### Summary

This report presents a brief summary of the Copped Hall Parkland Management Plan (PMP), prepared for the City of London Corporation by two expert consultants and part-funded by the statutory agencies, Historic England and Natural England. The purpose of the PMP was to provide a complete heritage and ecological assessment of the this Registered Park and Garden (RPG) Grade II\* site and to make recommendations for the protection and long-term management of the exceptional heritage, whilst working in sympathy with the conservation and access management of Epping Forest. This report proposes that the full PMP itself is now more widely shared with key stakeholders.

### Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- approve Option 1 below, to make the PMP publicly available and to allow dialogue with key stakeholders from 11<sup>th</sup> May 2021 onwards.

### Main Report

#### Background

1. The City Corporation acquired 295 hectares (ha) of the Copped Hall Estate in 1992 in order to protect the boundaries of the Forest from development and to provide support for the Forest's wildlife. This acquisition was one of a series of Buffer Lands acquisitions during the 1980s and early 1990s made to

protect the Forest in a strategy recognised and endorsed in October 1993 by Policy and Resources Committee.

2. Of this acquisition, 130ha lies within the 165ha national Registered Park and Garden designation (RPG). The remainder of the RPG area is in other ownership, including the hall and gardens owned by the Copped Hall Trust that also acquired their area in 1992 (see map at **Appendix 2**).
3. Copped Hall park and gardens are recorded as Grade II\* on the Historic England *Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest for England*. The national significance is recognised by Historic England's designation as Grade II\* on its Register of Parks and Gardens (one of 38 registered sites in Essex, and 1610 registered sites nationwide –approximately 30% of all sites are Grade II\*). Comparison with other estates regionally and nationally concludes that it was of a high status and contains a relatively rare package of relict features.
4. Within the City Corporation's ownership of Copped Hall, the Registered Park and Garden area, as well as the earlier historic boundaries of the park are divided, at the current time, into different land designations and occupiers (see map at **Appendix 2**). To the south of the M25 the Warren Plantation and Holly Hedge Field have been incorporated as Forest Land under the Epping Forest Act 1878, the latter field only incorporated in the year 2000 to mark the start of the new Millennium.
5. North of the motorway Copped Hall is divided into two Buffer Land compartments Copped Hall North and South (respectively Compartment nos. 54 and 55). The whole of Copped Hall South and some fields in Copped Hall North have been managed in-house since acquisition. The areas, including the Deer Park, were returned to and have been managed as grassland with the support of consecutive Countryside Stewardship and Environmental Stewardship grants in 1993, 2003 and 2008. The last of these agreements terminated in 2018.
6. The rest of Copped Hall North is under an agricultural tenancy. This is currently a 1-year Farm Business Tenancy (FBT), as recently approved by your Committee in March this year.
7. In 2015, a Conservation Statement for Copped Hall and the Buffer Lands was prepared by Historic Environment Associates ('*Copped Hall Conservation Statement*', March 2015). The Conservation Statement provided an outline assessment of the site's landscape and heritage importance and flagged up gaps in knowledge, providing pointers to further archive sources. It also helped to open an early dialogue with both Copped Hall Trust and the officers at Epping Forest District Council responsible for the Local Plan's Conservation Area status of Copped Hall.

## **Current Position**

8. The PMP was commissioned in 2017, with 80% grant support from Historic England and Natural England. Two expert consultants in heritage assets, historic and farmed landscapes were engaged to carry out the detailed assessment of

Copped Hall's heritage and wildlife value with a view to providing advice and recommendations for management planning and external grant applications, particularly Countryside Stewardship.

9. In addition to cataloguing and assessing, in detail, the importance of the site and the key priorities for management, the PMP also sought to provide a framework for integrating the conservation actions across the multiple ownership of the RPG.
10. In addition to document research and extensive fieldwork during 2017 and 2018, the consultants also arranged discussions with Epping Forest management team and other officers and with the Copped Hall Trust. Following feedback and revisions from officers the PMP (in eight parts) was completed in December 2018. After a full review, Historic and Natural England advisors met with officers in summer 2019 to confirm that the PMP met their objectives.
11. Epping Forest officers have since been considering options and developing proposals on changes to the land management, based on the PMP recommendations and also new information in relation to climate action, and these proposals would be the subject of separate reporting.
12. A brief summary of the PMP's findings and recommendations is attached at **Appendix 1**, with the aim of developing this into a more complete PMP summary document to aid future consultations and discussions with stakeholders. The full PMP document is in eight sections, including a gazetteer and maps. Historic and Natural England have indicated that they are in a position to sign-off the PMP and, therefore, that the City Corporation is in a position to publish it.
13. The PMP demonstrated and enhanced the national importance of the heritage landscape at Copped Hall through its research findings. In particular, the earthworks within Rookery Wood were considered of exceptional significance due to their Tudor origins. It also recommended land within the RPG boundary in the City ownership should be reunited as some of this is divided between tenanted and in-house management at present. A series of recommendations were made on the built structures including the eastern and western ha-has and the two WW2 pill-boxes.
14. In addition, the PMP reiterated the importance of the ecological continuity of the landscape with that of the Forest. It recommended tree-planting across the historic park to reinstate the extent of the earlier lowland wood-pasture and parkland landscape, recommending the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century lay-out as a guide to this, but recognising the need for flexibility and the ecological links with the Forest. The PMP also recognised the importance of grazing to the future of the landscape management.
15. The PMP also considered the issues of access, including car parking and the issues this would pose with areas in multiple ownership around the central attraction of the Hall. Low-key interpretation was proposed, including possible grant support through Stewardship. Increasing visitor pressure and its implications were explored in the approaches to future management and the

PMP recommended that a consultancy specialising in access provision to historic environments should be engaged to develop options and proposals

## Proposals

16. This report provides a summary of the PMP to capture the key issues. It further proposes that the PMP, and a summary document based on the attached summary, be made publicly available to local stakeholders immediately after the Committee meeting. Amongst those local stakeholders would be the Epping Forest Consultative Committee at its June meeting, the Copped Hall North FBT tenant, the Copped Hall Trust and officers at Epping Forest District Council responsible for the Local Plan's Conservation Area designation.
17. It is proposed that officers would contact The Copped Hall Trust early in the process of dissemination of the PMP, in consideration of its ownership of the Hall and gardens and its involvement in the provision of information to the consultants for the PMP.
18. A delivery plan, with options for seeking external grant support, based on the PMP recommendations and the proposed role of the Copped Hall land for the City Corporation's *Carbon Removals* project, would be presented as a separate report (or reports) to both this Committee and the Consultative Committee.

## Options

19. Option 1: To "sign off" the Copped Hall PMP and to make it publicly available as soon as practicably possible, along with a summary document, and for officers to begin a dialogue to receive feedback on the PMP with Copped Hall Trust, EFDC officers, the tenant and the Consultative Committee. **This option is recommended.**
20. Option 2: To provide, at this stage, only a summary document to local stakeholders and to seek text modifications with Historic and Natural England to the main document while awaiting further development of external grant applications before consultation on the PMP with other stakeholders. **This option is not recommended.**

## Key Data

21. The City Corporation owns 295ha of Copped Hall as buffer lands acquired in 1992. Of this 130ha is within the 165ha Registered Park and Garden Grade II\* (RPG).
22. The RPG heritage interest dates back to the Tudor period and some of this heritage is of exceptional significance.
23. The RPG is within multiple ownerships and the City Corporation's owned land is divided between Forest Land, in-house and tenanted Buffer Lands. The in-house land has been managed with the support of UK Government Stewardship schemes between 1993 and 2018.

## Corporate & Strategic Implications

### Strategic implications

24. The PMP and its further development would contribute significantly to City of London Corporate Plan 2018-2023 Outcome 2 *People enjoy good health and well-being*; Outcome 11: *We have clean air, land and water and a thriving and sustainable natural environment* and Outcome 12: *Our spaces are secure, resilient and well maintained* .
25. The aim of the PMP and its recommendations are to support the Open Spaces Department's Vision of enriching people's lives by enhancing and providing access to ecologically diverse open spaces and outstanding heritage assets across London and beyond.

### Financial implications

26. None at this stage. A further report is to follow which will set out options for implementing recommendations from the PMP and seeking external grant funding. Some of the elements of the PMP would also be implemented through the *Carbon Removals* Project funding under Strand 9 of the City Corporation's Climate Action Strategy (CAS).

### Resource implications

27. The consultation work on the PMP over the next year would require Epping Forest officer time to discuss the PMP recommendations with local stakeholders, including Copped Hall Trust and Epping Forest District Council. There would also be significant resources required to develop the recommendations into an external grant proposal. Some of this work has already been completed and will be presented as a separate report to Committee in July. In addition, the new Carbon Removals Project posts will provide the required additional resources for the development of the grant proposals and further external consultations.

### Legal implications

28. None at this stage. This report covers only the distribution of and consultation about the PMP document.

### Risk implications

29. None at this stage as no direct works are proposed in this report.

### Equalities implications

30. None.

### Climate implications

31. None as part of this report. The future action plan for implementation of the recommendations of the PMP will be of fundamental importance to the

achievement of the Carbon Removals contribution to the City Corporation's CAS targets.

Security implications

32. None.

## **Conclusion**

33. The PMP has shown that the heritage landscape of Copped Hall landscape, within the ownership of the City of London Corporation, is of national significance with some exceptional features spanning several centuries of parkland development. The PMP recommends heritage and ecological restoration go hand-in-hand, with wood-pasture and parkland a key to the future management of the habitats and landscape. Of the heritage features the Tudor Square Pond is the most significant and requires careful restoration. Dialogue with key neighbours, including the Copped Hall Trust is encouraged and more work to sensitively integrate access and interpretation is required.

## **Appendices**

- **Appendix 1:** Summary of Copped Hall PMP highlights
- **Appendix 2:** Map of Copped Hall heritage boundaries and land use

## **Background Papers**

- *Copped Hall Conservation Statement* (Final Report). Historic Environment Associates March 2015

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## APPENDIX 1 for Copped Hall PMP report SEF 22/21

### An INTRODUCTION & SUMMARY NOTES for COPPED HALL PARKLAND MANAGEMENT PLAN (PMP) (Dec 2018 – 8 sections)

#### Purpose of the PMP

This is summarised on page 10 of the PMP. The report was commissioned by the City of London Corporation and supported by Historic England and Natural England through an 80% PA2 Stewardship grant. The purpose was to evaluate all physical and documentary evidence to set the importance of the site in context and to provide a framework for management recommendations to protect the heritage features and to inform a parkland restoration, with the aim of seeking funding for such a restoration, with Historic England and Natural England support, from Stewardship or successor grants.

#### Ownership and the Registered Park and Garden boundaries

The land owned by the City Corporation covers the majority of the nationally-important Registered Park & Garden Grade II\* (130ha of the 165ha total). Importantly, the City Corporation owns the majority of the original parkland boundaries, as their extent fluctuated over the centuries from Tudor times to the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

However, it is significant issue that land within the RPG is within multiple ownerships and establishing good working relationships with The Copped Hall Trust, which was consulted during the PMP, and with local residents within Copped Hall is important for the protection of the integrity of the site.

#### Heritage

The PMP itself provides an **Executive Summary** at pages 5 to 7. This includes the following important summary of the heritage significance of the site:

*“Copped Hall park and gardens are recorded as Grade II\* on the Historic England Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest for England. The national significance is recognised by Historic England’s designation as Grade II\* on its Register of Parks and Gardens (one of 38 registered sites in Essex, and 1610 registered sites nationwide – approximately 30% of all sites are Grade II\*). Comparison with other estates regionally and nationally concludes that it was of a high status and contains a relatively rare package of relict features.*

*Copped Hall is a multi-period site originating on the medieval and Tudor period, with connections both to Waltham Abbey and to royal and aristocratic owners. Archival material survives for some of the Tudor and Stuart period within the Sackville manuscripts (covering the ownership of both the Earl of Middlesex and Sackvilles) and considerable archaeological evidence for this period remains including the very substantial earthworks relating to the large-scale water features, also an earthwork mound to the south-west, and the park pale. These have been identified by the PMP of being a particular significance and rarity and are highlighted as areas for further research and protection. This period also influenced the subsequent layouts and design. The earliest veteran trees within the study area may date to this period”.*

The heritage interest of the site, however, spans several periods since then before the Hall fell into neglect after 1917. For example, a serpentine canal was built in 1839 through the earlier Tudor Square Pond in Rookery Wood, while the ha-ha is first mentioned in 1895. The importance of the Tudor Square Pond is summarised on page 147 of “exceptional significance”. The pill-boxes from WW2 are also considered significant and details of preserving these are given on page 186.

Reunifying land within the RPG area is given high priority by the PMP – with a plea to at a minimum bring Kennel Field (currently straddling the RPG boundary as arable) out of tenancy and arable land and into the wood-pasture and parkland area.

The PMP considers that the park reached its zenith around the 1890s at the time of the second edition OS map of the area.

### **Significance of the heritage**

**The significance of the site is summarised on pages 146 and 147 of the PMP, with it summarised thus:**

***“12.4 An assessment of the significance of the site in relation to its contribution to landscape history design, both in the UK and, if appropriate, abroad. (Brief B2 iii)***

***Copped Hall Park is Grade II\* on the register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest it is therefore assessed as of Exceptional Significance”.***

### **Timeline**

A timeline of historic events connected to the Hall and its park, including its changing boundaries, is provided in the PMP between pages 18 – 34. The park is at its greatest extent to the east in Tudor times – at 1590. Much of this land lies outside the RPG but is protected by City Corporation ownership.

There are key phases in the history of the park:

- Phase 1 Pre-Medieval (page 81)
- Phase 2 1100-1500 (pages 82 – 85)
- Phase 3: 1550-1650 (pages 86 - 100)
- Phase 4: 1645-1745 (pages 101 – 108)
- Phase 5: 1745-1869 (pages 108 – 126)
- Phase 6: 1869-1917 (pages 127 – 131)
- Phase 7 1917-1986 (pages 132 – 134)

### **Ecological issues and wood-pasture & parkland restoration**

The Park is of considerable nature conservation and wildlife importance. There are a five ancient Oak boundary trees on the site – which may date back to the earlier park boundaries. Given the closeness to Epping Forest, the presence of ancient and veteran trees and the known importance of nearby Warlies Park for saproxylic (decaying wood) invertebrates, Copped Hall is likely to be important for these species although a survey could not be completed as originally planned in the PMP.

The whole Copped Hall area owned by the City Corporation (compartments 54 and 55) supports red and amber listed bird species like Skylark, Cuckoo, Kestrel and Yellowhammer and also protected species (Schedule 1) like Red Kite -proved breeding on site and Hobby and Goshawk, probable breeding on or adjacent to the site. The area also supports the declining Brown hare and the Cobbins Brook has in the past supported Water Vole. All these species are vulnerable to disturbance. Grazing is of key importance to the landscape conservation as well as the ecological restoration of the wood-pasture and parkland.

The PMP proposes (pages 226 -228) a planting plan, proposing the use of the wood-pasture creation option under the Stewardship grant to help achieve the restoration. The PMP suggest more formality within the bounds of the RPG (see page 199) but a rougher wood-pasture character elsewhere and a high density of trees.



### **Access and interpretation**

The focus and brief for the PMP was to understand its heritage significance and propose recommendations for its conservation. Access was considered in less detail particularly in the light of the multiple ownership of the central area of the site. The issue of car parking and the need to work alongside the Copped Hall Trust was highlighted (page 202). Recommendations were made to explore the Option AC1 Stewardship grant funding for both car parking and interpretation installations. The PMP summarise the need for further access considerations thus:

*“It is suggested that a consultancy specialising in access provision and the historic environment may be able to facilitate discussion both internally for CoLC and with external stakeholders and then advise on suitable options arising from this. Future charging for parking may be an option for funding the associated infra structure required”.*

### **Principles of Restoration**

Principles are outlined for five key areas:

- Broad Spectrum principles (pages 191 - 192)
- Historic Parkland management (p, 192)
- Modern land management/biodiversity focus (p.192 – 193)
- Archaeological Features (page 193)
- Archives (page 193)

### **A Vision for the site**

This is discussed on pages 189 and 190 of the PMP. It emphasises that in the view of the authors it would be inappropriate to try to establish or impose one single period of heritage restoration on the landscape. It also makes clear that the biodiversity importance of Copped Hall should be strong focus and guiding factor in the restoration and development of the Park.

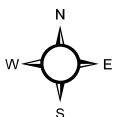
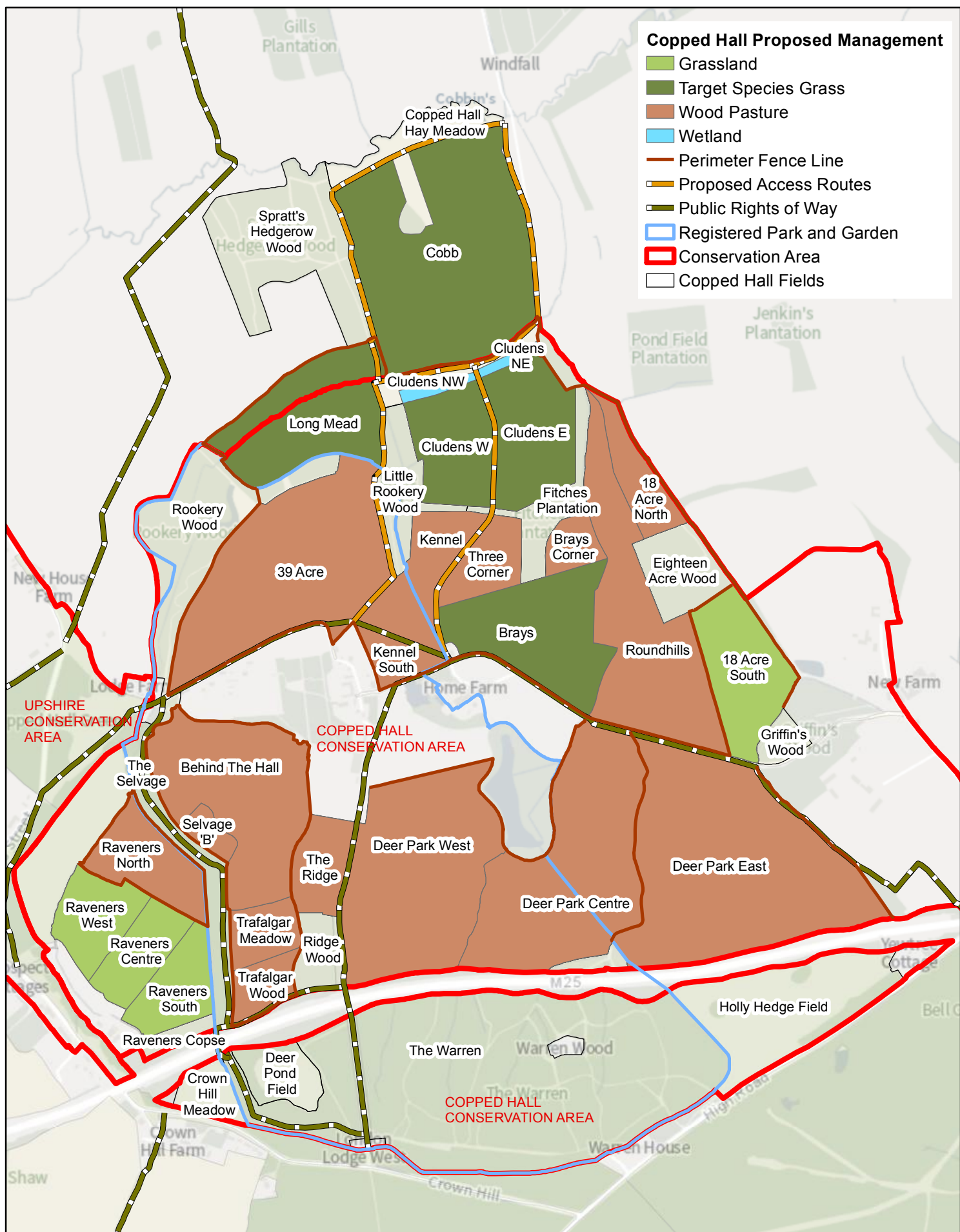
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- Registered Park and Garden
- Conservation Area
- Copped Hall historic boundaries**
- conjectural park boundary 1590
- 1751: Eyre map all boundaries
- 1634 eastern park boundary
- Public Rights of Way
- Copped Hall Fields
- Copped Hall Fields Management**
- Arable
- Grassland
- Conservation Headlands
- Forest Land
- Buffer Land

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## Copped Hall Proposed Management & Access

Page 225

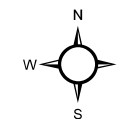
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# Copped Hall Tree Establishment Proposals (Indicative Only)

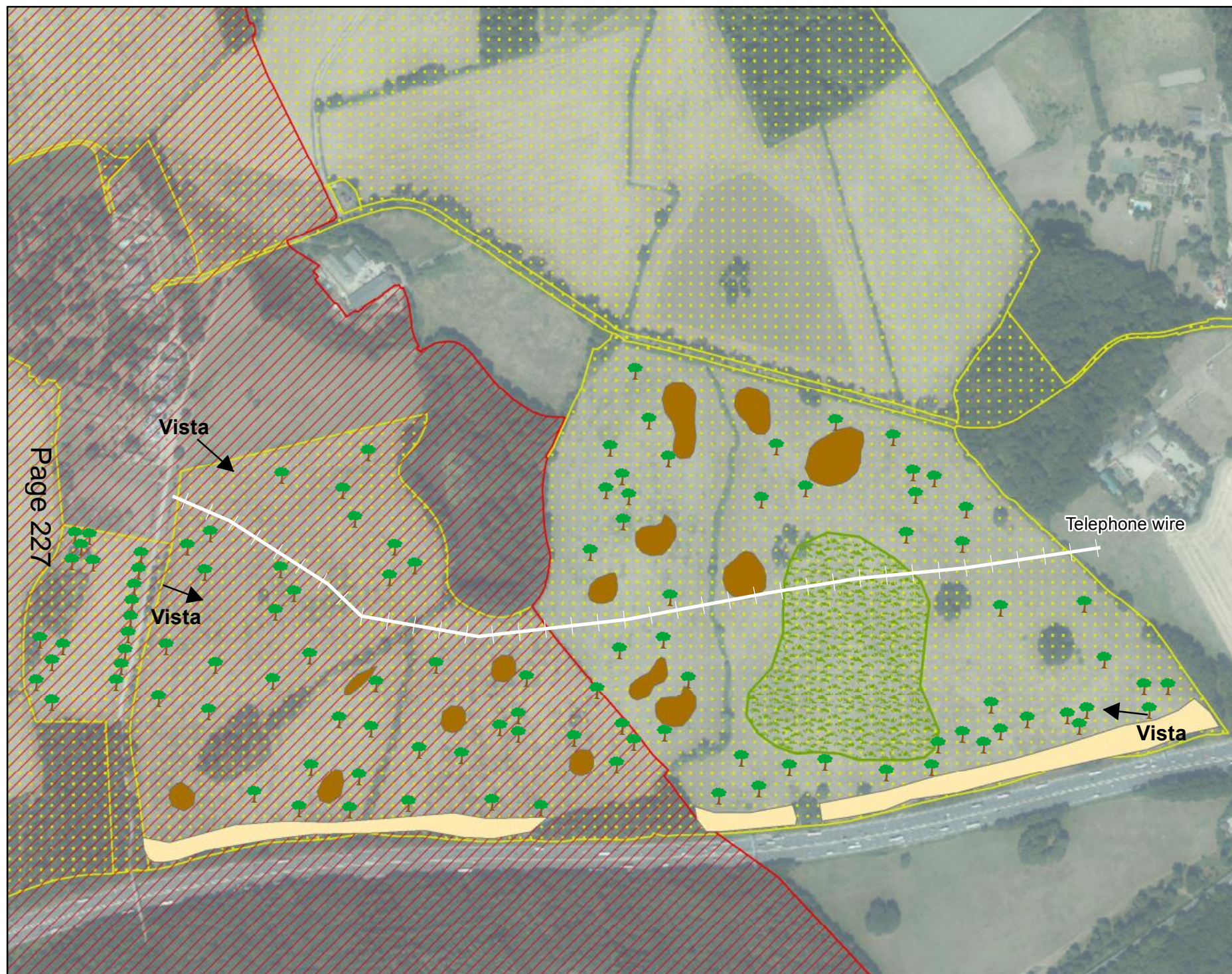
- Individual Tree Planting
- Registered Park and Garden boundary
- Open grassland for Skylark
- Nature colonisation and tree planting
- Natural colonisation only
- Buffer Land

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GIS Officer

Date Created:  
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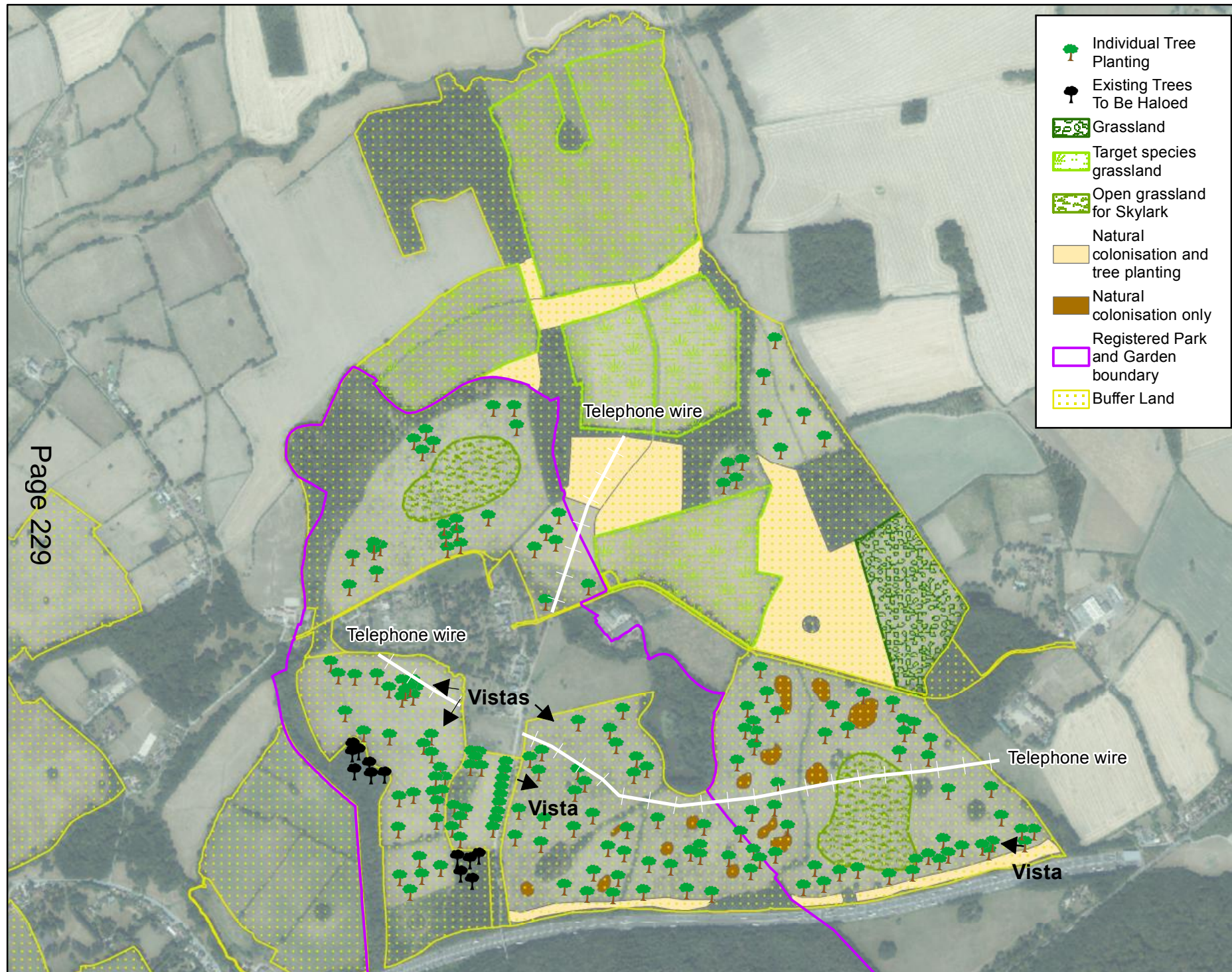
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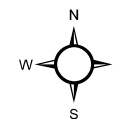


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- Individual Tree Planting
- Existing Trees To Be Haloed
- Grassland
- Target species grassland
- Open grassland for Skylark
- Natural colonisation and tree planting
- Natural colonisation only
- Registered Park and Garden boundary
- Buffer Land



## APPENDIX 6

### Copped Hall Tree Establishment Proposals II (Indicative Only)

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GIS Officer

Date Created:  
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**APPENDIX 7:**  
**Projected income & expenditure by financial year**

	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	Total
Potential <b>Income</b> (not incl external grants other than CSS*)	£79,880	£176,659	£195,444	£124,453	£135,946	£83,640	£81,925***	£81,925	£81,925	£81,925	£81,925	£1,196,989
<b>Expenditure</b>	£71,220	£181,582	£208,233	£116,480	£108,236	£51,965	£49,967	£51,041	£52,741	£52,118	£53,213	£996,796
<b>Net</b>	£8,660	-£4,923**	-£12,788	£7,973	£27,710	£31,675	£31,958	£30,884	£29,184	£29,807	£28,712	£200,193

\*CSS – is Countryside Stewardship Scheme. This income row does not include potential income generation from other sources i.e private funding for individual trees, grants for specific works (ponds and wetlands).

\*\*Note: for the 2024-25 net expenditure, this may be able to be made up from the Copped Hall or Buffer Land Local Risk budgets (as they are set at present) or some of the work under CAS may be completed earlier in 2023-24 thus reducing net expenditure..

Does not include heritage or access items in the grant-aided income that may be available under CSS. These may be eligible for up to 100% funding through CSS

The higher income from CSS in 2024-25 and 2025-26 would be from additional income for one off capital works in these two years along side annual revenue income that lasts for some grant options for 5 or 10 years, hence the slight decrease in income at 2029-30\*\*\* at year 6 when the 5-year options finish (these may be replaced by other options).

Does not include existing BPS income and expenditure on the grasslands already under our management (outside the tenanted land) because this feeds into the existing budget for existing Copped Hall management costs

2028 – BPS scheme has terminated; may be replaced by other agri-environemnt income through ELMs (Environmental Land Management Scheme)

Proposed CAS Funded Elements	Proposed CSS Funded Elements
Reversions of arable areas to grass	Fencing and access measures
Baling of hay on converted grass	Water infrastructure for grazing
Trees, tree protection, watering and associated costs	Heritage works
	10-year wood-pasture creation options

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<b>Committee(s):</b> Epping Forest Consultative Committee – for consultation Epping Forest Commons Committee – for decision	<b>Dated:</b> 16/06/2021 12/07/2021
<b>Subject:</b> Wanstead Park Permissive Cycling Extension (SEF 28/21b)	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	1,2,3,4, 9 and 11.
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>If so, how much?</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?</b>	<b>Y/N</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Director of Open Spaces	<b>For Decision</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Sarah Reid, Community Engagement Officer (Lakes and Ponds), Epping Forest.	

## Summary

This report provides feedback from the public consultation exercise for cycling in Wanstead Park recommended as an action in the Cycling Strategy which was agreed at your committee on 8 March.

The 1,004 responses from public consultation exercise held between 16 April 2021 – 10 May 2021 are presented in this report.

The Committee are asked to agree to permit cycling on all main paths across the whole of Wanstead Park. This is in accordance with and subject to the proposed restrictions and requirements in Option 3.

## Recommendation(s)

Epping Forest and Commons Committee Members are asked to:

- i. Note the comments from the Epping Forest Consultative Committee.
- ii. Note the public consultation exercise results, and
- iii. Approve the extension of permissive cycling across the Wanstead Park byelaw area.

## **Main Report**

### **Background**

1. This report follows up on the approval of the Epping Forest Cycling Strategy at the EF&CC meeting on 8 March 2021. The decision was made to review cycling in Wanstead Park. The specific action was to:
2. Undertake a review of the current restrictions in the Park with an aim to allow permissive cycling throughout Wanstead Park on surfaced paths, particularly the circular route supported by the local stakeholder group. Park users will be consulted as part of the process to ensure local feedback on any proposals.
3. An online public consultation was launched on 16 April 2021 and closed on 10 May 2021. One thousand and four people responded.

### **Current Position**

4. Wanstead Park is covered by two sets of byelaws. The “enclosed”<sup>1</sup> part of Wanstead Park (the eastern side) is covered by Wanstead Park byelaws. The unenclosed part (the western side) is covered by Epping Forest byelaws.
5. In respect of the eastern side of Wanstead Park, Byelaw 4 of the Wanstead Park Additional Byelaws 1950 is applicable. This prohibits cycles and scooters being ridden other than cycle riding on parts of the Park set apart for that purpose and indicated to that effect in the Park.
6. In respect of the western side of Wanstead Park, there is nothing in the Epping Forest Byelaws which prohibits vehicles (although access to specified areas can be prohibited). Bye law 3(10) of the Epping Forest Bye laws prohibits use of a bicycle or other vehicle to the danger, annoyance or inconvenience of the public.
7. A dedicated cycle path was installed in 2010 by London Borough of Redbridge who continue to maintain it. It runs from Warren Road (north) down to the Northumberland Avenue/Park Road junction, passing between Shoulder of Mutton and Heronry Ponds.
8. There is one permissive cycle route, connecting the above path to Wanstead Park Avenue passing between Heronry Pond and Perch Pond. The map in Appendix 1 shows the different byelaw areas and the two cycle routes.
9. The different rules in different parts of the Park have made it confusing for users to know where cycling is permitted and where it’s not. This has also made it difficult to enforce the current rules.

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<sup>1</sup> Formerly enclosed at the time the byelaw was made and described as the “enclosed” part of the Park in the Byelaw, but the enclosure arrangements have since changed. The eastern side as shown on the Map equates to the formerly enclosed area



## Pandemic Visitor Numbers

10. Since the coronavirus pandemic visitor numbers to Epping Forest have increased dramatically. Recent snapshot surveys have put Forest visits increasing by 350%
11. Cycling across the Forest has increased significantly, rising from 10% of visits in 2014 (equating to 400,000 visits per annum) to 12%-18% of visits in 2020.

## Consultation Exercise

### Public Consultation

12. Notices were put up around Wanstead Park publicising the cycling consultation. Local ward councillors (LB Redbridge, LB Waltham Forest and LB Newham) were emailed with details and asked to share with their networks. Local interest cycling groups were contacted. The Epping Forest Consultative and Epping Forest & Commons Committee were notified of the consultation. The Friends of Wanstead Parklands contacted their members and put-up notices.
13. The online public consultation exercise was launched Friday 16 April and closed Monday 10 May.

### Stakeholders

14. Wanstead Park Liaison Group stakeholders were consulted on the proposals prior to launching the public consultation. The Friends of Wanstead Parklands discussed the proposal at their committee meeting.
15. Councillor Paul Donovan (LB Redbridge) responded fully supporting to extend permissive cycling.

## Options

16. We consulted on **three** options for cycling in Wanstead Park:
17. **Option 1: Do nothing:** Leave the situation with cycling as it is, with cycling permitted in the Epping Forest part of Wanstead Park, but not permitted in the eastern area covered by Wanstead Park byelaws. The designated cycle route (marked blue on the Appendix 1 byelaw map) will remain.

The implications for this option will be continued confusion on where you can and can't cycle in the Park which results in user conflict. This option does not address the issue of the continued growth of cycling in Wanstead Park despite the byelaw.

**This option is not recommended.**

18. **Option 2: Stop cycling** – ban it in the park altogether (except for the Warren Road to Northumberland Road permanent route (blue route on Appendix 1). The permissive route would be withdrawn (orange route on Appendix 1).

This option will mean that a certain amount of confusion would continue because there is still a route that you can cycle through the Park on Warren Road to Northumberland Avenue/Park Road junction.

19. There would also be a significant implication for the western part of the Park (blue shaded on the Appendix 1 map) covered by Epping Forest Act 1878 legislation. It would mean preventing cycling in a section of Epping Forest, contrary to most of the rest of the Forest.

**This option is not recommended.**

20. **Option 3: Allow cycling on paths throughout the whole park** (both western Epping Forest land and eastern Wanstead Park bye law area). This will only apply to pedal cycles (including Electrically Assisted Pedal Cycles “EAPC”).<sup>2</sup> It is also proposed that, in respect of the eastern side of Wanstead Park, cycles are only permitted subject also to riders not causing danger, injury, annoyance or inconvenience to the public. This will mean that cycles not conforming to this requirement are not permitted and any offending rider proved to be causing danger, injury, annoyance or inconvenience would be in breach of Bye law 4 of the Wanstead Park Additional Bye Law 1950. It will also make the requirements and restrictions more consistent with those applicable in the western side of Wanstead Park by virtue of Epping Forest Bye law 3(10) (see paragraph 6 above).

21. Confusion will be clarified as there will be one consistent rule covering the whole of Wanstead Park; that permissive cycling is allowed subject further to no danger, injury, annoyance or inconvenience being caused to the public by the rider.

22. Cyclists will be required to adhere to the code of conduct with priority given to pedestrians. Although the code of conduct will be advisory rather than legally enforceable in itself, it will clarify expectations regarding cyclist behaviour and what is regarded as causing annoyance or inconvenience to other Park users. As such it could assist in enforcing non-compliance with the Bye laws. User conflict should be reduced.

**This option is recommended.**

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<sup>2</sup> As defined by the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016 as amended AEPC's are limited to 15.5 mph



## Proposals

23. We are seeking approval from the Committee to approve changes to allow permissive cycling on main paths across the whole of Wanstead Park as set out under “Option 3” above. This will bring one consistent rule across the whole Park.

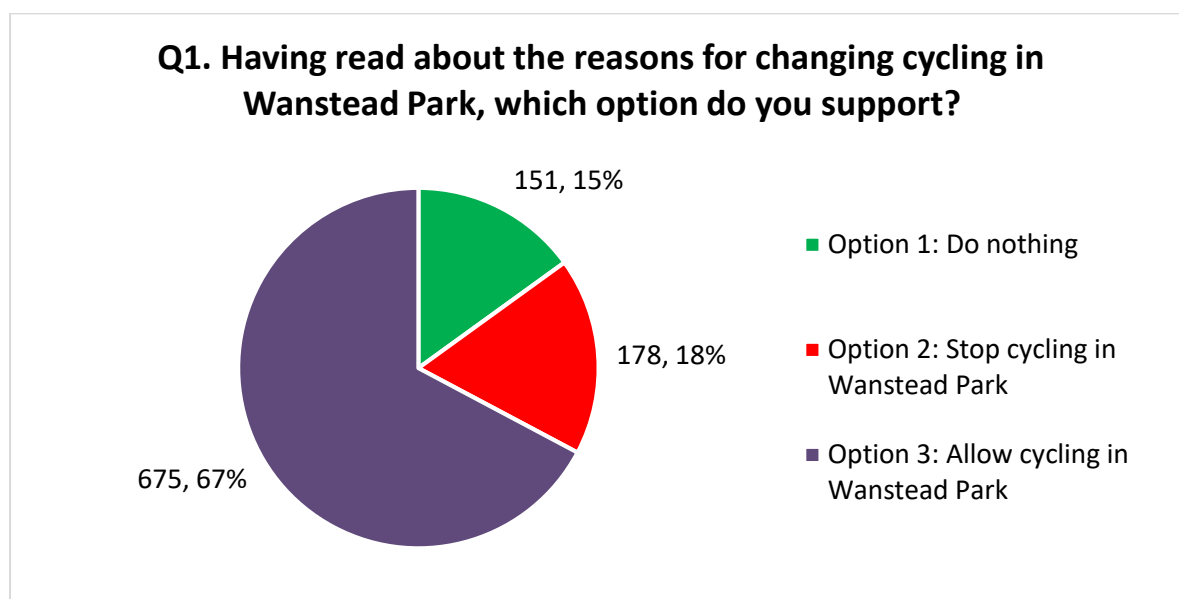
24. Initial results from the public consultation have indicated that the majority at 67% support the option to allow cycling on paths in the whole of Wanstead Park.

## Key Data

25. The survey questionnaire was published with a Frequently Asked Questions document – attached at appendix 2. The survey questionnaire is attached at appendix 3.

26. The Options question results are:

- 15% (151) respondents supported - Do nothing;
- 18% (178) respondents supported - Stop cycling;
- 67% (675) respondents supported – Allow cycling on paths throughout the whole park.



## Additional Feedback

27. An open question was also included in the questionnaire, asking if respondents had any further comments about cycling. From the 1,004 responses, 648 people (64.5%) completed the ‘further comments’ section.

28. Of the 648 comments made, many respondents made several points in their individual response. The figures which follow are presented as a percentage of the overall number of points made of which there were 1,142. These responses were grouped into themes and are summarised below.

29. Path issues, this category grouped many points regarding paths. Of the 1142 points made, over 10% (121) related to paths which was the highest amount of responses for one category. These ranged from the condition of the paths, from increase in erosion caused during the pandemic, and widening of paths. A lot of comments thought poor path conditions has been caused by, or made worse by cycling.

There was concern that paths are too narrow for shared use to allow cycling and walking to happen safely, with some suggestions to widen paths. Blind spots and lack of sightlines particularly near to the Ornamental Waters was raised as an issue. Paths having an unsuitable surface for cycling and causing punctures. Concern that smaller woodland paths would be used for cycling.

The proposal to extend permissive cycling across the whole Park will be on main paths, which should address some concerns about using narrower paths or smaller woodland paths. The Cycling Code of Conduct will be promoted before the extension is implemented.

30. Ecological damage or disturbance to wildlife - 3% (38) points related to concern about damage to the landscape and disturbance to wildlife, with some siting the listed historic landscape. Several comments related to Chalet Woods and blue bell season.

By allowing cycling on main paths only and restricting access to smaller woodland paths it is hoped that any damage to habitat will be minimised. Under the Epping Forest Cycling Management Strategy, we will have the ability to restrict cycling to specific areas if damage is occurring.

31. Over 7% (89 points) related to concern that extending permissive cycling would be dangerous and lead to an increased risk of collisions or near misses.

32. Just over 75 (80 points) wanted to keep the park as a quiet space for walking or experiencing nature, particularly around ornamental water.

In relation to the two points above, promotion of the Cycling Code will encourage courteous behaviour between different park users and mitigate these possible conflicts. The communications plan will tackle that not all park users are steady on their feet, or can hear well, so cyclists need to be mindful of these less visible impairments.

33. Over 7% (84 points) were made that it is a safe environment for children to cycle in. Several comments welcomed the proposals which allow safe routes for children traveling to and from school by bike, allowing them to avoid busy and polluted roads, or avoiding the use of cars for school journeys.

34. Cyclist poor behaviour was cited as an issue or not considerate enough of other users with over 6% (77 points). To counter this, over 2% (30 points) made that most cyclists behave well.

35. Related to the above is concern about cycling at speed with over 7% (88 points) being made. There were requests to be able to restrict and set a speed limit in the park. Questions regarding if e-bikes and scooters would be allowed.

The recently approved Epping Forest Cycle Management Strategy states that bicycle racing of any kind is not permitted in the Forest as it contravenes the Epping Forest byelaws. De-restricted e-bikes or speed pedalecs are not permitted. The legal limit for e-bikes is 15.5 miles per hour.

36. Over 2% (29 points) requested more bike racks around the park, many saying if there were it would encourage more people to cycle rather than drive to the park. Also, if they could lock up their bikes, they are more likely to walk around the park.

We will look to fund raise with local partners and interest groups to install additional bike storage racks.

37. Over 2% (28 points) made where that the current situation is confusing. Over 1% (14 points) made were that the respondent didn't know cycling was not allowed in parts.

38. Better signage for rule clarity was a common point made, with over 8% comments (95 points), believing this would help resolve the confusion and reduce user conflict.

39. Some comments related to lack of enforcement and the need to better enforce the rules, with over 4% (52 points) made. Mainly having a greater staff presence on site.

40. Over 3% (42 points) made related to providing cycle paths as routes through the park or variations on the three options proposed.

By promoting the Cycling Code of Conduct and extending permissive cycling to main paths in the park it is hoped that this will reduce confusion and user conflict by having one consistent rule across the whole Park.

41. The Friends of Wanstead Parklands committee had some support unconditionally for Option 3 (to allow cycling). Other members had suggested allowing cycling on more paths than currently, but not the whole park, keeping some areas bike free.

42. Specific concerns raised with allowing cycling (option 3) in a listed landscape and the impact on path condition when maintenance budgets are stretched. How sensitive areas would be protected, such as Chalet Woods and the blue bells. And how cyclists would be directed to other paths in the park.

43. Generally, the Friends Group support the option to extend permissive cycling. Raising concerns that if it is reliant on cyclists following the Code of conduct, how will this be communicated through signage, monitored, and enforced. The Group suggest introducing it on a trial basis with a review on the impact.
44. Councillor Paul Donovan – fully supports the proposal to extend permissive cycling, but raised concern about path condition, and the impact with possible increased cycling. He suggests some path areas may need widening, and some works to improve the surface and drainage of paths.

## **Evaluation**

45. The City is required to keep Epping Forest for the recreation and enjoyment of the public and to preserve the natural aspect of the Forest as far as possible (S.7 Epping Forest Act 1878).
46. An initial evaluation has considered that main paths are sufficient to meet the anticipated visitor numbers without any adverse impact on the recreation and enjoyment of the forest. This will be reviewed 18 months after the implementation and re-evaluated with results presented to committee.

## **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

### **Strategic implications**

47. The proposal aligns with the Corporate Plan 2018 – 2023. It contributes to a flourishing society, and outcome number 1 - People are safe and feel safe, and number 2. People enjoy good health and wellbeing.
48. It aligns with Shape outstanding environments, and outcome number 11. We have clean air, land and water and a thriving and sustainable natural environment. Objective 12 – Our spaces are secure, resilient, and well maintained.
49. It aligns with the Open Spaces Business Departmental Business Plan – A. Open spaces and historic sites are thriving and accessible through the outcome, London has clean air and mitigates flood risk and climate change.
50. Top line objective B Spaces enrich people's lives through the outcomes, people enjoying good health and wellbeing; people feel welcome and included and People discover, learn and develop,
51. Epping Forest Strategy (2020 – 2030) – 'London' Greatest Forest' Strategic Objectives 1 and 3; 'A welcoming Destination for All' and 'An inspiring place for people's health, recreation and enjoyment.'
52. The scheme fits with the Wanstead Parklands Plan to improve access to the Park site.

53. Epping Forest Cycling Management Strategy vision, is that Epping Forest is 'A welcoming green space for recreational cyclists of all ages to explore and enjoy responsibly.'

### **Epping Forest Consultative Committee Comments**

54. At the meeting held on 16 June 2021 the committee were supportive of the proposal to extend permissive cycling in Wanstead Park.
55. Members were pleased to hear the cycling code of conduct would be further publicised prior to the implementation of the changes and made offers to help with this.
56. Maps and signage will be introduced on site.

### **Financial and resource implications**

57. The proposals can be met within existing local risk budgets. However, longer-term, the issue of funding provision in the Park, to help alleviate pressure on the parts of Epping Forest lying within the Special Area of Conservation (EFSAC), will be raised with Natural England and the local authority partnership that forms the EFSAC Mitigation Oversight Group.
58. Additional cycle storage facilities may be required. If there is a demand, then we will work with local interest groups to fund raise, as well as bringing this issue of the uplift in recreational facilities at the Park to the attention of the EFSAC Mitigation Oversight Group (as outlined above). The installation can be met from in-house resources.

### **Legal implications**

These are included in the body of the report

### **Risk implications**

59. If permissive cycling is extended across the whole of the Park, there is the possibility of an increased risk in user collisions. This will be mitigated by the prohibition on cyclists causing danger, injury, annoyance or inconvenience and by publicising the Cycling Code of Conduct and that pedestrians have priority on these shared use paths.
60. If cycling is extended, there is a risk that cyclists may go 'off road' and cycle through the Historic Grade II\* listed landscape, causing damage to the heritage assets of Wanstead Park. This will not be permitted, as cycling will only be allowed on main paths, reflecting most of the cycling that currently occurs. Protection of heritage assets is a priority, and we will monitor the impact of changes for any signs of erosion or damage to non-path areas. This is in line

with the Cycling Management Strategy. We can restrict access to areas if parts of the Park are suffering damage due to cycling.

61. Historic England and London Borough of Redbridge will be consulted on the plans to extend cycling once committee have agreed plans under their responsibility for the Grade II\* listed Historic Park and Garden and the Wanstead Park Conservation Area respectively.

### **Equalities implications**

62. A Test of Relevance (Appendix 5) screening exercise of the equality impact of this decision has been undertaken by Epping Forest. Specific comments from respondents have been included in this, showing where people feel they would suffer negative impact from the changes.
63. It is acknowledged that adverse impacts would include greater risk of conflict or collision with inconsiderate, speeding or insufficiently aware cyclists or scooter users, and reduced pedestrian comfort if cycle and scooter users reduce space available for pedestrians below acceptable comfort levels.
64. The impacts are likely to disproportionately affect people with protected characteristics including those with more restricted mobility, those with visual or hearing impairments who may be less aware of cyclists or scooter users, and those using buggies or wheelchairs. It is believed these impacts can be mitigated by promotion of the Cycling Code of Conduct.
65. The majority of comments saw this is positive regarding mobility needs, as bicycles are used as mobility aids. The impact on children having a safe space to cycle was also seen as beneficial. It is considered that the mitigation measure will reduce adverse impacts but not remove them. To the extent that there are remaining adverse impacts, these are considered to be outweighed by the public benefits of allowing cycle use as recommended, including the benefits to people with protected characteristics. This includes increased cycle opportunities within Wanstead Park as a means of enjoying the Park, including for people able to use cycles or scooters but who may have difficulty walking, and for children who may otherwise have limited opportunities to cycle safely under supervision.

### **Climate implications**

66. By extending permissive cycling in Wanstead Park, we are improving links with the surrounding areas. In addition, we are providing a safe space away from traffic for people learning to cycle. This in turn gives users more choice in how to travel to the Park. Changes to more active transport and non-vehicular access to the Park, should have a positive impact on carbon emissions and air quality.

### **Security implications**

67. None.

## **Charity implications**

68. Epping Forest is a registered charity (number 232990). Charity Law obliges Members to ensure that the decisions they take in relation to the Charity must be taken in the best interests of the Charity.

## **Conclusion**

69. From the results of the public consultation there is a clear majority (67%) in favour of extending permissive cycling across the whole park.

70. There were concerns about cyclists not following the code of conduct, and cycling too fast, or not giving way to pedestrians. This can be addressed through publicising the Code of Conduct.

71. The initial evaluation considers the paths to be sufficient to meet anticipated visitor and cyclist numbers without any adverse impact on the recreation and enjoyment of the Forest. This will be reviewed 18 months after implementation, to analyse any impact and address any issues. The findings of the review will be presented to committee.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Map 1 Wanstead Park Byelaw Areas and cycle routes
- Appendix 2 – Frequently Asked Questions document.
- Appendix 3 – Consultation questionnaire Wanstead Park Cycling
- Appendix 4 – Test of relevance
- Appendix 5 – Cycling Code of Conduct

## **Background Papers**

Epping Forest Cycling Management Strategy (SEF 25/20b) - 8 March 2021.

## **Sarah Reid**

Community Engagement Officer (Lakes and Ponds) / Open Spaces Department

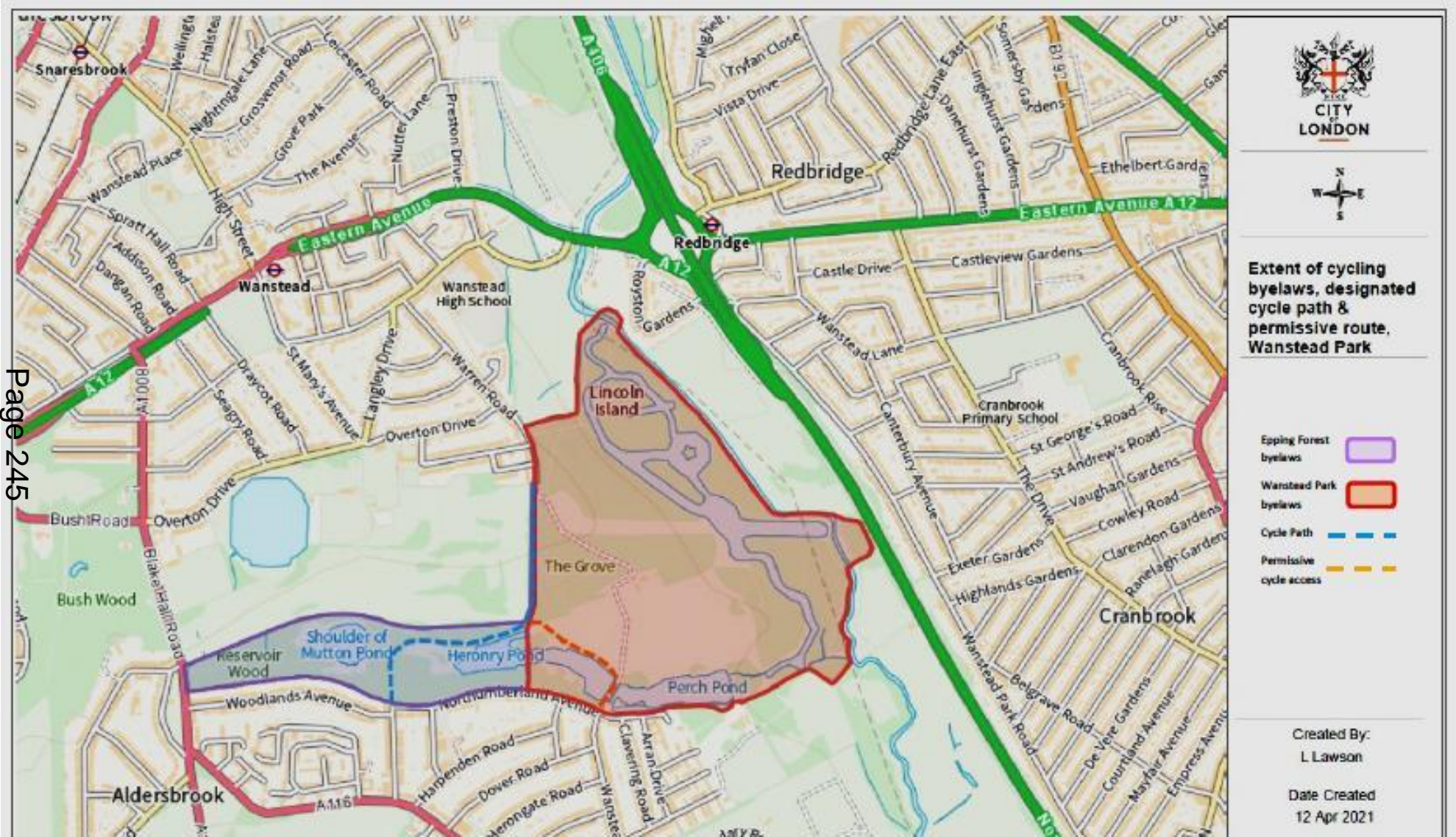
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Annex 1 – Map of Wanstead Park



Map showing byelaw areas and designated and permissive paths for cycling in Wanstead Park

**Key:**

Western area Epping Forest byelaw area – with purple boundary line shaded blue – Cycling is permitted.

Blue dashed line – designated cycle path running from Warren Road (north) between Shoulder of Mutton Pond and Heronry Pond out to Northumberland Avenue/Park Road junction (south).

Eastern area Wanstead Park byelaw area – with red boundary line, shaded orange – cycling is not permitted in this area except for below.

Orange dashed line – Permissive cycle route linking the above designated cycle path following the desire line to Wanstead Park Avenue.

## **Wanstead Park Online Cycling Consultation**

### **Background**

The Epping Forest and Commons Committee approved the Epping Forest Cycling Management Strategy at its meeting in March 2021. The strategy proposed a review of cycling in Wanstead Park with an aim to increase permissive cycle access.

You can see the cycling management strategy here:

<https://bit.ly/EFCyclingStrategy2021>

Currently there is one designated cycle path through the Park and one permissive route for cyclists. The rest of the Park is subject to a byelaw which prohibits cycling. Feedback from groups has been that this current mix is confusing for Park users.

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **Is cycling allowed in Wanstead Park?**

Cycling became a byelaw offense in Wanstead Park in the 1930's. This was in response to illegal cycle race events which were being organised in the Park and causing upset to other visitors. However, the ban was only applied to the 'enclosed' Park, when daily opening and closing of the Park was the norm. This has resulted in a position where cycling is permitted in the western area of Wanstead Park, but not in the eastern area because different byelaws apply.

There is a designated cycle path running from Warren Road (north) between Shoulder of Mutton Pond and Heronry Pond to Northumberland Avenue / Park Road junction. There is also a permissive cycle route linking the above designated path to Wanstead Park Avenue following an established desire line.

The attached map shows byelaw areas in Wanstead Park and allowed cycle routes **here**. The Park is split in two, with the western area (blue shaded on map) covered by Epping Forest land byelaws. The eastern area (orange shaded on map) is covered by Wanstead Park byelaws. The designated cycle path (blue dashed line) and the permissive cycle path (orange dashed line) are also shown.

#### **Why propose change to cycling in Wanstead Park?**

Over the past year during the pandemic – there has been an increase in the number of people visiting and cycling the Forest. In a survey (2014) it was estimated that as many as 10% of visitors to Epping Forest do so to cycle.

Since the Coronavirus pandemic, the Forest has seen a large increase in visitors. Recent snapshot visitor surveys put the increase of visitors at 350%. These visitors enjoy many different pastimes and cycling, in its various disciplines, is proving increasingly popular, growing from 10% in 2014, it now accounts for 12-18% (2020) of Forest visits.

Local interest groups are keen to see increased cycle access and the Epping Forest Cycling Management Strategy supports a move towards active means of local travel and allowing greater freedom to cycle in the Park would support this.

The current position with the varying different byelaws and cycle routes causes confusion for Park users and can result in user conflict.

### **What are the options?**

These options are:

**Option 1:** Do nothing: Leave the situation with cycling as it is, with cycling permitted in the Epping Forest part of Wanstead Park, but not permitted in the eastern area covered by Wanstead Park byelaws. The designated cycle route will remain.

Implications:

- ✓ Easiest option
- ✓ No byelaw implications
- ✗ Does not provide clarity of use
- ✗ Continued conflict with new visitors, who may then have a poor visitor experience
- ✗ Fails to address existing use, growth of cycling and byelaw violations

**Option 2:** Stop cycling – ban it in the Park altogether (except for the Warren Road to Northumberland Road permanent route. The permissive route would be withdrawn.

Implications:

- ✓ Provides clarity of use, although designated cycle path could still cause confusion for some
- ✓ Removes completely risk of pedestrian/cyclist collisions
- ✗ Restricts some user groups – in particular, family recreational cycling in a safe environment
- ✗ Does not support modal shift towards more sustainable, active travel for local journeys.
- ✗ Legal exclusion of cycling on Forest Land may impact on a wider area

**Option 3:** Allow cycling on paths throughout the whole Park (both western Epping Forest land and eastern Wanstead Park bye law area). This permissive cycling will be on the basis that pedestrians always have priority in Wanstead Park, and cyclist must follow the Epping Forest cycling code of conduct.

Implications:

- ✓ Provides clarity of use
- ✓ Supports modal shift towards more sustainable, active travel for local journeys.
- ✓ Increases access to visit the Park by bicycle
- ✓ Implemented via permission, can easily be revoked
- ✗ May increase user conflict if cycling code of conduct is not observed
- ✗ May impact on ecology or heritage features if permission is abused

### **When might changes be made?**

Subject to the outcome of the public consultation, and Committee approval, we anticipate changes will be implemented by Autumn 2021.

Any changes will be reviewed 18 months after implementation to analyse the impact and any issues.

**Will there be more signage?**

This depends on the outcome of the consultation. If the majority want cycling across all the Park, then this will reduce the need for signage – as there will be one rule for cycling across the whole Park. The cycling code of conduct will also be displayed in the Park.

**Will cycle racks be installed?**

We would like to see more cycle racks installed across the Forest, including Wanstead Park. In the first instance, we will work with local interest groups to raise funding for these but in time revenue from recently approved car Park charges will help to fund this work.

**How will we minimise conflict between cyclists, other Park users and pedestrians?**

We encourage Park and Forest visitors to be courteous and have respect for one another. The Epping Forest Cycling Code of Conduct (view [here](#)) outlines that cyclists must give priority to pedestrians when visiting the Forest.

**How will we ensure that the heritage assets of Wanstead Park are protected?**

Option 3 outlines that permissive cycling in Wanstead Park will be limited to paths only. This reflects most of the cycling which currently occurs. Protection of heritage assets is a priority, and we will monitor the impact of changes for any signs of erosion or damage to non-path areas. In line with the Cycling Management Strategy, we can restrict access to areas in the event that parts of the Park are suffering damage due to cycling.

**What happens when the consultation closes?**

We are running a three-week online consultation exercise with survey questionnaire; this runs from 4.00pm Friday 16 April 2021 – closes at 9.00am Mon 10 May 2021.

The results of the consultation will be presented to the Epping Forest Consultative Committee and following their comments, to Epping Forest and Commons Committee in mid-Summer for a decision.

**Further information**

More information can be found on this page <https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/green-spaces/epping-forest/activities-in-epping-forest/cycling-in-epping-forest>

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# Consultation Questionnaire cycling in Wanstead Park

## Background

The Epping Forest and Commons Committee approved the Epping Forest Cycling Management Strategy at its meeting on 8 March 2021. Within the strategy, confusion over cycling restrictions in Wanstead Park was identified as an issue. The strategy proposed a review of the current position with an aim to increase permissive cycle access in the wider Park.

You can see the cycling management strategy here:

[https://democracy.cityoflondon.gov.uk/documents/s141077/SEF%2025-20%20Appendix%20%20-%20Cycling%20Strategy%20Final%20V1%206\\_10\\_2020.pdf](https://democracy.cityoflondon.gov.uk/documents/s141077/SEF%2025-20%20Appendix%20%20-%20Cycling%20Strategy%20Final%20V1%206_10_2020.pdf)

## Park Designations and Byelaws

There are several designations that apply to the Wanstead Park site:

- *Grade II\* on English Heritage's Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England* - This is a statutory designation of national importance, with Grade II\* being the second highest ranking.
- *Listed Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest* – statutory designations of national importance for The Temple (Grade II) and The Boathouse Grotto (Grade II).
- *Archaeological Priority Zone* designated by London Borough of Redbridge.
- *Wanstead Park Conservation Area* statutory designation by London Borough of Redbridge.

Wanstead Park also has its own byelaws and regulations in addition to the Epping Forest Act. The opening and closing of the park (8am until sunset) is no longer in practice, but as the byelaws were written when this was daily practice, they only pertain to the enclosed area of the park, shown in orange shading on the map.

The western side of Wanstead Park (blue shaded area on map) is covered by Epping Forest land byelaws.

Please see the attached map which outlines the current rules covering Wanstead Park. To view [click here](#).

## History of Cycling in Wanstead Park

Cycling has been prohibited in the enclosed area of Wanstead Park (shown in the red line and orange shaded area on the map) since the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. At that time, cycle racing within the park presented a management issue with concerns raised for the safety and enjoyment disturbance of other park visitors.

The Wanstead Park Byelaws and Regulations (1903) were amended, with several byelaws added in 1950, including byelaw (4) which outlined that:

*No person shall at any time drive or bring, or cause to be driven or brought, into the Park any vehicle other than an invalid wheeled chair or perambulator. Provided that this byelaw (a) shall not prohibit the wheeling of a bicycle, tricycle or similar machine in any part of the Park not set apart for the purpose of any game and (b) shall not prohibit, subject to the permission of the Superintendent being first obtained, the movement in the Park of any vehicle carrying goods or materials of any kind required in connection with, and for the purposes of, the Park and (c) shall not prohibit the riding of bicycles on those portions of the Park set apart by the Conservators for this purpose and indicated by a notice to that effect exhibited in the Park.*

In 2010, approval was given by Epping Forest and Commons Committee for the London Borough of Redbridge to install a designated cycle path. The path runs from Warren Road (N) to the junction of Northumberland Avenue with Park Avenue (S) and passes between Shoulder of Mutton Pond and Heronry Pond. Although it appears to be 'in the park' it is outside the designated park boundary (running along the

western line) and is thus exempt from the byelaw cycling prohibition. This path provides an active travel route from Aldersbrook to Wanstead, and vice versa. It is maintained by London Borough of Redbridge and will continue to remain.

In 2013, the decision was taken to trial a permissive cycle route (orange dashed line on map) on Park designated land to link the Park entrance opposite Wanstead Park Avenue, nearest the tea hut in the Park, with the cycle path. Signage outlining the 'permissive cycle path, pedestrians have priority' was installed to communicate the route for Park users. The trial period passed without any major issues being raised and use of the route became the norm.

## Cycling Options Consultation

We are consulting on **three** options for cycling in Wanstead Park:

**Option 1:** Do nothing: Leave the situation with cycling as it is, with cycling permitted in the Epping Forest part of Wanstead Park, but not permitted in the eastern area covered by Wanstead Park byelaws. The designated cycle route (marked blue on the map) will remain.

The implications for this option will be continued confusion on where you can and can't cycle in the Park which results in user conflict. This option does not address the issue of the continued growth of cycling in Wanstead Park despite the byelaw.

**Option 2:** Stop cycling – ban it in the park altogether (except for the Warren Road to Northumberland Road permanent route. The permissive route would be withdrawn.

This option will mean that a certain amount confusion would continue because there is still a route that you can cycle through the Park on Warren Road to Northumberland Avenue/Park Road junction.

This option would also have a significant implication for the western part of the Park (blue shaded on the map) covered by Epping Forest Act 1878 legislation. It would mean preventing cycling in a section of Epping Forest, contrary to most of the rest of the Forest.

**Option 3:** Allow cycling on paths throughout the whole park (both western Epping Forest land and eastern Wanstead Park bye law area).

If we proceed with option 3 – the confusion will be clarified as there will be one consistent rule covering the whole of Wanstead Park, that permissive cycling is allowed. Cyclists will be required to adhere to the code of conduct with priority given to pedestrians. User conflict should be reduced.

Option	Implications (positive)	Implications (negative)
Option 1 – do nothing	Easiest to implement - no action required	Does not provide clarity of use
	No byelaw changes required	Continued user conflict with new visitors potentially subject to a poor visitor experience
		Fails to address existing use and byelaw violations
Option 2 – ban cycling	Provides clarity of use	Restricts some user groups - in particular family recreational cycling in a safe environment
	Removes risk of pedestrian/cyclist collisions	Does not support modal shift towards more sustainable, ecologically sound travel for local journeys



		Legal exclusion of cycling on Epping Forest land may impact on wider area
Option 3 – permit cycling	Provides clarity of use	May increase user conflict if cycling code of conduct is not observed.
	Supports modal shift towards more sustainable, ecologically sound travel for local journeys	
	Increases access to visit the park by bicycle	May impact on ecology or heritage features if abused
	Implemented via permission, can easily be revoked at any time	

## Timeline

Three week online public consultation opens 4.00pm Friday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2021

Online consultation closes at 9.00 Mon 10<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

The results will be analysed and taken to the Epping Forest Consultative Committee, and then to the Epping Forest Commons Committee for a decision in mid-Summer. We hope to implement the changes by Autumn 2021.

Any changes will be reviewed 18 months after introduction, to assess how the changes are working.

Please see the frequently asked questions (or FAQs) document for answers to more detailed questions, which you can [view here](#).

## Questionnaire

**Q1. Having read about the reasons for changing cycling in Wanstead Park, which option do you support?**

**Option 1:** Do nothing – keep cycling the same with no changes, keeping cycling in the Epping Forest half of the park, but not allowing it in the Wanstead Park byelaw part. Keeping the Warren Road to Northumberland Avenue/Park Road designated cycle route.

**Option 2:** Stop cycling – ban it in the park except for Warren Road to Northumberland Avenue / Park Road junction route.

**Option 3:** Allow cycling on paths throughout the whole park.

**Q2. Do you have any other comments about cycling in Wanstead Park?**

**Q3. How often do you use Wanstead Park?**

Everyday

2-3 times a week

Monthly

Infrequently

**Q4. How do you get to the park?**

- Walk
- Cycle
- Public Transport
- Private vehicle (including owned vehicle, taxi or private hire vehicle)
- Other

**Q5. What do you do when visiting the park? (please tick all that apply)**

- Walking
- Dog Walking
- Jogging/ Running
- Cycling
- Socialising – meeting friends and family
- Visiting the Tea Hut
- Nature watching/appreciation e.g bluebells
- Visiting heritage areas like the Temple, Grotto or other
- Children's play activities
- Other

**Q6. How long do you spend in the park on an average visit?**

- 0 – 2 hrs
- 2 – 4 hrs
- 4 – 6 hrs
- Over 6 hrs

The next section is about you to help us understand more about the people using or not using Wanstead Park.

We ask these questions because we are keen to see fair representation in the responses to our consultation exercise and to be able to see that our proposals do not adversely impact on any one particular group.

This section is optional, but we would really appreciate it if you have time to fill in the questions, it should only take a minute.

All data stored by us is kept, maintained, and used in compliance with the City of London Data Protect Policy, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and all other relevant legislation.

**About you**

**Q7. Which age range are you?**

0 -10 years

11 – 20 years

21 – 35 years

36 – 45 years

46 – 55 years

56 – 65 years

66 – 75 years

Over 76 years

**Q8. What is your ethnic group?**

- White
- White – Irish
- White – English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish, British
- White – Scottish
- Irish Traveller
- Roma, Gypsy or Traveller
- Other White background

- Black or Black British – Caribbean
- Black or Black British – African
- Other Black background

- Asian or Asian British – Indian
- Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
- Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
- Chinese
- Other Asian background

- Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
- Mixed – White and Black African
- Mixed – White and Asian
- Other mixed background

- Arab
- Other ethnic background (Please state)

- Not known
- Prefer not to say

**Q8. What is your gender?**

- Male
- Female
- Other (Please state)
- Prefer not to say

**Q9. Do you have an impairment, health condition or learning difference that has a substantial or long-term impact on your ability to carry out day to day activities?**

(tick all that apply)

- No known impairment, health condition or learning difference
- A long-standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy
- A mental health difficulty, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder
- A physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using your arms or using a wheelchair or crutches
- A social/communication impairment such as a speech and language impairment or Asperger's syndrome/other autistic spectrum disorder
- A specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D
- Blind or have a visual impairment uncorrected by glasses
- D/deaf or have a hearing impairment
- An impairment, health condition or learning difference that is not listed above (specify if you wish)
- Prefer not to say

**Q10. What are the first three parts of your postcode, for example, E11 1AT, would be E11.**

**Q11. Please enter your email address below if you would like to receive more information from Epping Forest Charity regarding Wanstead Park. Your details will only be used for Wanstead Park communication.**

**Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.**

# TEST OF RELEVANCE: EQUALITY ANALYSIS (EA)



The screening process of using the Test of Relevance template aims to assist in determining whether a full Equality Analysis (EA) is required. The EA template and guidance plus information on the Equality Act and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) can be found on Colnet at: <http://colnet/Departments/Pages/News/Equality-and-Diversity.aspx>

## Introduction

**The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) is set out in the Equality Act 2010 (s.149). This requires public authorities, in the exercise of their functions, to have ‘due regard’ to the need to:**

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, and
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

The characteristics protected by the Equality Act 2010 are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership.
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex (gender)
- Sexual orientation

What is due regard?	How to demonstrate compliance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It involves considering the aims of the duty in a way that is proportionate to the issue at hand</li> <li>• Ensuring that real consideration is given to the aims and the impact of policies with rigour and with an open mind in such a way that it influences the final decision</li> <li>• Due regard should be given before and during policy formation and when a decision is taken including cross cutting ones as the impact can be cumulative.</li> </ul> <p>The general equality duty does not specify how public authorities should analyse the effect of their business activities on different groups of people. However, case law has established that equality analysis is an important way public authorities can demonstrate that they are meeting the requirements.</p> <p>Even in cases where it is considered that there are no implications of proposed policy and decision making on the PSED it is good practice to record the reasons why and to include these in reports to committees where decisions are being taken.</p> <p>It is also good practice to consider the duty in relation to current policies, services and procedures, even if there is no plan to change them.</p>	<p>Case law has established the following principles apply to the PSED:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Knowledge</b> – the need to be aware of the requirements of the Equality Duty with a conscious approach and state of mind.</li> <li>• <b>Sufficient Information</b> – must be made available to the decision maker</li> <li>• <b>Timeliness</b> – the Duty must be complied with before and at the time that a particular policy is under consideration or decision is taken not after it has been taken.</li> <li>• <b>Real consideration</b> – consideration must form an integral part of the decision-making process. It is not a matter of box-ticking; it must be exercised in substance, with rigour and with an open mind in such a way that it influences the final decision.</li> <li>• <b>Sufficient information</b> – the decision maker must consider what information he or she has and what further information may be needed in order to give proper consideration to the Equality Duty</li> <li>• <b>No delegation</b> - public bodies are responsible for ensuring that any third parties which exercise functions on their behalf are capable of complying with the Equality Duty, are required to comply with it, and that they do so in practice. It is a duty that cannot be delegated.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Review</b> – the duty is continuing applying when a policy is developed and decided upon, but also when it is implemented and reviewed.</li> </ul> <p><b>However there is no requirement to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produce equality analysis or an equality impact assessment</li> <li>• Indiscriminately collect diversity data where equalities issues are not significant</li> <li>• Publish lengthy documents to show compliance</li> <li>• Treat everyone the same. Rather, it requires public bodies to think about people's different needs and how these can be met</li> <li>• Make services homogeneous or to try to remove or ignore differences between people.</li> </ul> <p><b>The key points about demonstrating compliance with the duty are to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collate sufficient evidence to determine whether changes being considered will have a potential impact on different groups</li> <li>• Ensure decision makers are aware of the analysis that has been undertaken and what conclusions have been reached on the possible implications</li> <li>• Keep adequate records of the full decision making process</li> </ul>
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**Test of Relevance screening**

The Test of Relevance screening is a short exercise that involves looking at the overall proposal and deciding if it is relevant to the PSED.

**Note: If the proposal is of a significant nature and it is apparent from the outset that a full equality analysis will be required, then it is not necessary to complete the Test of Relevance screening template and the full equality analysis and be completed.**

The questions in the Test of Relevance Screening Template to help decide if the proposal is equality relevant and whether a detailed equality analysis is required. The key question is whether the proposal is likely to be relevant to any of the protected characteristics.

Quite often, the answer may not be so obvious and service-user or provider information will need to be considered to make a preliminary judgment. For example, in considering licensing arrangements, the location of the premises in question and the demographics of the area could affect whether section 149 considerations come into play.

There is no one size fits all approach but the screening process is designed to help fully consider the circumstances.

**What to do**

In general, the following questions all feed into whether an equality analysis is required:

- How many people is the proposal likely to affect?
- How significant is its impact?
- Does it relate to an area where there are known inequalities?

At this initial screening stage, the point is to try to assess obvious negative or positive impact.

On completion of the Test of Relevance screening, officers should:

- Ensure they have fully completed and the Director has signed off the Test of Relevance Screening Template.
- Store the screening template safely so that it can be retrieved if for example, Members request to see it, or there is a freedom of information request or there is a legal challenge.

If a negative/adverse impact has been identified (actual or potential) during completion of the screening tool, a full equality analysis must be undertaken.

If no negative / adverse impacts arising from the proposal it is not necessary to undertake a full equality analysis.

- If the outcome of the Test of Relevance Screening identifies no or minimal impact refer to it in the Implications section of the report and include reference to it in Background Papers when reporting to Committee or other decision making process.

1. **Proposal / Project Title:** Wanstead Park Extension of Permissive Cycling to the whole site

2. **Brief summary (include main aims, proposed outcomes, recommendations / decisions sought):**

The aim of the project is to address the confusing situation regarding cycling in Wanstead Park. Currently the site is covered by two sets of byelaws – western side permitting cycling (Epping Forest byelaw land), the eastern side not (Wanstead Park byelaw land). There is one designated cycle path and another permissive cycle path.

Due to the range of different rules covering the site, many people visiting are unaware that you can’t cycle in the eastern half of the Park. The current situation causes user conflict, between people that are aware of the rules and those that are not. This situation also makes it difficult for Epping Forest staff to enforce the rules.

The proposal is to extend permissive cycling across the whole site – so there is one consistent rule, that cycling is allowed on paths in Wanstead Park. No new designated cycle paths will be created as part of this proposal. Paths will be ‘shared use’, with no plans to change surface construction of any shared paths. It is hoped that this change will reduce the rare occurrences of user conflict.

Currently in Epping Forest land, cyclists are required to adhere to the Cycling Code of Conduct. This states that pedestrians have priority, use paths considerately and let other users know you are there with a greeting or bell. This will be promoted in Wanstead Park, being displayed prominently if the extension goes ahead.

3. **Considering the equality aims (eliminate unlawful discrimination; advance equality of opportunity; foster good relations), indicate for each protected group whether there may be a positive impact, negative (adverse) impact or no impact arising from the proposal:**

Protected Characteristic (Equality Group) <input type="checkbox"/>	Positive Impact	Negative Impact	No Impact	Briefly explain your answer. Consider evidence, data and any consultation.
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>There could be a positive impact as more of the Park is able to be used for cycling in a safe environment away from vehicles by younger children, or people just learning to cycle.</p> <p>In total 1,009 people responded to the consultation. Of these, 64.5% (648 people) made further comments. Of the 648 comments, many respondents made several points in their individual response. The figures which follow are presented as a</p>

percentage of the overall number of points made of which there were 1,142. These responses were grouped into themes.

In total over 7% (85 points) made supported the park being a safer place for children to cycle, also saying it would provide a safer route for children traveling to and from school.

It could be viewed that by allowing permissive cycling across the whole park, and ensuring cyclists understand about the cycling code of conduct that there will be clarity on what is acceptable in Wanstead Park – and thereby reducing user conflict, fostering good relations.

Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Providing an environment where there are no vehicles – giving greater safety for individuals with a disability. At the end of this document is all comments relating to protected characteristics. The majority of points made – 54% that bicycles are used as a mobility aid and allowing cycling will have a positive impact..</p> <p>There is the opposing view represented with 46% of points made concerned that allowing wider permissive cycling could have a negative effect for people that are less stable on their feet, with poor eyesight or poor hearing that cyclist passing by quickly could impact on these individuals feeling of safety.</p>
Gender Reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Marriage and Civil Partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Pregnancy and Maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Religion or Belief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Sex (i.e gender)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Possible positive impact on women, who may feel safer while cycling rather than walking. This is supported by one comment, where a woman said she feels safer cycling around the park rather than walking.</p>
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	



<b>4. There are no negative/adverse impact(s)</b> Please briefly explain and provide evidence to support this decision:		There are potentially perceived negative impacts by more elderly park users who feel less safe with cyclist if they are travelling at speed or do not make themselves know to other users. However we have a Cycling Code of Conduct which outlines courteous cycling behaviour and that pedestrians have priority throughout the park. We will implement a communications plan when the change is implemented informing park users and cyclists of the Code of conduct and that Pedestrians have priority.	
<b>5. Are there positive impacts of the proposal on any equality groups?</b> Please briefly explain how these are in line with the equality aims:		From the consultation results it has been shown that should permissive cycling be allowed through Wanstead Park this would open a new route that is suitable for older cyclists, children and people with a disability. Through the consultation it has become apparent that bicycles are used as non standard mobility aids.	
<b>6. As a result of this screening, is a full EA necessary? (Please check appropriate box using <input type="checkbox"/>)</b>	Yes	No	<b>Briefly explain your answer:</b> No, because perceived negative impacts can be mitigated by publicising the code of conduct and pedestrian priority. The ToR has been updated with the consultation results which have been analysed. If extended cycling is implemented – this will be reviewed 18 months after operation with the ToR updated.
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>7. Name of Lead Officer:</b> Sarah Reid		<b>Job title:</b> Community Engagement Officer (Lakes and Ponds)	<b>Date of completion:</b> 14 May 2021

Signed off by Department Director :	Name:	Date:
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Below are all comments made relating to a group with a protected characteristic during the online consultation.

Additional Comments Made During Consultation	Negative issue if allow cycling with individual	Positive impact on individual
Park use has increased massively over the last year to the extent that we unsafe going in the park at the weekend. I often lose my balance when I have to move out the way in a hurry for cyclists and runners who brush past with no warning, who clearly feel they have right of way. Although I am quite young and don't look dodderly I have a degenerative spinal condition and walking is one of the few things I can enjoy. If everyone who used the park cycled there would not be enough room.	1	
I am a wheelchair user and last year I was hit by a cyclist whilst being pushed around the Ornamental Waters by my son. I have also had a number of other near misses As a result I am very wary of going back into the park.	1	

I live opposite the park and use it daily. I have early stage dementia and find it difficult to walk with cyclists constantly riding at me and not allowing me time to move out the way.	1	
<p>This survey is completed as a keen cyclist. Too keen if you ask my wife. If there were no other areas within the local area to cycle I would have voted to allow cycling but Wanstead Flats, Bushwood and Hollow Ponds are all available to cycle off road. As your survey preamble states Wanstead Park is the remains of the formal gardens of the old Wanstead House. The park is on the at risk register and needs attention in a number of areas. The increase in cycle traffic has not helped this and has worsened it in many cases. The path around the Ornamental Waters after rain is almost impassable in areas and cycling has exacerbated this. Throughout the last year cyclists have not stuck to the designated paths but have been cycling through the woodland causing more damage to the woodland. How is allowing cycling fitting in with the introduction of cattle into the park. Last year we had cyclists believing they were John Wayne trying to round up the cattle on the prairie causing distress to the animals, especially when one was pregnant. The standard of cycling has not always been good with inconsiderate cycling on the increase. I have witnessed cyclists going to fast, riding at pedestrians forcing them to get out of the way and a number of near collisions. Also there has been what appears to be cycling clubs using the paths on masse. The park has seen an increase in pedestrian footfall many of these are young families and a more elderly demographic who find it difficult to move out of the way. My wife has early onset dementia and she has been nearly hit a number of times as her reactions are not as fast as the average person. Allowing cycling seems to penalise these diverse communities for the benefit of one. There has already been one cycling fatality in the park in the last 5 years. What does as to the type of bike that will be allowed. Electric bikes, electric scooters and surf boards have all been used in the park. I have access to an e-bike with a top speed of 35mph. If cycling is allowed then will I be able to use this cycle?</p>	1	
Is dangerous. Spoils walks. Difficult enough for people with poor eyesight and hearing.	1	
Disabled visitors should be able to visit without being injured because of cyclists cycling at speed without any consideration for others. There are enough places for cyclists throughout the forest and cycling should be banned completely in Wanstead Park. Cyclists are a big problem at Connaught Water where cycling is prohibited but nothing is done about it. Please ban cyclists in Wanstead Park so that disabled visitors can safely visit without getting injured. Cyclists are a big problem around the ornamental lake where they cycle without any consideration for pedestrians. They should be encouraged to use the thousands of acres of cycle paths in the forest and to keep away from Connaught Water and Wanstead Park which are two of the few places where disabled visitors should be able to visit safely.	1	
Cyclists are a real danger to pedestrians especially disabled ones when they cycle in the park. Many cyclists cycle at speed especially around the Ornamental lake without giving way to pedestrians. There are plenty of other places in Epping Forest for cyclists to use. They are a big danger to disabled visitors in Wanstead Park at Connaught Water where they continue to use the accessible path.	1	

It is dangerous for pedestrians with people cycling in Wanstead Park and at my age I cannot get out of the way quickly. Any ban on cycling should be enforced.	1	
The eastern section of the Park is currently used by cyclists. No one 'polices' the area. I am deaf and have had some very near misses with cyclists who approach from behind and do not use their cycle bells to warn. I do not think the eastern area of WP is suitable for cycling as it is heavily used by pedestrians, joggers, families, dog walking. Accidents waiting to happen I believe. If you choose to extend the ban on cyclists then you need to police this. I am not willing to face the inevitable abuse.	1	
yes. cyclists are using the pedestrian walks around the ornamental ponds. there are no wardens or other methods of controlling the use. we have had a number of 'near misses'. my partner is deaf so cannot hear cyclists behind her. no one uses a bell. i am physically disabled so cannot get out of the way quickly.	1	
I have a longstanding disability leading to poor mobility. It is important for me to feel safe using paths and unfortunately this is not the case with cyclists around. During COVID, having the park nearby had been a real lifeline for me, but I am very worried about extending cycling. I often don't hear cyclists approaching from behind, and the first I know is when a cyclist passes me at speed and often very close (which has been a worry during COVID). I have had to stop using some of the narrower paths near the lake because of this issue. I can't see how this would be improved by asking people to follow a cycling code, as I can already see that plenty of cyclists are not fully aware of the needs of pedestrians. I am really worried that this will limit my access as a pedestrian.	1	
I feel safer cycling around Vs walking alone as a woman.		1
As a cyclist with. Obility problems I struggle to use the part of the designated park to the west in the winter because it gets very slippery. I would love to be able to go straight from Wanstead Park Avenue to Warren .road using the disabled access route and straight across by the tea hut legally.		1
I am a disabled person. My primary mobility aid is an e cargo cycle. I strongly support these changes but formally request that they are seen as a first step towards the writing and implementation of a full inclusive cycling strategy for all open space under the control of the City of London. I recommend the Bridge Trust is directly involved so that this becomes a very long term strategic project. I strongly recommend the principles of CROW LTN120 and Wheels for Wellbeing.		1

I have visited the park nearly every day and see no racing or disruptive cycling behaviour. I just see happy families and individuals cycling responsibly and carefully around pedestrians, who also seem happy to see them there. It is a vital place for children to improve their cycling skills away from busy roads. I am fully in favour of extending cycling to all parts of the park. You really need to improve the texture of the pathways in the park to enable this. It is really difficult for wheelchair users and people pushing buggies to use the pathways as they are so stony. Recent increases in visitors and bad weather have meant the surfaces are terrible. You should consider tarmacing the surfaces with a smooth surface so that people of all abilities can use the park in comfort		
Shared use works really well in similar greenspaces (e.g. Hackney/Walthamstow/Tottenham Marshes, Millfield Park, Lloyd Park etc.) Increased cycling permissions will make the park more accessible to people who rely on cycles for mobility.		1
Yes cycling will increase inclusivity. I struggle to walk but cycle and enjoy the park.		1
It has meant the ability to enjoy nature when walking had been difficult due to health reasons! Thank you		1
The space should be shared and cycling is a good activity to get fit, especially for some people where walking is hard.		1
Our bylaws are out of date and need to be Brought in line with the Equality Act 2010. To exclude cycling from any park or open space is discriminatory towards disabled people and the older and more frail Among us, who cannot walk and use other types of wheels, such as bicycles or scooters to get around. Not everyone is in a wheelchair!!! All parks should be accessible by all, not the select few. Everyone has a right to enjoy nature. I am disabled and my only option is my electric bike if I want to have a nice stroll in a park with my husband and the dog. I simply cannot go on foot. Everyone should respect each other's life and their requirements to enjoy life. If there is a cycling code of conduct that's great but perhaps have a "keep dogs on a lead" at all times as well, as the sheer volume of Dogs off lead is quite dangerous. I am sick of irresponsible dog owners pets chasing my dog and bounding up to us and jumping up also as they can hurt our little dog and me!!!		1
Many people, myself included can cycle far further than we can walk, our bikes are a 'rolling walking stick', I currently feel excluded from much of the park.		1
I cannot walk the entire park but I can cycle it so cycling allows me to enjoy the entire park		1
Knowing that I can cycle through the park to Wanstead from my house on Park Rd means it saves me enough time to be able to cycle rather than drive a car on the roads. So it effectively removes cars from the local roads to ease congestion. Secondly, I have a medical condition in which I can't walk on my right foot and being able to cycle means less impact on the joint. It would be a pleasure to be able cycle through the park as a form of enjoyment and relaxation.		1

We live locally. We do not own a car. My son is disabled, but I can carry him on my bike. Permitting cycling throughout the park would open up substantial new opportunities for us to show him more parts of the park.		1
Guidance should recognise the use of standard and non standard cycles as mobility aids.		1
<b>Total numbers</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Percentage</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>Overall Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>1% =</b>	<b>0.24</b>	

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# Epping Forest

Registered Charity

## Cycling Code of Conduct

- Use the shared use trails considerately to ensure the safety of others. Let people know you are there with a greeting or bell. Pedestrians and horse riders have priority.
- Approach corners and descents with caution; dogs, wildlife and cattle may cross your path unexpectedly.
- Racing bicycles (including digital KOM/QOM 'chasing') is prohibited in Epping Forest.
- Building or digging jumps or berms and tree cutting is prohibited.
- Leave no trace. Use the existing routes and avoid skidding to prevent erosion. Take your litter home.
- Leave gates as you find them, to prevent cattle straying.
- Respect 'No cycling' restrictions that exist to protect ancient monuments, easy access paths and delicate habitats.

[www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/eppingforest](http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/eppingforest)  
020 8532 1010



@CoLEppingForest



Epping Forest City of London



ColLEppingForest

This is one of  
14 green spaces  
managed by the  
City of London at  
little cost to the  
general public.



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<b>Committee(s):</b> Epping Forest & Commons Committee - For Decision	<b>Dated:</b> 12/07/2021
<b>Subject:</b> Climate Action Strategy – Open Spaces “Carbon Removals” – Site Plans 2021 (SEF 30/21)	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	11
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>If so, how much?</b>	See Committee report SEF 23/21 for current budgetary information on this project
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	Climate Action Strategy - <i>Carbon Removals</i> approved budget
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?</b>	<b>Y</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Colin Buttery, Director of Open Spaces	<b>For decision</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Sally Gadsdon, Epping Forest, Open Spaces	

## Summary

This report provides further information on Phase 1 land management works for the first nominated sites to be utilised to support the Open Spaces Department’s *Carbon Removals* project, which helps deliver the City of London Corporation’s Climate Action Strategy. The aim of the *Carbon Removals* project is to increase the amount of carbon that habitats across the Open Spaces remove and isolate from the atmosphere to contribute to tackling climate change and to meet the City Corporation’s *net zero* target by 2027; the Government’s Nationally Determined Carbon Contribution and the 2015 Paris international agreement on climate change.

The first sites proposed to be utilized to support this project include:

- 1) **Netherhouse** (Compartment 61) for which the conversion from an arable field to a wildflower meadow with edge scrub, ponds and larger, wider hedges is recommended; and
- 2) **Gifford’s Meadow/Bottom** (Compartment 53), which it is recommended, subject to an Ecological Impact Assessment, would be planted with a small number of trees to supplement existing natural regeneration and within which a new pond would be created. The recommended proposal also includes the proposed commemoration of the past Lord Mayor, the late Sir Roger Gifford’s work to raise funds for the conservation work at the nearby site of Gifford’s Wood.

## **Recommendation(s)**

Members are asked to:

- approve the Option 1 plan for Netherhouse and approve the revival of the field name to 'Patmore's Field'.
- approve the Option 1 outline plan for Gifford's Meadow/Bottom and approve a final name for the site.

## **Main Report**

### **Background**

1. The report to your Committee in March (SEF 10/21b) presented the City of London Corporation's Climate Action Strategy (CAS) and Open Spaces' *Carbon Removals Project* (CRP) within that programme, which outlines the City Corporation's commitment to tackling its carbon emissions as its response to the climate change crisis.
2. The CAS reflect work by Government to reduce emissions in 2030 by at least 68% compared to 1990 levels through the UK's latest Nationally Determined Contribution, together with the legally binding international treaty obligations outlined in the Paris Agreement (2015) to limit global warming to well below 2, preferably to 1.5 degrees Celsius, compared to pre-industrial levels.
3. The CRP focuses on increasing the amount of carbon that habitats remove from the atmosphere (termed carbon sequestration) across the Open Spaces where such change in land management will have a net increase in ecosystem services and biodiversity. This paper provides an update on presents site plans for the first sites to be utilized to support the CRP.
4. Further to an initial analysis of the availability of opportunities at Open Spaces sites, Epping Forest and the Buffer Land offers some immediate opportunities. The report to your Committee (SEF 23/21) in May 2021 outlined the first proposed phase of works which include tendering for studies to calculate carbon sequestration and the opportunities to increase sequestration across the Open Spaces. This research would be accompanied by further studies to understand the impacts of these opportunities on biodiversity and the other ecosystem services these habitats could provide. The report also described the Phase 1 land management works, which this report provides further details on.

### **Current Position**

5. The first sites proposed to be included in the first year (2021 – 2022) Phase I land management works of the CRP are located at Netherhouse and Gifford's Meadow on the Epping Forest Buffer Lands and in Epping Forest respectively.
6. Netherhouse is currently managed under a short-term Farming Business Tenancy (FBT), the termination of which was approved by your Committee last

September (SEF 19/20). The tenant will be vacating the site after the harvest has been taken by September 2021. The field is 17 hectares in extent and is a single arable field, with conservation grassland corner, grass field margins and ancient hedgerows.

7. Gifford's Meadow/Bottom is one of three fields purchased by the Epping Forest Fund to support the Lord Mayor's Appeal (2012-13) during the term of Lord Mayor Sir Roger Gifford. The other two fields were planted with trees and scrub and became Gifford's Wood. Work is now proposed in the meadow (see *Proposals* below) with a view to commemorating the dedication of the late Alderman Sir Roger Gifford to Epping Forest through his Lord Mayor's Appeal, his service on the Epping Forest & Commons Committee, and his wider commitment to improving the environment in his role as Chairman of the Green Finance Institute.

## **Proposals**

8. Netherhouse (Compartment 61 – buffer land)  
This site sits in a wider ancient woods and field landscape with the nearby Trueloves and Fernhills (Compartment 17) grassland-scrub mosaic. The creation of a wildflower meadow at Netherhouse would extend the area of high nature conservation value grassland and scrub.
9. Work funded by the CRP would begin on site in September 2021 with the sowing of a wild-flower meadow. Other planned work would include pond creation and the installation of water troughs to allow conservation grazing. Over time the hedges and scrub would be allowed to widen as they contain many important tree species including ancient pear, oak pollards and many willows.
10. A report by Anderson for the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM 2021) states that in reviewing land management for increasing carbon sequestration, diverse species grasslands offer carbon capture potential equivalent to that of some woodlands, with 80% of carbon stored in soils in such habitats. Most importantly, reversion from arable to grassland with no further disruption to the soils is likely to provide a much more rapid net gain in carbon stores in the soils than any tree planting and speed in carbon capture is of the essence given the present crisis.
11. It is further proposed that the site name should be changed from Netherhouse back to its historic name of Patmore's Field. The current tenant, whose family has farmed in the area for over a century, confirms that this had always been the local name prior to the fields purchase by the City Corporation as Buffer Land.
12. Gifford's Meadow/Bottom (Compartment 53)  
This small and sheltered grassland site (3.5ha), adjacent to the newly-planted Gifford's Wood and ancient green lanes (integral parts of Epping Forest), could benefit from planting with a small number of open-grown oaks and scrub species to consolidate the scrub-grass mosaic habitats in the area. Some trees, especially the oaks would be allowed to become the veteran trees of the

future. The scrub in the planting would provide a pollen and nectar source as well as nesting and food source for other species.

13. Any planting, however, would need to consider the existing grassland flora and an Ecological Impact Assessment would need to be carried out to ensure that existing scarce grassland flowers, like Sneezewort, would not be lost as a result of any planting work. More open tree planting or use of the existing oak natural regeneration on site, would allow the protection of the existing grassland flora on the upper parts of the site. Also, importantly, the carbon store present in the roots of this flora and the grasses would be preserved in what is clearly an old established sward. Tree planting, although eventually storing more carbon above ground, can initially release more carbon than it captures when in old grass swards.
14. Given this and the small size of the site, limiting any planting to a much lower number of trees would not result in any notable difference in carbon sequestration in relation to the CRP target. However, such an approach would allow existing flora to be protected whilst adding some new structural interest to the habitat and for visitors' interest.
15. It is hoped, with the invisible fence GPS collars technology, that the site could be grazed in the future, which would add to the biodiversity enhancements and better preserve the grassland sward and consolidate its root mass.
16. It is proposed to seek funding or in-kind support to contribute to the costs of both sites if possible. Given any grants are likely to be of low value, it is recommended that delegation be granted to the Director of Open Spaces (or successor) to approve any grants, other funding or in-kind support.
17. A flexible approach to the long term (>10 years) management of the sites would take account of how they develop in their response to management and climate change. This approach is important in the long-term to ensure that the management is adapted to match resources and for the benefit of an appropriate balance between carbon sequestration, biodiversity and ecosystem services.
18. Alongside the work on these two sites, consultants will be commissioned during summer 2021 to undertake a review of the Open Spaces habitats, by spring 2022, and identify further opportunities to increase carbon sequestration or prevent/reduce carbon/greenhouse gas losses to meet the CRP target.

## **Options**

19. Netherhouse Option 1. Sow a wildflower meadow, create pond(s), install water to allow the site to be grazed long-term and allow the ancient hedges and scrub to develop over time preserving carbon and providing habitat for red-listed and other bird species such as Yellowhammer and Cuckoo. Estimated cost would be a maximum £80,000 approved as part of the CRP budget.
20. The proposed benefits would be the creation of a habitat of high nature conservation value that has an increased carbon sequestration potential of

approximately 0.03 ktCO<sub>2</sub>-e. The site would conserve, and should enhance, the existing breeding Skylark population – a UK red-listed species.

21. The reversion to grassland would also preserve the historic Patmore's Field and it is, therefore, further proposed that as part of this project that this name is adopted formally for Compartment 61. The costs above include the contingency of a second sowing in spring, but this is not expected to be required. **This option is recommended.**
22. Netherhouse Option 2. Plant the site with trees. Estimated cost c. £105,000. The potential benefits would be a higher increase in above-ground carbon sequestration but only in the medium to long term but with an associated risk of carbon losses from the soil, which would need to be assessed. Such planting work would remove the open habitats for the red-listed breeding Yellowhammer and Skylarks. **This option is not recommended.**
23. Gifford's Meadow/Bottom Option 1. Subject to an Ecological Impact Assessment of the grassland flora in summer 2021, consider the planting of the lower part of this small site with a low density of trees and scrub with the creation of a pond allowing visitors access across the majority of the site. The potential benefits would be the retention of the known grassland floral diversity, , an increase in pollen and nectar from the planted scrub and maintained visitor access. This mosaic planting is likely to increase the biodiversity of the site and ecosystem services. Estimated cost < £15,000 using the approved CRP budget. The name of the site would need to be approved prior to any event. **This option is recommended.**
24. Gifford's Meadow/Bottom Option 2. Plant the site with a dense block of trees. Estimated cost c. £15-20,000 using the approved CRP budget. The potential benefits would be a higher medium-term increase in carbon sequestration than Option 1, although on a very small scale, However, the grassland flora would be lost from site representing a significant loss of biodiversity. This option would also not provide the edge habitats that would enhance the insect and bird biodiversity as in Option 1. The name of the site would need to be approved prior to any event. **This option is not recommended.**
25. Gifford Meadow/Bottom Option 3. Do nothing and leave the site in current condition, with annually cut grassland and possible future conservation grazing, as with Option 1. However, this option would not allow the opportunity or occasion to commemorate Sir Roger Gifford or the start of the CRP. **This option is not recommended.**

## Key Data

26. The Open Spaces Department is estimated to already offset approximately 16ktCO<sub>2</sub>-e of the City Corporation's emissions (~44%).

27. The City Corporation's Climate Action Strategy aims to reach *net zero* by cancelling out or offsetting its scope 1 and 2 emissions, amounting to a total of 36ktCO<sub>2</sub>-e annually.
28. The target for the CRP is to increase sequestration by 1.4ktCO<sub>2</sub>-e.
29. Netherhouse (Compartment 61) is forecast to increase carbon sequestration by an estimated 0.03ktCO<sub>2</sub>-e per year.
30. Gifford's Meadow/ Gifford's Bottom is forecast to increase carbon sequestration by an estimated 0.01ktCO<sub>2</sub>-e per year.

## **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

### Strategic implications

31. The Carbon Action Strategy is complementary to London-wide and national efforts to reduced emissions and improve resilience of our communities and urban spaces in the face of the Climate Emergency. This includes the draft London Plan, the Greater London Authority's London City Resilience Strategy 2020, the UK Committee on Climate Change Climate Risk Assessment 2017 and National Adaptation Programme, as well as the landscape of policies set out by government.
32. The CRP within the Climate Action Strategy will meet Outcome 11 of the Corporate Plan: "*We will have clean air, land and water and a thriving and sustainable natural environment*". The Climate Action Strategy builds upon existing City Corporation strategies and policies including: The Responsible Business Strategy 2018-2023, the Climate Mitigation Strategy, the Carbon Descent Plan, the Responsible Investment Policy, the City Procurement Strategy 2020-2024, the Local Plan 2015, the draft City Plan 2036, the Transport Strategy 20218-2043, the Air Quality Strategy 2015-2020, the Transition to a Zero Emission Fleet Policy, the Renewable Electric Policy & Sourcing Strategy.
33. By aiming for net zero, the City Corporation will be contributing to the UK government's Nationally Determined Contribution, which commits the UK to reducing economy-wide greenhouse gas emissions by at least 68% by 2030. This legal commitment has been made by the UK Government under the UK Climate Change Act 2008 (revised 2019), which has enshrined in law both a target of net-zero emissions by 2050 and requirements for measures for climate adaptation.

### Financial implications

34. This project is funded through the approved CRP in the City Corporation's Climate Action Strategy. However, there are a number of external funding opportunities which may be available to contribute to the cost of delivering the works long-term and maintaining the site after creation. These will be explored, and appropriate funding applications made, when possible, to reduce the amount requested from the Climate Action Strategy for any one project, allowing for additional carbon sequestration or storage work to be undertaken elsewhere.

#### Resource implications

35. The initial project management is being undertaken by the Environmental Stewardship Officer at Epping Forest and Conservation and Trees Manager at North London Open Spaces. A project manager post is in the process of being recruited to manage the CRP.
36. The initial delivery of works will be undertaken by the Epping Forest Division, with further works and site maintenance by a CRP team to be headed up by the Project Manager. These new posts are being funded by the Climate Action Strategy.

#### Legal implications

37. Certain qualifying work may require an assessment under the Environmental Impact Assessment as required under Environmental Impact Assessment (Forestry) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999, as amended.

#### Risk implications

38. None.

#### Equalities implications

39. An Equality Impact Assessment Test of Relevance was presented in the Gateway 2 report to your committee (SEF 23/21) which identified some potential positive impacts and no negative impacts. The positive impacts would be provided with the creation of newly available public open spaces and additional public goods through increased ecosystem services.

#### Climate implications

40. The CRP is part of the City Corporation's Climate Action Strategy which demonstrates the City Corporation's commitment to reducing its contribution to factors that cause climate change and adapting to the impact of a changing climatic conditions, including extreme weather events.

#### Security implications

41. None.

#### Charity Implications

42. Epping Forest is a registered charity (number 232990). Charity Law obliges Members to ensure that the decisions they take in relation to the Charity must be taken in the best interests of the Charity.
43. In carrying out its charity trustee duties in respect of its various Open Spaces charities, the City Corporation as trustee must have regard only to whether proposals and their effects are in the best interests of each of the charities (not to whether they benefit any wider City Corporation interests, for example by helping achieve *net zero* carbon emission targets for the wider City Corporation).

44. In respect of the proposals in this report, there are clear benefits to the charitable purposes of the various open spaces charities for the reasons set out in this report including, protection of habitats and amelioration of adverse environmental impacts on the open spaces. The strategic aims of the wider City Corporation are explained in this report for context. However, pursuit of the proposals is considered fully justified on the sole basis of the benefits to the Open Spaces' charities.

### **Epping Forest Consultative Committee**

45. This report was not presented to the Epping Forest Consultative Committee due to lack of time after developing the outline budgets for the sites through the *Gateway* approval process for the CRP. However, the Consultative Committee discussed the overall approach of the CRP on the Buffer Lands at its February 2021 meeting, as reported to your Committee in March.

46. At the Consultative Committee meeting, its members agreed that there should be recognition that agricultural habitats may also have value for specialist farmland wildlife and, therefore, there would be a need to try to ensure retention of these species. Skylarks and Yellowhammers - both UK red-listed bird species - were highlighted in the Consultative Committee's discussion as being amongst the conservation priorities.

47. The work proposed at Netherhouse (Patmore's Field) seeks to address this by maintaining optimum open habitats for these birds whilst sequestering and storing more carbon at the same time. These and other specialist farmland red-listed birds are not present as breeding species at Gifford's Meadow.

### **Conclusions**

48. Details on the first two sites to be included in the CRP are presented. The budgets for this work would be provided through the approved CRP separate from local risk. The reversion of the arable Netherhouse to wildflower grassland provides an excellent opportunity to prevent further losses of carbon from ploughed soils while capturing carbon rapidly and considerably enhancing the biodiversity of this historic field known as Patmore's prior to the city Corporation's purchase of the land some decades ago.

49. Gifford's Meadow or Gifford's Bottom would allow the commemoration of the late Sir Roger Gifford. These works will contribute to the project's target of increasing carbon sequestration of the Open Spaces to assist the City Corporation's aim of reaching *net zero* emissions by 2027 through its Climate Action Strategy. At the same time the recommended options proposed here seek to maximise the biodiversity benefits based on the existing wildlife values of the two sites.



**Background Papers**

Climate Action Strategy – *Carbon Removals* Project (SEF 23/21), a Gateway 2 report, 10 May 2021

Climate Action Strategy – Open Spaces “Carbon Removals” (SEF 10/21b), 8 March 2021

Farm Business Tenancy reviews at Netherhouse and Copped Hall North (SEF 19/20), 6 July 2020

**Dr Sally Gadsdon**

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<b>Committee(s):</b> Epping Forest and Commons Committee – For decision	<b>Dated:</b> 12/07/2021
<b>Subject:</b> Epping Forest Consultative Committee – Request to Co-opt a further member (SEF 31/21)	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	4, 10, 11, 12
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>If so, how much?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Director of Open Spaces	<b>For Decision</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Jo Hurst, Business Manager Epping Forest	

## Summary

In May 2021, your Committee appointed sixteen organisations to form the Epping Forest Consultative Committee for the next three years.

Unfortunately, due to Officer error, detail for one of the applicant organisations was misrepresented, and permission is sought to co-opt that organisation.

## Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Acknowledge the error in the previous report to Committee regarding the application from Theydon Bois & District Rural Preservation Society and co-opt them to attend the Epping Forest Consultative Committee until the next full selection process.

## Main Report

### Background

1. In May 2021, the Epping Forest and Commons Committee selected sixteen organisations, from a list of applicants, to take part in the next three years of the Epping Forest Consultative Committee.
2. Due to officer error, the membership processes of the Theydon Bois and District Rural Preservation Society were erroneously stated as being contrary to the EF

Consultative Committee Terms of Reference, which is not the case.

3. On discovery of the error, The Chairman and Deputy Chairman were informed and opted to invite the Theydon Bois and District Rural Preservation Society to the meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> June, with a view to co-opting the Society to become Consultative Committee members until the next selection round.
4. The Officer has apologised by telephone and in writing to the applicant.

### **Current Position**

5. Paragraph 28 of the Consultative Committee Terms of Reference states “Epping Forest and Commons Committee may appoint further members or co-opt representatives (for example subject matter experts) to attend where it deems appropriate.”
6. Had the membership processes and numbers of the Society been reported to your Committee correctly, it is likely they would have been appointed in preference to other organisations as their membership is relatively large.
7. As a courtesy, the Theydon Bois and District Rural Preservation Society were invited to, and did attend, the Consultative Committee meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> June.

### **Options**

8. The option to co-opt the Theydon Bois & District Rural Preservation Society exists under the Terms of reference, and to do so acknowledges the details of their application, without detriment to other organisations who have also had their places confirmed.
9. Although the Terms of Reference recommend a membership of sixteen, the logistics of on-line meetings, which are likely to be a significant aspect of future business, do not make a small increase to seventeen unmanageable. Membership was at seventeen for most of the previous three years after Royal Epping Forest Golf Club were co-opted.

### **Proposals**

10. It is proposed that the Theydon Bois and District Rural Preservation Society are co-opted to the Epping Forest Consultative Committee until the next review of membership, due in 2023-24.

### **Key Data**

11. Strategic implications – The continued meetings of the Epping Forest Consultative Committee support the Corporate Plan items 4, 10, 11 and 12.

12. Financial and resource implications – The resources required for room hire (post pandemic), light refreshments, the publication of agendas; reports and minutes are provided by the Town Clerk's Department.
13. Legal implications – The Epping Forest Consultative Committee is a consultative group, rather than a formal statutory committee, and its constitution is not subject to specific legislative provisions. The Epping Forest and Commons Committee is therefore able to vary its Terms of Reference and membership, as necessary.
14. Prior to exercising certain powers under the City of London Corporation (Open Spaces) Act 2018 the Corporation as Conservators must consult such persons or bodies as it thinks appropriate and the arrangements as set out in this report would generally satisfy that requirement.
15. Since the Consultative Committee was first established, it has been confirmed that later iterations of the Members' Code of Conduct do not apply to the membership of consultative groups, so the Terms of Reference have also been updated on this basis.
16. Risk implications – This is a revision of an existing Consultative Committee structure and is therefore 'business as usual' and considered low risk. Implementation of the City of London Governance Review may require a further review of the status of this Committee.
17. Equalities implications –Equalities statements and policies have been incorporated into these revised terms.
18. Climate implications – The UK Government has binding targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and hence global warming by 2050, with the Consultative Committee acting as a key factor in the engagement and protection of the Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) at Epping Forest which is directly affected by climate warming.
19. Security implications – None
20. Charity implications – Epping Forest is a registered charity (number 232990). Charity Law obliges Members to ensure that the decisions they take in relation to the Charity must be taken in the best interests of the Charity.  
Insert text here]

## **Conclusion**

21. Officer error led to incorrect information being relayed to the Epping Forest and Commons Committee and the Theydon Bois and District Rural Preservation Society application was therefore unsuccessful. By using the power to co-opt, the Society may take part in future meetings.

## **Appendices**

- None

**Background Papers**

Epping Forest Consultative Committee Appointments 2021 to 2024 – 10 May 2021

**Jo Hurst**

Business Manager – Epping Forest

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<b>Committee(s)</b>	<b>Dated: 12 July 2021</b>
Committee name – Epping Forest & Commons Committee	
<b>Subject:</b> This report provides a general update on issues across the nine sites within ‘The Commons’ division that may be of interest to members and is supplementary to the monthly email updates.	<b>Public</b>
<b>Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?</b>	[insert relevant number(s) from p3 of <a href="#">Corporate Plan</a> ]
<b>Contribute to a flourishing society Shape outstanding environments</b>	1,2,3,4 10,11,12
<b>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</b>	<b>N</b>
<b>If so, how much?</b>	£ N/A
<b>What is the source of Funding?</b>	N/A
<b>Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?</b>	Y/N
<b>Report of Colin Buttery, Director of Open Spaces Department</b>	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author: Andy Barnard, Superintendent of The Commons</b>	

## Summary

This report provides a general update on issues across the nine sites within ‘The Commons’ division that may be of interest to members and is supplementary to the monthly email updates.

## Recommendations

Members are asked to note the contents of this report.

## Main Report

### Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common

1. Visitor numbers have returned to more normal levels following the easing of the national Covid restrictions and car parks at the Beeches have been returned to normal capacity. Some heavily trampled areas have remained

cordoned off and new 'desire lines' have been blocked to prevent further damages. Some areas have begun to recover, at least aesthetically, as a result.

2. The team continue to liaise with Buckinghamshire Council regarding the temporary parking suspensions introduced on roads around the Beeches in February. The Council held a public consultation on making the suspensions around the Beeches, and other areas across Buckinghamshire, permanent in May and June. We await the results and conclusion of this work.
3. The cafe at Burnham Beeches has remained open as a 'takeaway kiosk service' and has remained very popular. Outdoor seating has been made available again.
4. Volunteer Group activity at Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common has continued with small groups working on a range of typical summer tasks including path maintenance, setting up grazing loops, repairs to boardwalks and bracken whipping. Individual volunteers have continued the on-going monitoring programme and have also helped the Ranger team with tasks such as pond fencing, site repairs and production of information signs.
5. The Friends of Stoke Common and a handful of individual volunteers have undertaken the annual (though missed in 2020) 'whole site reptile survey' at Stoke Common. This has shown reptiles continue to increase and spread across the common into areas of heathland restored in the last 10 years. Some of the Friend's Group will also be carrying out bat monitoring at the Common for the first time this year as part of the National Bat Monitoring Programme.
6. The Eco-volunteer Group have also been active completing a survey of the wood ant nests across the Beeches and supporting the Conservation Officer with vegetation monitoring at both Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common.
7. The Ranger team have been ensuring the Beeches is grazed using cattle (in both traditional and invisible fence) and ponies, including grazing the majority of the Main Common.
8. Rangers have also been carrying out the necessary surveys for Oak Processionary Moth (OPM) at Stoke Common. Six OPM nests were found at the Common last year. Stoke Common is in the national OPM control zone and as a result we have been required, as a minimum, to survey all oak trees within 100m of any nest location from 2020. This year, found 45 more nests in 36 trees. The location of each nest has been recorded ready for nest removal in July. The team have adapted tried and tested (GIS) systems in use



at Hampstead and Ashted Common, to help deliver this first year of OPM survey work.

9. Annual squirrel trapping was undertaken throughout May and June, focussing on the areas of the Beeches where there are old and young pollards which are most badly impacted by their damage.
10. Plans for winter habitat restoration work programmes at the Beeches and Stoke Common have been drawn up and orders placed with contractors where required.
11. The Conservation Officer continues to check local planning applications but those requiring comment have declined considerably now the SAC mitigation strategy is in place.
12. Fieldwork has started on a review of the National Vegetation Classification of those areas of the Beeches restored to heathland, mire or grassland since the last survey in 1997. A volunteer botanist has been helping the Conservation Officer with this project.
13. The report and work programme for the young pollards at Burnham Beeches has been completed. There are 1,300 in the work programme some of which have now been cut three or four times and are starting to develop good saproxylic habitats.
14. Dartford warblers again bred at Stoke Common this year and nightjar were also heard calling on several evenings in June.
15. Partnership work with National Trust and Plantlife has continued, with survey work for vascular plants and saproxylic invertebrates starting on land adjacent to the Beeches. Already some rare beetles have been recorded in ancient oak trees on neighbouring farmland.

## **PARTNERSHIPS**

### **Kenley Revival update**

16. Work has commenced on rectifying the defects caused by thaumasite sulphate attack affecting the 2017 conservation work. The 12-week programme of work costing £161,000 is scheduled to finish by mid-September before the weather turns colder.
17. Several of the new Kenley Revival signs have been vandalised and now need significant repair. The signage supplier is due to attend site to assess the work

required, which will probably involve the removal of damaged signs for repair and further strengthening.

18. The project's evaluation consultants have been re-engaged to produce an addendum to the evaluation report. This additional section was requested by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and will summarise the impact of the signage and the City funded Legacy Officer post.

### **The West Wickham and Coulsdon Commons**

19. The prolonged cold and dry spring limited the amount of vegetation growth for the Sussex cattle and additional hay had to be bought to supplement grazing on Woodplace Farm Fields on Farthing Downs.
20. The Sussex cattle are now grazing Farthing Downs. Smaller herds are grazing Famet, Riddlesdown and Western Front South, Kenley Common. The lambs born in April/May this year have been out grazing compartments on Coulsdon Common. These fields have been locked and secured to prevent worrying by dogs whilst the lambs become accustomed to the sites.
21. Our resident bull, Wilf, has been sold locally to the Downlands Partnership farm after a 3-year tenure on the Commons. A new bull will be bought in Spring 2022 to maintain the Sussex cattle breeding programme. A check-up on the cows in a few months will reveal how many cows are pregnant.
22. Site Rangers have been preparing for the upcoming Green Flag Award and Green Heritage judging. Coulsdon Common is being entered into the Heritage Award for the first time. If successful, this will complete the full set of Green Flag and Green Heritage Awards across the Coulsdon Commons. A new interpretation panel at the Windmill Paddock on the Common has been produced, highlighting the two windmills which once stood there, and the WW1 military exercises carried out nearby. Visits from Green Flag judges are planned for Coulsdon Common and Farthing Downs on 6 July.
23. New waymarkers have been created and installed across the Commons with clear icons and colours to help users keep to the correct right of way. The icons for these signs are being added to keys on new site maps. This has been followed by regular mowing of grass paths across all the Coulsdon Commons to discourage visitors from trampling through meadows.
24. Signs created with support from Natural England have been put up on Farthing Downs to emphasise the significance of the SSSI and Scheduled Monument designation and prohibited activities that could damage the site including illegal off-road vehicles and metal detecting.

25. A group Ranger task on Whyteleafe Bank, Kenley Common targeted young Hawthorn saplings with tree poppers to maintain the chalk grassland and benefit orchids and wildflowers.
26. Volunteer groups have resumed in groups of 5 to carry out practical conservation tasks. Tasks have included tree popping on Kenley Common, clearing dense vegetation along Rights of Way and repairing step-access into the Riddlesdown Quarry.
27. A section of 'tired' fencing at Tollers field on Farthing Downs has been removed by Rangers and volunteers after several years of wear. A new, more durable, fence will be added by the Ranger team to contain grazing livestock in this field.
28. The Farthing Downs, Kenley Common and Coulsdon Common management plans covering the 2021-2031 management period have been sent to the local consultative committee for comments and review. The team are now preparing and finalising the draft Riddlesdown Management plan.
29. An online consultation for the Kenley Common Management Plan is currently running to gather public feedback on the Plan's main actions. This survey will be active for 6 weeks through Microsoft Forms. So far, 181 people have taken part and their views generally align with the management actions proposed and are complimentary of how the site is maintained.
30. As part of a project for public fundraising across the Open Spaces Registered Charities, there is an active appeal to upgrade and refresh the interpretation panels at Farthing Downs. This project will focus on well-placed and informative panels to inspire and educate visitors on wildlife, history and landscape features and is being promoted via the e-newsletter, posters, social media and email banners/signatures.
31. Man orchids have been recorded on Stoney White Piece, reflecting the success of the chalk grassland restoration. Bee orchids have also been recorded on New Field for the first time. The late flowering season brought on by the weather has led to an overlap in orchid species being seen at the same time; in one 2m grid square, 6 different species of orchid were observed on 8-Acre, Farthing Downs.
32. Moth surveys have been carried out on Farthing Downs and Coulsdon Common; 59 species of macro moths were recorded at Farthing Downs in one night, including several species new to the site. A count of 8 glow worms on the 24 June at Farthing Downs was an early record for this species here.

## **Ashtead Common**

33. Following the easing of lockdown restrictions on 17 May, the limit on volunteer groups size was relaxed, although other covid-19 controls like social distancing remain in place. The Monday volunteer group no longer meet, so drop-in practical conservation volunteering is now restricted to Thursdays.
34. A printed version of the new management plan was circulated to volunteers, members of the Ashtead Common Consultative Group and other stakeholders. The plan has been well received.
35. After an absence of 18 years a nightingale was heard singing on the common earlier in the summer for several days.
36. Schultmay Ltd commenced a fly survey in early June. This will run through the summer using a combination of trap types and some on-site surveying. Flies are listed in the SSSI notification but have not previously been surveyed.
37. The presence of black letter hairstreak on the reserve is noted. It is likely that this species has been illegally introduced, so its discovery is not being celebrated. However, it does appear to have become established and it means that all five hairstreaks can now be found on the common.
38. A specialist law firm Thwlegal has been instructed to produce an internal agreement in support of the Countryside Stewardship application. This agreement is considered necessary by the RPA to define the roles of all parties with an interest in the proposed Countryside Stewardship agreement.

## **Support Services Team (SST)**

39. The relatively new Administration Assistant for Merlewood and Ashtead Estate offices has now been in post for three months and fitting in to the team very well. Their fixed term contract period has, fortunately, been extended until the end of December 2021.
40. The team continue to busy with numerous projects including building lets, car park income reconciliation, establishing procedures for the new and complex IR35 requirements for our contractors and dealing with numerous enquiries from members of the public as well as maintaining Covid safety systems at the Estate offices.

## **Incidents**

### **Burnham Beeches & Stoke Common**

41. There were 18 incidents in the period. These included 3 instances of fly tipping, 1 where rubbish was dumped for about 400m along an adjacent road – 5

incidents of site vandalism/misuse (3 graffiti/ 1x vandalism of a pond fence/ 1 x small fire). The rest were a variety of lost dogs, travellers taking horses and carts off road onto the Beeches, injured wildlife and visitors in need of assistance including the rangers helping emergency services to get a casualty out of the woods in a site vehicle

### **Ashtead Common**

- 42. A drone was flown over Woodfield on 1 May. The owner was spoken to by a Ranger who explained that on Ashtead Common the flying of model aircraft breaches the byelaws.
- 43. A potential pollution incident affecting the Rye Brook at the Two Bridges outfall was reported to the Environment Agency and Thames Water on 13 May.
- 44. The poor condition of pollution control bunds in the Rye Brook at Two Bridges was reported to Thames Water on June 23.
- 45. A light fitting fell from the top of the lift shaft at the Ashtead Estate Office sometime during the night of 23-24 June following a service visit on 23 June. This was reported as a near miss.

### **The West Wickham and Coulsdon Commons**

- 46. There were 10 incidents within the period from 22 April to 25 June . These related to verbal abuse to a Ranger from a vendor trading at Farthing Downs, a small woodland fire at West Wickham Common, an injured deer, a group of suspicious males parked at the estate yard, a campfire on Farthing Downs, an ongoing incident of overflow drain flooding after high rainfall, and 3 incidents of fly tipping and vandalism.

### **Filming, major events and other activities**

#### **Burnham Beeches**

- 47. Silverback films filmed the wood ants at Burnham Beeches for a two-week period for a major new series for the BBC about British wildlife due to be screened in 2023.
- 48. Two more days filming for an Agatha Christie drama are booked for early July.

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