



Natural Environment Board

Date: THURSDAY, 17 OCTOBER 2024

Time: 11.00 am

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

Members:

Caroline Haines (Chair)	William Upton KC (Ex-Officio Member)
Eamonn Mullally (Deputy Chairman)	Alderman & Sheriff Gregory Jones KC (Ex-Officio Member)
Anne Corbett	Heather Barrett-Mold
Andrew McMurtrie	Vladislav Dobrokhotov
Wendy Mead OBE	Tony Leach
Benjamin Murphy	Dani Stephenson
Deputy Alpa Raja	Catherine Bickmore (Observer)
James St John Davis	Paul Morris (Observer)

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<https://www.youtube.com/@CityofLondonCorporation/streams>

A recording of the public meeting will be available via the above link following the end of the public meeting for up to one civic 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.

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Ian Thomas CBE
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 minutes of the previous meeting held on 11 July 2024.

For Decision
(Pages 5 - 12)

4. **YOUTH NATURAL ENVIRONMENT BOARD UPDATE**

Report of Simon Lightman, Head of Philosophy, Politics and Religious Studies, King Edward's School, Witley.

For Information
(Pages 13 - 16)

Open Spaces

5. **ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF CHARITY DEVELOPMENT - VERBAL UPDATE**

Assistant Director of Charity Development to be heard.

For Information

6. **ASSISTANT DIRECTOR CULTURE AND PROJECTS UPDATE REPORT Q1: APRIL - JUNE 2024**

Report of the Executive Director of Environment.

For Information
(Pages 17 - 30)

7. **RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE REPORT**

Report of the Executive Director of Environment.

For Decision
(Pages 31 - 62)

8. **PROJECT PRIORITISATION PROCESS**

Report of the Executive Director of Environment.

For Decision
(Pages 63 - 70)

9. **VOLUNTEERING AUDIT**

Report of the Executive Director of Environment.

For Information
(Pages 71 - 112)

10. **BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN - PROGRESS REPORT**

Report of the Executive Director of Environment.

For Information
(Pages 113 - 186)

11. **OPERATIONAL FINANCE PROGRESS REPORT - QUARTER 2 (AUGUST 2024)
2024/25**

Joint report of the Chamberlain and Executive Director of Environment.

For Information
(Pages 187 - 206)

City Gardens

12. **CITY GARDENS UPDATE**

Report of the Executive Director of Environment.

For Information
(Pages 207 - 212)

13. **UPCOMING DATES OF INTEREST TO THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT BOARD**

Tuesday 10 December 2024 – Natural Environment Board Meeting

Wednesday 22 January 2025 – Natural Environment Board Dinner

Thursday 6 February 2025 – Natural Environment Board Meeting

Thursday 1 May 2025 – Natural Environment Board Meeting

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

15. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED**

16. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

MOTION - That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items 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

Part 2 - Non-Public Agenda

17. **FINSBURY CIRCUS GARDENS REINSTATEMENT**

Joint report of the City Surveyors and the Executive Director of Environment.

For Decision
(Pages 213 - 226)

18. **CARBON REMOVALS (CLIMATE ACTION STRATEGY) PROJECT 2024/25 UPDATE**

For Information
(Pages 227 - 276)

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

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

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT BOARD

Thursday, 11 July 2024

Minutes of the meeting of the Natural Environment Board held at Committee Room 2
- 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Thursday, 11 July 2024 at 11.00 am

Present

Members:

Caroline Haines (Chair)
Eamonn Mullally (Deputy Chairman)
Heather Barrett-Mold
Anne Corbett
Tony Leach
Benjamin Murphy
Andrew McMurtrie
Deputy Alpa Raja
William Upton KC (Ex-Officio Member)

In Attendance:

Alderman Gregory Jones KC

External:

Simon Lightman (King Edward's Witley)

Officers:

Clem Harcourt	- Chamberlain's Department
Pauline Mouskis	- Chamberlain's Department
Jack Joslin	- City Bridge Foundation
Anna Cowperthwaite	- Comptroller and City Solicitor's
Chandni Tanna	- Communications & External Affairs
Emily Brennan	- Environment Department
Simon Glynn	- Environment Department
Joanne Hill	- Environment Department
Jo Hurst	- Environment Department
Joe Kingston	- Environment Department
Sam Lee	- Environment Department
Jonathan Meares	- Environment Department
Jake Tibbetts	- Environment Department
Callum Southern	- Town Clerk's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from James St John Davis, Vladislav Dobrokhotov, Wendy Mead MBE and Verderer Paul Morris.

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

No declarations were made.

3. **MINUTES**

3.1 **Draft Minutes of the Natural Environment Board Meeting on 16th May 2024**

RESOLVED – That, the public minutes of the last meeting held on 16th May 2024 be agreed as a correct record.

4. ***NATURAL ENVIRONMENT DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

The Board received a report of the Natural Environment Director concerning an update on matters relating to the Natural Environment Board since the last board meeting on 16 May 2024.

During the discussion, the following points were made:

- a) The Board expressed thanks to the Natural Environment Director for her work over the last year since joining the Corporation.
- b) The difficulty of filling vacancies was raised by the Board. Officers indicated that there were challenges with job descriptions needing to be re-written, as well as long-term sickness, and roles had needed to be re-advertised in the past due to quality of some candidates.
- c) Members indicated that post-COVID in-office arrangements had contributed to issues with recruitment.
- d) It was suggested the staff surveys recently seen by Corporate Services Committee needed to be seen by Natural Environment committees to review the information provided.
- e) It was highlighted by Members that low-level grievances consumed a significant amount of staff time and resource.

RECEIVED.

5. **ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF CHARITIES & COMMERCIAL VERBAL UPDATE**

The Board received a verbal update from the Assistant Director for Charity Development on the next phase income strategy, specifically on grants, rentals and the biodiversity net gain.

During the discussion, the following points were made:

- a) The Chair reiterated the need for the charities review to be responsive to Members' views and requests for information on its review and progress.
- b) Members considered what prioritisation with the City Surveyors would look like. Officers reported that they were working on a different model for work between charities and surveyors, specially on how grant funding may affect central element of charities' funding.
- c) It was discussed whether Officers had the required resource to complete the asset review element of the charities review. Officers indicated they had a colleague dedicated to working with Surveyors on updating asset lists and that they were also waiting for Surveyors to be properly resourced for some projects.
- d) The Board expressed the importance of identifying assets and sought clarity over the timeline for doing that. Officers informed Members that 45 conditional surveys had been carried out across lodges as they were at the forefront of Officer's concerns and findings had been shared with City Surveyors.
- e) Members reiterated the need for City Surveyors to have Officers present at meetings of Natural Environment Board. Officers reported that Surveyors had committed to attending meetings from Autumn onwards.
- f) The Chair highlighted that it would be up to individual charities to agree plans for assets following the review. Officers added that the condition surveys included fire protection and general fabric condition surveys; the assets were considered to be domestic buildings for the purpose of those surveys.
- g) Officers reported that the Chair of the Operational Property Review Group had received a tour of the open spaces to demonstrate requirements of some of the buildings and the legislative constraints.
- h) Officers explained to the Board that the objective was to establish a list of assets on a charity-by-charity basis and would not stall vital backlog work or prevent Committees from taking decisions.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE

The Board considered a report of the Natural Environment Director concerning the Natural Environment Cross-Divisional Risk Register which included risks which are managed by the Natural Environment Director at a higher, strategic, level.

Officers reported that the risk of a lack of an asset register had been reduced from a 16 to a 12 rating; the negative impacts of wildlife management risk had also been reduced. Additionally, Officers reiterated that the highest risk for the cross divisional register was the declining condition of assets while the highest risk for City Gardens was the negative impact of public behaviour.

During the discussion, the following points were made:

- a) The Board suggested adding two risks relating to the potential change to the funding model of the charities and interdepartmental collaboration.
- b) Questions were raised about whether the NEB risk register used aggregated figures. Officers explained that it was not a sum as it had to use the same risk scoring matrix, but the highest level of risk was taken and did reflect the combined risk across all of the charities.

RESOLVED – That, Members confirmed, in relation to the City Gardens and on behalf of the City Corporation as Trustee (as relevant), that the Natural Environment Cross-Divisional Summary Risk Register satisfactorily identified the key high-level risks to the charities and that an appropriate risk management process was in place.

7. *ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT HIGH-LEVEL BUSINESS PLAN PROGRESS REPORT (YEAR-END 2023-24)

The Board received a report on an update on progress toward the delivery of the Environment Department's high-level Business Plan 2023/24. The report summarised the progress that had been made against major workstreams and performance measures during 2023/24.

RECEIVED.

8. *REVENUE OUTTURN 2023/24

The Board received a report which compared the revenue outturn for the services overseen by the Board in 2023/24 with the final budget for the year. The report noted, in total, that there was an adverse budget position of £246,000 for the services overseen by the Board compared with the final budget for the year.

During the discussion, the following point was made:

- a) Following requests for clarity by the Board, Officers confirmed that the net cost per annum to the Corporation of the Open Spaces was £19.1m for 2023/24.

RECEIVED.

9. FINSBURY CIRCUS ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS

The Board received a report on a project seeking to implement accessibility improvements and to rearrange parking to enable improvements and micromobility parking in line with the Liverpool Street Area Healthy Streets Plan.

During the discussion, the following points were made:

- a) The Board queried whether there were going to be dockless cycle bays around Finsbury Circus. Officers confirmed there were no planned cycle racks at Finsbury Circus.

RESOLVED – That, Members agree, to the proposed changes to the pathways at the entrances inside Finsbury Circus Gardens, to align with the adjacent highway measures shown on the plan in Appendix 2 of the report.

10. ***CITY GARDENS UPDATE**

The Board received a report which provided an update on the current management and operational activities across the City Gardens department.

Officers reported that issues with dogs had been prevalent for some time, with 64 incidents of dogs off leads with 61 at Bunhill Fields. They were currently in the process of recruiting a keeper to enforce park byelaws and were working with the Comptroller and City Solicitor to investigate Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) as a potential means of encouraging responsible dog ownership across the City.

During the discussion, the following points were made:

- a) Officers indicated they would return to Committee with a presentation on tackling box hedging.
- b) The Chair informed Members of another walk across City Gardens property on 15 August at 2:00pm.
- c) The Chair reported that considerations were undergoing to open up the area around St. Bride's Church for a Christmas concert in the Winter.
- d) It was also suggested by the Chair that there was a plan to open up a different City Garden space over a week in the Summer as part of the Destination City Programme.
- e) The Board considered how much the issue of human defecation was related to the lack of public toilets. Officers noted there were two fully staff public conveniences and a recommendation had been made at Port Heath & Environmental Services Committee to review signage to City and non-City toilets.
- f) Questions were raised as to why the Park Guard and not the Metropolitan Police were called to incidents of dogs off leads. Officers indicated that the Park Guard made continuous visits which allowed them to build relationships with dog walkers at Bunhill Fields
- g) Officers informed the Board that the vacant keeper position would be stationed at Bunhill Fields and considerations were being made to offer free dog training to dog walkers at Bunhill Fields.

- h) A member requested that the visit to Finsbury Circus on 11 September be in the afternoon.
- i) It was requested by a Board Member that a note on opening times of the public toilets be taken to Port Health and Environmental Services Committee. Officers confirmed they would and would share the report with Board Members.
- j) The Board considered whether restricting hours of dog walking would help. Officers responded that it would require a change in the byelaws; if working with dog owners through the new keeper did not work, Officers would look at PSPOs.

RECEIVED.

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

The Committee received an update on the Youth Natural Environment Board from Simon Lightman.

The Chair reminded the Board that the Natural Environment Board annual dinner was due to take place on 22 January 2025.

The Chair also informed Members that the Natural Environment Board away day was due to take place on 3 October 2024.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED

No other business was raised that the Chair considered urgent.

13. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

The Committee did not resolve to go into non-public session.

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

No non-public questions were raised relating to the work of the Board.

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

No other non-public business was considered which the Chair considered urgent.

The meeting ended at 12.32 pm

Chairman

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Committee(s): Natural Environment Board	Dated: 17 October 2024
Subject: Youth Natural Environment Board Update	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	Engaging diverse communities, creating a thriving destination, promoting sustainability and net-zero
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	N/A
Report of: N/A	For Information
Report author: Simon Lightman, King Edward’s Witley – External	

Summary

This report provides an update on the progress of the City of London Natural Environment Youth Board (YNEB) since its initial proposal was endorsed on 17th April 2024. The YNEB has made significant strides, including setting a provisional date for its first meeting on 8th November 2024 at the Hampstead Heath Outdoor Education Centre. This initiative aims to empower students and alumni from City of London schools to engage actively in environmental decision-making. A successful outreach campaign has garnered a positive response from several schools, and collaborative projects have been initiated to enhance sustainability education across the City of London Family of Schools.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

The establishment of the YNEB was proposed in April 2024 to address the need for youth involvement in sustainability discussions at the City of London Corporation.

Following the approval, the Environmental and Outdoor Learning Network coordinated efforts to integrate youth voices into the existing Natural Environment Board's decision-making processes.

Current Position

The YNEB has set a provisional date for its inaugural meeting on 8th November 2024 at the Hampstead Heath Outdoor Education Centre. The meeting has been advertised through the Family of Schools newsletter, yielding a positive response from several schools that have confirmed their participation. Confirmed representatives will attend from the following schools: City of London School for Girls, Newham Collegiate Sixth Form Centre, City Academy, City of London Freeman's School, and King Edward's School, Witley. Efforts will continue to ensure representation from state schools, which is critical to the board's mission.

The YNEB has also facilitated a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Surrey University Institute of Sustainability and the City of London, with the Bridewell Royal Hospital Trust acting as a facilitator. This partnership aims to leverage the institute's research to support various initiatives across the City of London Family of Schools, positioning the group as leaders in education for sustainable development.

Options

1. Continue Developing the Youth Board

- *Cost Implications:* Minimal, mainly related to administrative support.
- *Benefits:* Increased youth engagement and representation in environmental decision-making.
- *Risks:* Low, primarily concerning member participation and retention.

2. Enhance Outreach to Ensure Diverse Representation

- *Cost Implications:* Low costs associated with outreach activities.
- *Benefits:* Broader representation from various communities, enriching discussions and initiatives.
- *Risks:* Moderate, related to logistical challenges in reaching underrepresented groups.

Proposals

We propose to continue developing the YNEB by focusing on member engagement and refining its governance structure. This approach will facilitate youth-led initiatives that contribute to the City of London's sustainability goals while ensuring that diverse perspectives are included.

Additionally, the YNEB is developing collaborative projects, including:

A partnership with the Royal Commonwealth Society to support their ocean cleanup initiatives through a Thames River cleanup activity.

Discussions about facilitating an online youth empowerment conference for students across the Commonwealth, fostering environmental action exchanges.

An urban sustainability photography competition in collaboration with the International Garden Photographer Competition.

Representation at the Golden Jubilee celebrations for the Duke of Gloucester in his role as Ranger of Epping Forest.

Key Data

- **Engagement Metrics:**
 - Number of interested participants: 12
 - Confirmed school representatives: City of London School for Girls, Newham Collegiate Sixth Form Centre, City Academy, City of London Freeman's School, King Edward's School, Witley.
 - Proposed project ideas: Thames River cleanup, online empowerment conference, photography competition.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Strategic implications

- This initiative strongly aligns with the City Corporation's Corporate Plan by fostering youth involvement in environmental advocacy and supporting sustainable practices.

Financial implications

- There are no financial implications anticipated as the initiative is volunteer-driven.

Resource implications

- The project will utilize existing resources for coordination and support.

Legal implications

- None identified at this stage.

Risk implications

- The main risk involves varying levels of engagement from youth members. Strategies will be put in place to ensure sustained participation.

Equalities implications

- The initiative is designed to promote inclusivity and ensure diverse representation in environmental discussions.

Climate implications

- The YNEB's activities will contribute to the City of London's Climate Action Strategy by empowering youth to advocate for sustainable practices.

Security implications

- None identified.

Conclusion

The ongoing development of the City of London Natural Environment Youth Board represents a significant opportunity to leverage youth engagement in driving environmental action. With the upcoming inaugural meeting and various collaborative initiatives in the pipeline, the YNEB is poised to make meaningful contributions to sustainability education and advocacy in the City of London.

Simon Lightman

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Agenda Item 6

Committee(s): Natural Environment Board	Dated: 17 October 2024
Subject: Assistant Director Culture and Projects Update Report Q1: April - June 2024	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	<u>City's Corporate Plan</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse engaged communities • Vibrant thriving destination • Flourishing public spaces • Providing excellent services • Leading sustainable environment
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	n/a
What is the source of Funding?	n/a
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	n/a
Report of: Katie Stewart, Executive Director of Environment	For Information
Report author: Simon Glynn, Natural Environment Division, Environment Department	

Summary

This report provides an update against workstreams, outcomes and key performance indicators from the Natural Environment Division Business Plan and objectives from the Natural Environment Strategies that are applicable to staff in the Culture and Projects Section covering April-June 2024 (Q1).

The Culture and Projects Section comprises the Natural Environment Learning Team, Heritage and Museums Team and Carbon Removals Project Team.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Current Position

This quarterly report format and content has been amended to align the reporting with the objectives of the Natural Environment Strategies and Business Plan currently being updated for the period 2025-2030. The revised reporting process is still being developed and further refinements will be forthcoming.

The revised report structure provides a breakdown of activity in Appendix 1 with summary details and key points highlighted in the main report.

In the Natural Environment Division Business Plan for 2024/25, the priority workstreams for the Culture and Projects Section are:

- Establish a natural capital-based management process across our open spaces (Carbon Removals Project)
- Develop communities of interest that participate in, advocate for, and support our Natural Environment and Heritage charities
- Develop a learning offer that builds nature connection and well-being
- Protect and enhance our built heritage, landscape heritage and archaeological assets and promote them as part of our visitor and learning offers

The outcomes identified in the NE Business Plan relevant to the Culture and Projects Section are:

- Delivery of the Climate Action Strategy will ensure the Corporation meets its target of being carbon neutral by 2027.
- Increased nature connection, pro-environmental behaviour and well-being of participants. More participants are from high pupil premium schools, are looked after children, young carers, young refugees and 13–25-year-olds who are struggling with education, employment or mental health.
- Built heritage, landscape heritage and archaeological assets are protected, meet statutory obligations and are enhanced to support improved visitor and learning offer.

The performance measures associated with these outcomes and their reporting frequency are:

- Achieve annual carbon removal target/ Annually
- Number of participants per annum in our school learning and play programmes/ Annually
- Number of heritage assets on the Heritage at Risk Register/Every 6 months
- Number of visitors per annum to our managed heritage attractions/Every 6 months

Reporting on the relevant key performance indicators, therefore, will take place after Q2 and after Q4, once the data has been gathered and assessed. Reporting in Q1 will therefore focus on the outputs and activities relevant to the Culture and Projects Section during this period.

Progress against Natural Environment Strategies and Business Plan objectives for the period April-June 2024 (Q1)

1. Nature Conservation and Resilience

1.1 The Carbon Removals Project funding and the project plan for Year 4 (2024-25) was approved by Policy and Resources Committee and the Carbon Removals Project Board.

1.2 The project aims to maintain current carbon sequestration of 16.2kt, increase sequestration by 0.21kt and support biodiversity objectives through its activities.

2. Community Engagement

2.1 Any activities in support of the Community Engagement Strategy largely relate to learning and heritage activities and are therefore referenced in section 4 of this report.

3. Access and Recreation

3.1 Any activities in support of the Access and Recreation Strategy largely relate to learning and heritage activities and are therefore referenced in section 4 of this report.

4. Culture, Heritage and Learning

4.1 The Learning Team have continued to facilitate heritage learning at Epping Forest, providing school workshops at the Tudor Hunting Lodge and an Orienteering Through History workshop.

4.2 The Learning Team at Epping also hosted sessions for young unaccompanied asylum seekers, working in partnership with the Corporation's Virtual School, and for young people from a pupil referral unit. The team have worked in partnership with Tindersticks (community interest company), to expand the programme for young people.

4.3 In May, the Learning Team opened two new pond platforms at two teaching gardens in Hampstead Heath, welcoming learning participants from schools and local community groups. These new assets have been a positive addition in support of the successful schools learning programme.

4.4 Despite funding cuts in effect from April, the Learning Team was able to maintain its popular play offer at its two centres in Hampstead Heath during Q1, whilst undertaking an assessment of options to secure new income in support of maintaining the play offer in the longer-term.

4.5 In addition to delivering the ever-popular schools learning programme at West Ham Park, during Q1 the Learning Team expanded its learning provision for participants 13-25 with special educational needs and disabilities, funded through a grant from the Cultural and Creative Learning Fund.

4.6 In April, the Learning team in partnership with the Barbican Children's Library delivered a successful project entitled *New Leaf* project over the Easter school holidays. Targeting children facing challenges such as poverty, disability, or caring responsibilities, this programme operated in collaboration with 'Ambition

Aspire Achieve' and the City of London Early Help Team. The project had positive impact on participants, including a 17% increase in feelings of wellbeing and a 28% increase in feelings of confidence to explore our spaces

4.6 On 1 May, the Heritage team at Keats House launched a new exhibition showcasing the hidden histories of the house. The exhibition, which runs until 30 March 2025, provides a glimpse into the lives of some of the other people who called this house 'home' between 1816 and 1920.

4.7 In April, options for the repair of Wanstead Grotto and Landing Stage were produced by our appointed consultant, Alan Baxter Associates. The options were reviewed by Historic England and other key stakeholders and the level of repair necessary to remove the asset from the Heritage at Risk Register was confirmed. (This option was approved by Epping Forest and Commons Committee in July).

4.8 During Q1, the Heritage team led the research and design of an outdoor exhibition on the history of West Ham Park, ahead of its display at the West Ham Park 150 celebrations in July.

4.9 The Heritage team presented the financial and operational position of The Monument to the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee in May. In 2023/24 over 100,000 people visited the Monument; although an upward trend, this is still 60% of pre-pandemic visitor numbers. The Monument was closed on 88 of its normal opening days, resulting in c. £97k in lost income. Overall, the net cost of the Monument to the Corporation in 2023/24 was £105k.

4.10 During Q1, Culture and Projects Section led the delivery of community engagement activities at West Ham Park, seeking feedback on the future of the former nursery site. Activities delivered included 10 1-2-1s with local schools and groups, 5 pop-up events, 8 workshops with young people and an on-line survey.

5. Income Generation

5.1 Grants of a total value of £70k were secured from the Cultural and Creative Learning Fund in April for the delivery of projects in academic year 2024/25. These projects included *Green change-makers*, *Culturally Speaking* and *Change the Record*.

6. People Management

6.1 A successful round of recruitment took place in April, May and June for the roles of Carbon Removals Project Manager and Carbon Removals Project Officer.

Conclusion

This revised Assistant Director report being presented is under development and will focus on reporting on the Business Plan and Natural Environment Department Management Strategies outcomes.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Progress against key objectives / actions (categorised by Natural Environment Strategy).

Simon Glynn

Assistant Director Culture and Projects, Natural Environment Division

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Appendix 1: Progress against key objectives / actions (categorised by Natural Environment Strategy). Quarter One (April-June) 2024-25

Culture and Projects Section includes Learning Team, Heritage and Museums Team, Carbons Removals Project Team

1	Nature Conservation and Resilience strategy		
	Action/Objective	Progress update (Quarter One 2024-25)	Also contributes to:
1.12	The City of London Corporation's Climate Action Strategy goals are met for the open spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The Carbon Removals Project funding and the project plan for Year 4 (2024-25) was approved by Policy and Resources Committee and the Carbon Removals Project Board.</i> <i>The project aims to maintain current carbon sequestration of 16.2kt, increase sequestration by 0.21kt and support biodiversity objectives through its activities.</i> <i>Carbon Removals: All workstreams planned for this reporting year are now underway.</i> 	

4	Culture, Learning and Heritage Strategy		
	Action/Objective	Progress update (Quarter One 2024-25)	Also contributes to:
4.1	Deliver learning activities which incorporate the 'pathways to nature connection' and which facilitate an increase in participants' feelings of nature connection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>In May, the Learning Team opened two new pond platforms at two teaching gardens in Hampstead Heath, welcoming learning participants from schools and local community groups. These new assets have been a positive addition in support of the successful schools learning programme.</i> 	Nature Conservation and Resilience Strategy Community Engagement Strategy

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>In addition to delivering the ever-popular schools learning programme at West Ham Park, during Q1 the Learning Team expanded its learning provision for participants 13-25 with special educational needs and disabilities, funded through a grant from the Cultural and Creative Learning Fund.</i> <i>The Learning Team at Epping also hosted sessions for young unaccompanied asylum seekers, working in partnership with the Corporation's Virtual School, and for young people from a pupil referral unit. The team have worked in partnership with Tindersticks (community interest company), to expand the programme for young people.</i> 	
4.2	Develop synergies between NE Learning, CoL Environmental Resilience and CoL Climate Action, and provide opportunities for children and young people to get involved and make a positive contribution to biodiversity and environmental resilience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Grants of a total value of £70k were secured from the Cultural and Creative Learning Fund in April for the delivery of projects in academic year 2024/25. These projects included Green change-makers, Culturally Speaking and Change the Record.</i> 	Nature Conservation and Resilience Strategy Community Engagement Strategy
4.3	Collaborate with educators and researchers to develop an evidence-informed model of best practice in climate education and apply best practice to the NE learning programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>In April, the Learning team in partnership with the Barbican Children's Library delivered a successful project entitled New Leaf project over the Easter school holidays. Targeting children facing challenges such as poverty, disability, or caring responsibilities, this programme operated in collaboration with 'Ambition Aspire Achieve' and the City of London Early Help Team. Its mission was to extend the reach of cultural opportunities to those who may not</i> 	Community Engagement Strategy

		<p><i>otherwise access them. Held at the Barbican Libraries and Hampstead Heath, it offered participants a warm welcome and a wealth of enriching experiences, from shared lunches by the campfire amidst the beauty of Hampstead Heath to engaging in mindful movement and crafting stories inspired by nature, every moment is designed to ignite joy and curiosity. The project had positive impact on participants, including a 17% increase in feelings of wellbeing and a 28% increase in feelings of confidence to explore our spaces</i></p>	
4.4	Adopt sustainable practices, including an aim to achieve net zero, in accordance with Corporation policy and strategies e.g. the Climate Action Strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Grants of a total value of £70k were secured from the Cultural and Creative Learning Fund in April for the delivery of projects in academic year 2024/25. These projects included Green change-makers, Culturally Speaking and Change the Record.</i> 	Nature Conservation and Resilience Strategy
4.5	Engage participants in activities which increase feelings of wellbeing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The New Leaf project had positive impact on participants, including a 17% increase in feelings of wellbeing and a 28% increase in feelings of confidence to explore our spaces</i> 	Community Engagement Strategy
4.6	Provide more opportunities for children to engage in outdoor play.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Despite funding cuts in effect from April, the Learning Team was able to maintain its popular play offer at its two centres in Hampstead Heath during Q1, whilst undertaking an assessment of options to secure new income in support of maintaining the play offer in the longer-term.</i> 	Community Engagement Strategy Access and Recreation Strategy

4.7	Provide opportunities for adult volunteering as a means to increase wellbeing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A new Learning volunteer was recruited, based at West Ham Park, to support the nature learning programme for children with additional needs. The volunteer also contributed photographs for the West Ham Park 150 anniversary exhibition. 	Community Engagement Strategy
4.8	Engage participants from London boroughs with high levels of deprivation and child poverty.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Learning Team at Epping also hosted sessions for young unaccompanied asylum seekers, working in partnership with the Corporation's Virtual School, and for young people from a pupil referral unit. The team have worked in partnership with Tindersticks (community interest company), to expand the programme for young people.</i> 	Community Engagement Strategy
4.9	Provide bespoke learning opportunities for young people struggling with education, employment or mental health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>In addition to delivering the ever-popular schools learning programme at West Ham Park, during Q1 the Learning Team expanded its learning provision for participants 13-25 with special educational needs and disabilities, funded through a grant from the Cultural and Creative Learning Fund.</i> 	Community Engagement Strategy
4.10	Provide bespoke learning sessions for children and young people with additional needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>See above.</i> 	Community Engagement Strategy
4.11	Provide opportunities for apprenticeships and traineeships leading to skills and career development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Learning Team hosted a young person on a work placement at Epping Forest supporting both the Learning and Epping Forest teams.</i> 	

4.12	Engage participants in our learning, heritage and cultural activities which provide opportunities to explore, enjoy and feel safe in our spaces.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The Learning Team have continued to facilitate heritage learning at Epping Forest, providing school workshops at the Tudor Hunting Lodge and an Orienteering Through History workshop.</i> 	
4.13	Provide activities which enable participants to build confidence to explore green spaces.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>In April, the Learning team in partnership with the Barbican Children's Library delivered a successful project entitled New Leaf project over the Easter school holidays. Targeting children facing challenges such as poverty, disability, or caring responsibilities, this programme operated in collaboration with 'Ambition Aspire Achieve' and the City of London Early Help Team. The project had positive impact on participants, including a 17% increase in feelings of wellbeing and a 28% increase in feelings of confidence to explore our spaces.</i> 	Community Engagement Strategy
4.14	Develop strategic partnerships with organisations that help to deliver our culture, heritage and learning offer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>See above</i> 	Community Engagement Strategy
4.15	Ensure that our programming to build participants' fusion skills and confidence is informed by our communities of interest.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>See above</i> 	Community Engagement Strategy
4.16	Develop our communities of interest that participate in, advocate for, and support, our natural environment and heritage charities and assets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>On 1 May, the Heritage team at Keats House launched a new exhibition showcasing the hidden histories of the house. The exhibition, which runs until 30 March 2025, provides a glimpse into the lives of some of the other people who called this house 'home' between 1816 and 1920.</i> 	Community Engagement Strategy

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>During Q1, Culture and Projects Section led the delivery of community engagement activities at West Ham Park, seeking feedback on the future of the former nursery site. Activities delivered included 10 1-2-1s with local schools and groups, 5 pop-up events, 8 workshops with young people and an on-line survey.</i> • <i>The Learning Team have continued to facilitate heritage learning at Epping Forest, providing school workshops at the Tudor Hunting Lodge and an Orienteering Through History workshop.</i> 	
4.17	Conserve and enhance our heritage assets in accordance with statutory requirements, sector guidance and best practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>In April, options for the repair of Wanstead Grotto and Landing Stage were produced by our appointed consultant, Alan Baxter Associates. The options were reviewed by Historic England and other key stakeholders and the level of repair necessary to remove the asset from the Heritage at Risk Register was confirmed. (This option was approved by Epping Forest and Commons Committee in July).</i> 	
4.18	Ensure a consistent approach to the management and promotion of our heritage assets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Heritage team presented the financial and operational position of The Monument to the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee in May. In 2023/24 over 100,000 people visited the Monument; although an upward trend, this is still 60% of pre-pandemic visitor numbers. The Monument was closed on 88 of its normal opening days, resulting in c. £97k in lost income. Overall, the net cost of the Monument to the Corporation in 2023/24 was £105k.</i> 	Community Engagement Strategy Access and Recreation Strategy

4.19	Ensure our cultural programming is both informed by, and representative of, our diverse communities of interest.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During Q1, the Heritage team led the research and design of an outdoor exhibition on the history of West Ham Park, ahead of its display at the West Ham Park 150 celebrations in July. 	Community Engagement Strategy
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5	Income Generation		
	Action/Objective	Progress update (Quarter One 2024-25)	Also contributes to:
5.3	Grant Income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grants of a total value of £70k were secured from the Cultural and Creative Learning Fund in April for the delivery of projects in academic year 2024/25. These projects included Green change-makers, Culturally Speaking and Change the Record. 	Culture, Heritage and Learning Strategy Nature Conservation and Resilience Strategy

6	People Management		
	Action/Objective	Progress update (Quarter One 2024-25)	Also contributes to:
6.1	Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A successful round of recruitment took place in April, May and June for the roles of Carbon Removals Project Manager and Carbon Removals Project Officer. 	Nature Conservation and Resilience Strategy

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Committee(s)	Dated:
Natural Environment Board	17 October 2024
Subject: Risk Management Update Report	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading sustainable environment • Providing excellent services • Flourishing public spaces
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	N/A
Report of: Katie Stewart, Executive Director of Environment	For Decision
Report author: Joanne Hill, Business Planning and Compliance Manager	

Summary

This report is presented to provide the Natural Environment Board with assurance that risk management procedures in place within the Environment Department are satisfactory and that they meet the requirements of the Corporate Risk Management Framework and, where applicable, the Charities Act 2011. Risk is reviewed regularly within the Department as part of the ongoing management of services.

The Natural Environment Cross-Divisional Risk Register includes risks which are managed by the Natural Environment Director at a strategic level. The Cross-Divisional risks are summarised in this report and the detailed register is provided at Appendix 1.

Each of the Natural Environment charities holds its own risk register which is reported to its respective management Committee.

City Gardens is part of the City Operations Division of the Environment Department, and its risks are held in a separate risk register which is summarised in this report and provided in full at Appendix 2.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- A. **Natural Environment Division Risk Register:** Members are asked to confirm, on behalf of the City Corporation as Trustee, that the Natural Environment Cross-Divisional Risk Register (Appendix 1) satisfactorily sets out the key top-level risks to the charities and that appropriate systems are in place to identify and mitigate risks across the charities.
- B. **City Gardens Risk Register:** Members are asked to note the content of this report, the City Gardens Risk Register (Appendix 2), and the action being taken to effectively manage these risks.

Main Report

Background

1. The City of London's Risk Management Strategy, which forms part of its Corporate Risk Management Framework, requires each Chief Officer to report regularly to Committees on the risks faced by their department.
2. The Charity Commission requires Trustees to confirm in a 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.
3. Each Committee to which the Natural Environment Division of the Environment Department reports receives a quarterly update on the risks relevant to that Committee. This frequency aligns with the City of London's Risk Management Strategy and exceeds the requirements of the Charity Commission.
4. The Executive Director Environment assures the Natural Environment Board that all risks held by the Natural Environment Division and the City Operations Division continue to be managed in compliance with the Corporate Risk Management Framework, and, in the case of the Natural Environment Division, with the Charities Act 2011.
5. Risks are regularly reviewed by management teams, in consultation with risk owners, with updates recorded in the corporate risk management information system. Risks are assessed on a likelihood-impact basis, and the resultant score is associated with a traffic light colour. For reference, the City of London's Risk Matrix is provided at Appendix 3.
6. The Natural Environment Cross-Divisional Risk Register includes risks which are managed by the Natural Environment Director at a strategic level. The cross-divisional risks are summarised in this report and the detailed register is presented at Appendix 1.

7. Each of the Natural Environment charities holds its own risk register which is reported to its respective management Committee.
8. City Gardens is part of the City Operations Division, and its risks are held in a separate risk register which is summarised in this report and provided in full at Appendix 2.

Current Position

Natural Environment Cross-Divisional Risks

9. The Natural Environment Director holds a Cross-Divisional Risk Register containing risks which are common to most or all Natural Environment charities: individual charities hold their own local risks on these matters, and the cross-divisional risk consolidates them for oversight by the Director.
10. The Natural Environment Director reviews the cross-divisional risks regularly in liaison with her Senior Leadership Team. The Register, summarised below and provided in full at Appendix 1, contains four RED risks, six AMBER risks and one GREEN risk.
11. The highest risk on the Cross-Divisional register remains '**Decline in condition of assets**'. The risk is currently scored at Red 32 (likely to occur, with a serious impact) due to ongoing concerns about inadequate repair and maintenance of the charities' built assets. Officers are working closely with colleagues in the City Surveyor's Department to assess, allocate and prioritise funding to areas of most need. Work is also underway to develop an agreed set of clearly defined roles and responsibilities for asset management and maintenance across departments. The progression of these actions, along with the completion of priority works, should help to reduce the risk.
 - Since the last report to the Natural Environment Board, the score of the '**Recruitment of suitable staff**' risk has reduced from Amber 12 (possible / major) to Amber 8 (unlikely / major). This is a result of successful recruitment to several posts across the Natural Environment Division. However, there are some key posts still to be filled before consideration can be given to reducing this risk further.
 - In response to comments from the Natural Environment Board, the previously titled 'Budget pressures' risk has been amended to '**Budget pressures and uncertainty over future funding model**'. The risk description has also been revised to clarify that it includes the proposed changes to the funding model for the charities. The ongoing Natural Environment Charity Review includes the development of a sustainable funding model which should, in time, lead to the reduction of this risk.

12. The full list of Natural Environment Cross-Divisional risk is as follows:
- **ENV-NE 003: Decline in condition of assets** (*RED, 32*)
 - **ENV-NE 004: Negative impacts from pests and diseases** (*RED, 16*)
 - **ENV-NE 010: Budget pressures and uncertainty over future funding model** (*RED, 16*)
 - **ENV-NE 015: Impacts of anti-social behaviour on staff and sites** (*RED, 16*)
 - **ENV-NE 001: Risks to health and safety** (*AMBER, 12*)
 - **ENV-NE 002: Adverse impacts of extreme weather and climate change** (*AMBER, 12*)
 - **ENV-NE 005: Negative impacts of development and encroachment** (*AMBER, 12*)
 - **ENV-NE 014: Lack of asset register** (*AMBER, 12*)
 - **ENV-NE 011: Recruitment of suitable staff** (*AMBER, 8*)
 - **ENV-NE 013: Negative impacts of visitor pressure** (*AMBER, 8*)
 - **ENV-NE 012: Negative impacts of carrying out wildlife management** (*GREEN, 4*)

City Gardens Risks

13. City Gardens is part of the City Operations Division of the Environment Department, alongside Cleansing Services. The City Gardens Risk Register, summarised below and presented in full at Appendix 2, contains seven risks (one RED, four AMBER, and two GREEN) which are owned and managed by the City Gardens Manager and his Management Team.
14. Since the last report to the Natural Environment Board, all risks have been reviewed and updated in the risk management information system.
15. The highest risk for City Gardens remains '**Negative impacts of public behaviour**' which is currently scored at Red 16 (likely to occur, with a major impact). Irresponsible public behaviour continues to be an issue in and around the City Garden sites. To address this, officers work in partnership with the City of London's Outreach Team and Street Environment Officers, and with Parkguard where appropriate. Recruitment is underway for a new 'Keeper' post. This individual will have enforcement duties, and it is hoped that once the position is filled, the risk will begin to reduce.
16. Work to reduce other risks on the register is ongoing. Staff resources are increasing, with four apprentice gardeners having been taken on in January, and four other posts currently proceeding through the recruitment process. Officers are working closely with colleagues in the City Surveyor's Department as the corporately approved funds to address the backlog of maintenance works is allocated and works prioritised.

17. The full list of risks held by City Gardens is as follows:

- **ENV-CO-GC 018: Negative impacts of public behaviour** (*RED, 16*)
- **ENV-CO-GC 011: Tree and plant diseases and other pests** (*AMBER, 12*)
- **ENV-CO-GC 016: Staff resources** (*AMBER, 12*)
- **ENV-CO-GC 017: Decline in condition of assets** (*AMBER, 12*)
- **ENV-CO-GC 009: Risk to health and safety** (*AMBER, 8*)
- **ENV-CO-GC 015: Electric vehicles** (*GREEN, 4*)
- **ENV-CO-GC 012: Climate and weather** (*GREEN, 3*)

Risk Management Process

18. Across the Environment Department, risk management is a standing agenda item at the regular meetings of local, divisional and departmental management teams.
19. Between management team meetings, risks are reviewed in consultation with risk and action owners, and updates are recorded in the corporate risk management information system.
20. Regular risk management update reports are provided to this Committee in accordance with the City's Risk Management Framework and, where applicable, the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

Identification of New Risks

21. New and emerging risks are identified through several channels, including:
- Directly by Senior Leadership Teams as part of the regular review process.
 - In response to ongoing review of progress made against Business Plan objectives and performance measures, e.g., slippage of target dates or changes to expected performance levels.
 - In response to emerging events and changing circumstances which have the potential to impact on the delivery of services. For example, changes to legislation, resource availability, severe weather events.

Corporate and Strategic Implications

22. Effective management of risk is at the heart of the City Corporation's approach to delivering cost effective and valued services to the public as well as being an important element within the corporate governance of the organisation.
23. The risk management processes in place in the Environment Department support the delivery of the Corporate Plan, our Departmental and Divisional Business Plans and relevant Corporate Strategies, such as the Climate Action; Cultural; Sport and Physical Activity; and Volunteering Strategies. Risks are also being considered as part of the Natural Environment and City Operations Divisions' strategies.

24. Risks which could have a serious impact on the achievement of business and strategic objectives are proactively identified, assessed and managed in order to minimise their likelihood and/or impact.

Conclusion

25. The proactive management of risk, including the reporting process to Members, demonstrates that the Environment Department is adhering to the requirements of the City of London Corporation's Risk Management Framework and, where applicable, the Charities Act 2011.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Natural Environment Cross-Divisional Risk Register
- Appendix 2 – City Gardens Risk Register
- Appendix 3 – City of London Corporation Risk Matrix

Contact

Joanne Hill, Business Planning and Compliance Manager, Environment Department

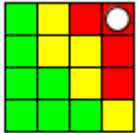
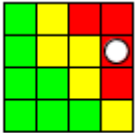

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Natural Environment Cross-divisional Risk Register

Rows are sorted by Risk Score

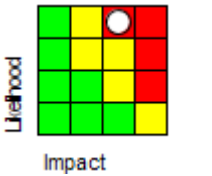
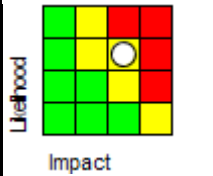
Risk no, Title, Creation date, Owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date/Risk Approach	Flight path
ENV-NE 003 Decline in condition of assets Page 37	<p>Cause: Inadequate planned and/or reactive maintenance; failure to identify and communicate maintenance issues; failure to retain expertise necessary to maintain complex buildings / sites. Reduced CWP budget and limited capital programme.</p> <p>Event: Fail to meet statutory regulations and checks. Operational, residential or public buildings deteriorate to unusable/unsafe condition.</p> <p>Effect: Potential serious health and safety risks including fatality or serious injury to users. Service capability disrupted; ineffective use of staff resources; damage to corporate reputation and poor customer satisfaction; increased requirement and costs for reactive maintenance and lack of budget to replace. Delays will have operational impact. Poor condition of assets, loss of value, permanent closure.</p>		Likelihood Impact 32	<p>This risk has been assessed as Red 32 (Likely; Extreme) due to ongoing and increasing concerns about inadequate repair and maintenance of operational property across all Natural Environment sites.</p> <p>The Environment Department is Lead Client for its operational property with inspections managed and records kept by the City Surveyor's Department (CSD). The Corporation has approved funding for the significant maintenance backlog, including the Natural Environment Division. We are awaiting process and timescales.</p> <p>Officers also continue to seek alternative funding or other opportunities to enable repair and maintenance works to be undertaken outside the Cyclical Works Programme (CWP).</p> <p>A condition survey of high-priority lodges was undertaken, and work is underway to</p>		Likelihood Impact 24	31-Mar-2025	

Appendix 1

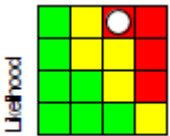
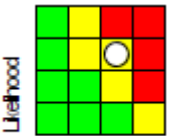
30-Aug-2017 Emily Brennan				<p>feed back the findings and prioritise work internally and with CSD.</p> <p>Positive meetings have been held with CSD and some actions have been agreed to help reduce this risk. The Environment Department will be represented on the group which decides on CWP allocations and priorities. We will work together to update the division of responsibilities and premises controller lists.</p> <p>21 Sep 2024</p>			Reduce	
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Action no, Title,	Action description	Latest Note	Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
ENV-NE 003a Liaison with other departments	Liaise with City Surveyor's Department and other internal departments to press for action to be taken especially with regard to the most urgent issues.	We continue to work with the City Surveyor's Department to resolve service delivery issues.	Jo Hurst	21-Sep-2024	31-Mar-2025
ENV-NE 003b Regular monitoring	Keep risk under regular review and monitor the actions and progress of each Natural Environment site.	This is a standing agenda item for discussion at all Senior Leadership Team meetings.	Emily Brennan	21-Sep-2024	31-Mar-2025
ENV-NE 003d Asset register	Create a comprehensive asset register.	<p>A full review of Natural Environment assets is underway. The outcome will be the compilation of a comprehensive, accurate asset register which will enable us to identify ownership of our assets. A Charity Asset Officer is now in post and is working to ensure assets are recorded correctly and consistently.</p> <p>Asset registers for built assets are undergoing review and being transferred into a new system with additional information. However, this does not include infrastructure assets such as bridges and culverts. The Assistant Director Charity Development is taking forward recommendations for changes ways of working with CSD and other corporate departments.</p>	Jo Hurst	21-Sep-2024	31-Mar-2025

Appendix 1

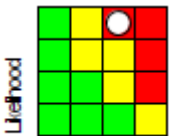
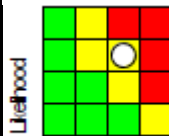
Risk no, Title, Creation date, Owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date/Risk Approach	Flight path
ENV-NE 004 Negative impacts from pests and diseases 30 Aug-2017 Emily Brennan	Causes: Inadequate biosecurity; purchase or transfer of infected trees, plants, soil and/or animals; 'natural' spread of pests and diseases from neighbouring areas. Event: Sites become infected by animal, plant or tree diseases e.g. Oak Processionary Moth (OPM), foot and mouth, Massaria, Ash Die Back, <i>Salmonella</i> (DT 191a), Bleeding Canker of Horse Chestnut. Effect: Service capability disrupted; public access to sites restricted; tree decline; reputational damage; increased cost of monitoring and control of invasive species; risk to human health from OPM or other invasive or indigenous species; loss of key native species; threat to existing conservation status of sites particularly those with woodland habitats.	 Likelihood Impact	16	This risk is currently scored as Red 16 (likely/ major) due to the potential biodiversity, financial and human health impacts associated with pests and diseases across many of our Natural Environment sites. The regional and national situation is monitored on a regular basis. Staff across all Natural Environment sites are carrying out a range of actions, such as inspections, spraying and pest removal to mitigate the impact of this risk and with the aim of reducing it to the target score. 21 Sep 2024	 Likelihood Impact	12	31-Mar-2025	
							Reduce	

Action no, Title,	Action description	Latest Note	Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
ENV-NE 004a	Cooperation and coordination across the Natural Environment Division and wider Department.	Natural Environment sites collaborate to share information and knowledge. This ongoing cooperation and coordination includes other parts of the Environment Department such as City Gardens and the Cemetery and Crematorium.	Emily Brennan	21-Sep-2024	31-Mar-2025
ENV-NE 004b	Regular review and monitoring of sites' local risks.	The risks of each individual site are kept under regular review.	Emily Brennan	21-Sep-2024	31-Mar-2025

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	Flight path
ENV-NE 010 Budget pressures and uncertainty over future funding model 16-Dec-2022 Emily Brennan	Cause: Reduction in income and the need for greater investment in order to deliver services. Pressures on the Corporation's finances have led to a proposed new financial model for the charities. Event: Inability to generate sufficient income to cover operating costs. Effect: Reduction or cessation of services; decline in quality of services; inability to respond to the impacts of other business risks.	 Likelihood Impact	16	The Assistant Director, Charity Development is developing a Fundraising Strategy, collaborating with colleagues across the Corporation to identify funding sources. The Strategy will include clear targets, define priority income streams and help to develop a coordinated approach. Actions from the Strategy will be built into the new five-year charity business plans. The Assistant Director, Charity Development is the Natural Environment Division's lead officer on the Natural Environment Charity Review. The Charity Review will also aim to develop a sustainable funding model for the charities and enable funds to be restricted for specific use within the Natural Environment Division. 21 Sep 2024	 Likelihood Impact	12	31-Mar-2026	
							Reduce	

Action no, Title,	Action description	Latest Note			Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
ENV-NE 010a Charity Fundraising Income Strategy	Develop an Income Generation Strategy.	The Assistant Director Charity Development is taking this forward and will seek Committee approval of the final version.			Jo Hurst	21-Sep-2024	30-Sep-2025

Appendix 1

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	Flight path
ENV-NE 015 Impacts of anti-social behaviour on staff and sites 02-Jan-2024 Emily Brennan	Cause: Anti-social behaviour of members of the public. Event: Anti-social, irresponsible or unsafe behaviour; abuse of staff; fly-tipping; litter; dog fouling; dog attacks; vandalism; abandoned/burnt out vehicles; traveller incursions. Effect: Safety of staff and visitors; damage to sites; reputational damage; disruption to operations; cost of repair and increased insurance premiums; loss of staff time.	 Likelihood Impact	16	We are developing a departmental approach to tackling abuse of staff; encouraging responsible behaviour and rapid reporting; putting preventative measures in place; collaborating with police and other enforcement agencies to minimise incidents. 21 Sep 2024	 Likelihood Impact	12	31-Mar-2025	
							Reduce	

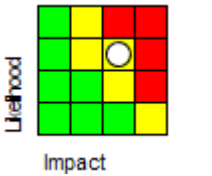
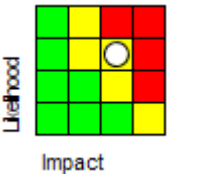
Action no, Title,	Action description	Latest Note	Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
ENV-NE 015a Departmental 'Abuse of Staff Policy'	Departmental 'Abuse of Staff Policy'.	An Environment Department reporting system is being trialled, following which a decision will be taken as to a permanent arrangement and departmental policy.	Emily Brennan	21-Sep-2024	31-Mar-2025
ENV-NE 015b Staff training	Training for staff on conflict management.	First-time or refresher training for staff on conflict management is being provided as part of a departmental arrangement.	Emily Brennan	21-Sep-2024	31-Dec-2024
ENV-NE 015c Enforcement partnerships	Build enforcement partnerships.	This is ongoing at each site with relevant local agencies and partners.	Emily Brennan	21-Sep-2024	31-Mar-2025
ENV-NE 015d Educate visitors	Educate visitors to use the sites responsibly.	The use of social media messaging, press releases, signage and face to face engagement with members of the public to encourage responsible behaviours is ongoing at each site as appropriate.	Emily Brennan	21-Sep-2024	31-Mar-2025

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	Flight path
ENV-NE 001 Risks to health and safety 21 Aug-2017 Emily Brennan	Causes: The operation of vast, widespread and diverse public green spaces carries a range of potential health and safety implications for members of the public, staff, volunteers and contractors. Event: Incident or accident with health and safety implications. Effect: Injury or death of a member of the public, volunteer, staff or contractor.		12	Due to the nature of our sites and the types of activities carried out, there are a range of health and safety risks associated with working practices and use of the sites. Each site has appropriate mitigating actions in place. The Department's Health and Safety Manager provides advice and assistance with identifying and managing health and safety risks. We expect the risk score to reduce further as vacancies are filled and new staff become familiar with, and support implementation of, policies, processes and safe working practices. 21 Sep 2024		8	31-Mar-2025	
							Reduce	

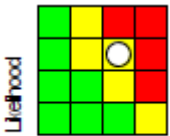
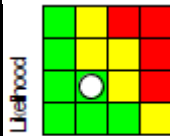
Action no, Title,	Action description	Latest Note	Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
ENV-NE 001a Regular review and monitoring	Regular review and monitoring of health and safety risks held by individual sites.	The Director keeps the health and safety risks of individual sites under review. Major health and safety risks are identified and discussed at Senior Leadership Team meetings.	Emily Brennan	21-Sep-2024	31-Mar-2025
ENV-NE 001b Health and Safety support and advice	Seek support and advice from Departmental Health and Safety Manager and other relevant health and safety resources.	The Environment Department's Health and Safety Manager is actively engaged in assisting sites to identify and manage their health and safety risks. Relevant staff are members of departmental and divisional health and safety groups at which issues are discussed, knowledge shared, and advice and support provided.	Emily Brennan	21-Sep-2024	31-Mar-2025

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	Flight path
ENV-NE 002 Adverse impacts of extreme weather and climate change 30 Aug-2017 Emily Brennan	Causes: Climate change causes more frequent and severe weather events: storms, wind, rainfall, snow, drought. Event: More frequent and prolonged periods of drought, flooding, storm damage, wildfires etc. Effect: Service capability disrupted; incidents increase demand for staff resources to respond and maintain public and site safety; temporary site closures; increased costs for reactive management. Strong winds cause tree limb drop; prolonged heat results in fires; snow disrupts site access; rainfall results in flooding and impassable areas. Damage/loss of rare/fragile habitats and species. Risk of injury or death to staff, visitors, contractors and volunteers. Damage to property and infrastructure.		12	Each site carries out a range of appropriate actions to control this risk. Officers continue to work with the Environment Department's Environmental Resilience Team to develop a Climate Resilience Plan for the Natural Environment Division. This work includes identifying specific climate change related risks and actions. Carbon Removals Project: A Project Manager and Project Officer are now in post and are taking the project forward. 21 Sep 2024		8	31-Mar-2025	
							Reduce	

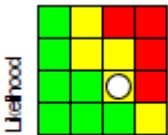
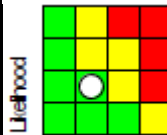
Action no, Title,	Action description	Latest Note	Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
ENV-NE 002a	Develop a Climate Resilience Plan for the Natural Environment Division.	We are working with the Department's Environmental Resilience Team to identify specific climate change related risks and actions for the Natural Environment Division.	Simon Glynn	21-Sep-2024	31-Dec-2024
ENV-NE 002b	Regular review and monitoring of climate and weather risks held by each Natural Environment site.	The risks held by each site on this subject are kept under regular review.	Simon Glynn	21-Sep-2024	31-Mar 2025
ENV-NE 002d	Progress the Carbon Removals Project.	A Project Manager and Project Officer are now in post and are taking the project forward. The project will protect the carbon stored on our open spaces and provide additional carbon storage. Actions include fencing to protect vulnerable trees; tree and hedge planting; and deer management.	Emily Brennan	21-Sep-2024	31-Mar-2025

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	Flight path
ENV-NE 005 Negative impacts of development and encroachment 30-Aug-2017 Emily Brennan	<p>Cause: Pressure on housing and infrastructure in London and South East; failure to monitor planning applications and challenge them appropriately; unsuccessful challenges; lack of resources to employ specialist support, carry out necessary monitoring/research or consult on Local Plans; lack of partnership working with, and engagement from, Planning Authorities.</p> <p>Event: Major development(s) have a negative impact on our sites through loss and damage to habitats. Increase in visitor numbers.</p> <p>Effect: Loss, damage, destruction or fragmentation of habitats. Increased damage through high visitor numbers. Encroachment/loss of land.</p>		12	<p>Staff at all Natural Environment sites work with their neighbouring local authorities and consult with stakeholders. They seek out opportunities to integrate sustainability into proposed developments, e.g. asking for CIL funds from developers to mitigate the impact where possible. They also do what they can to limit the impact of increased visitor numbers.</p> <p>We have accepted this risk at its current score as there is currently no additional actions we can take to reduce it further.</p> <p>21 Sep 2024</p>		12	Accept	

Action no, Title,	Action description	Latest Note	Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
ENV-NE 005a Regular monitoring and review	Regular monitoring of the risks held by individual sites and action taken.	The Director keeps the risks held by individual sites under review and is notified by her Assistant Directors of any specific planning issues and concerns that arise.	Emily Brennan	21-Sep-2024	31-Mar-2025

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	Flight path
ENV-NE 014 Lack of asset register Page 45 22-Aug-2023 Jo Hurst	Cause: We do not hold an accurate, comprehensive, asset register for the Natural Environment sites. Event: We do not know the ownership details of all our assets. Effect: Potential to be non-compliant with Charity Commission requirements.	 Likelihood Impact	12 A full asset review is underway which will result in the compilation of a comprehensive, accurate Asset Register. This will enable us to identify the ownership of our assets and ensure compliance with Charity Commission’s Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) requirements. Once full details are determined, we will also be able to consider wider opportunities for income generation, repurposing and/or disposal. The Charity Asset Officer is working on developing the asset register. This work will be completed in order of priority – highest priority assets should be completed by the end of the current financial year but will be subject to a rolling programme of review. 21 Sep 2024	 Likelihood Impact	4	31-Mar-2025		
						Reduce		

Action no, Title,	Action description	Latest Note	Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
ENV-NE 014a	Carry out Natural Environment Asset Review	A full review of Natural Environment assets is underway. The outcome will be the compilation of a comprehensive, accurate asset register which will enable us to identify ownership of our assets.	Jo Hurst	21-Sep-2024	31-Mar-2025
ENV-NE 014b	Establish and monitor protocols to ensure compliance with Charity Commission requirements.	Establish and monitor protocols for ensuring compliance with Charity Commission requirements in relation to charity-owned assets.	Jo Hurst	21-Sep-2024	31-Mar-2025




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	Flight path
ENV-NE 011 Recruitment of suitable staff 16-Dec-2022 Emily Brennan	Cause: There is a lack of appropriately skilled candidates in the wider environment employment market. Event: Difficulty in filling new and existing posts at the right level. Effect: Inability to deliver front-line and back-office services.	 Likelihood Impact	8	There is an apparent lack of individuals in the employment market with relevant skills and experience to fill some specialist posts - this is an industry-wide issue. A key element of delivering the new divisional structure is to offer our existing staff more learning and development opportunities to enable them to fill new and vacant posts in the future. Vacancies are being advertised across a broad range of recruitment outlets in an attempt to attract suitable candidates. The score of this risk has now been reduced from Amber 12 (possible / major) to Amber 8 (unlikely / major) because recruitment has been successful across the division. There are still some key posts to be recruited to before we can consider reducing the risk to the target score.	 Likelihood Impact	4	31-Mar-2025	
							Reduce	

Action no, Title,	Action description	Latest Note	Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
ENV-NE 011a Develop staff	Develop our staff	We will offer staff more learning and development opportunities to enable them to fill new and existing vacancies. Management training for all managers is taking place during Autumn 2024.	Emily Brennan	21-Sep-2024	31-Dec-2024

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	Flight path
ENV-NE 013 Negative impacts of visitor pressure 22-Aug-2023 Emily Brennan	Cause: Continual increase in number of visitors due to greater popularity of natural environment sites, population growth and new housing in local areas. Event: Long-term environmental damage, with a particular focus on protected landscapes and Sites of Special Scientific Interest and SACs which are not designed for such high visitor numbers. Increased use of car parks and parking on adjacent roads and land. Effect: Ecological and environmental damage; negative press coverage; loss of grants related to preservation; increased spend required to maintain sites / mitigate damage.	Likelihood Impact	8	Works to improve visitor infrastructure are being undertaken where possible and/or funding to enable this work is being sought. Education of visitors to encourage responsible use of sites is carried out via publicity, social media messaging and signage. Opportunities to increase this will be sought and taken up. 21 Sep 2024	Likelihood Impact	6	31-Mar-2025	
							Reduce	

Page 11

Action no, Title	Action description	Latest Note	Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
ENV-NE 013a	Improve visitor infrastructure.	Seek ways to improve visitor infrastructure to encourage visitors to stay on designated routes and minimise damage.	Emily Brennan	21-Sep-2024	31-Mar-2025
ENV-NE 013b	Carry out education and messaging campaigns to encourage responsible use of the sites.	Carry out education and messaging campaigns at our sites to encourage the public to use sites responsibly in order to conserve them for the future.	Emily Brennan	21-Sep-2024	31-Mar-2025

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	Flight path
ENV-NE 012 Negative impacts of carrying out wildlife management 22-Aug-2023 Emily Brennan	<p>Cause: Control of wildlife is necessary across the Natural Environment sites to ensure populations remain healthy and in balance with their environment, to conserve biodiversity and protect carbon stocks. For example, deer culling and grey squirrel control. Humane despatch of injured wildlife may also be necessary. These activities often require the use of firearms.</p> <p>Event: Failure to maintain and/or follow robust plans and policies to undertake deer culling and other wildlife controls responsibly, to a sufficiently high standard, in compliance with legal requirements, and with due regard to health, safety and animal welfare.</p> <p>Effect: Injury to staff or members of the public due to non-compliant use of firearms, lone working etc; risk to human health; road traffic accidents; damage to property. Detrimental impact on stakeholder relationships; negative publicity; reputational risk.</p>	 <p>Lifehood</p> <p>Impact</p>	4	<p>Deer management is a key issue at Epping Forest - contractors successfully carried out a cull during winter 2023/24. This was managed carefully to ensure the work was undertaken responsibly and in accordance with local policies and legal requirements. There were no incidents or issues. We worked closely with the Media Team to manage communications.</p> <p>Plans for the 2024/25 season have been approved by Committee. The Wildlife Manager is now in post which has increased in-house capacity and expertise. Contractors have been appointed for the 2024/25 season and officers will lead and support this work.</p> <p>Other wildlife management actions and associated policies are in place across the division and are kept under regular review to manage the risk.</p>	 <p>Lifehood</p> <p>Impact</p>	2	31-Mar-2025	
							Reduce	

Action no, Title,	Action description	Latest Note	Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
ENV-NE 012a Deer management	Deer management at Epping Forest	Contractors successfully carried out a deer cull at Epping Forest during winter 2023/24. Plans for the 2024/25 season have been approved by Committee.	Jacqueline Eggleston	21-Sep-2024	31-Mar-2025

Appendix 1

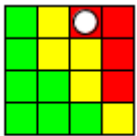
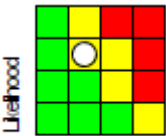
ENV-NE 012c Manage external communications	Work with the Media Team to manage communications.	Work closely with the Media Team to manage communications about deer management and other wildlife control.	Emily Brennan	21-Sep-2024	31-Mar-2025
ENV-NE 012d Maintain up to date policies	Review, update and communicate relevant policies.	Divisional and site-specific Firearms and other relevant policies (e.g. lone working) are reviewed and updated on a regular basis and are communicated to appropriate staff.	Emily Brennan	21-Sep-2024	31-Dec-2024

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City Gardens Risk Register

Rows are sorted by Risk Score

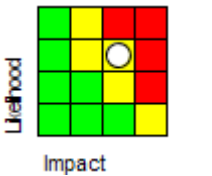
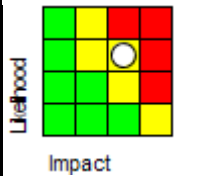
Risk no, Title, Creation date, Owner	Risk Description (Cause, Event, Impact)	Current Risk Rating & Score		Risk Update and date of update	Target Risk Rating & Score		Target Date/Risk Approach	Flight path
ENV-CO-GC 018a Negative impacts of public behaviour 04-Aug-2022 Jake Tibbetts	<p>Cause: Problematic, anti-social and criminal behaviour.</p> <p>Event: Litter; public urination and defecation (human and dog); dog fouling, dog attacks, street drinking; drug use; vandalism; wanton damage and theft.</p> <p>Effect: Damage and loss of assets; reduction in user experience and satisfaction; increased costs of cleaning and repairing damage; reputational harm.</p>	 <p>Lifehood</p> <p>Impact</p>	16	<p>Irresponsible public behaviour continues to be an issue in and around our sites. Actions are in place to address anti-social, criminal, and other problematic behaviours.</p> <p>We are in the process of recruiting a Keeper who will have enforcement duties. Once this individual is in post, we hope to be able to reduce the risk score.</p> <p>12 Sep 2024</p>	 <p>Lifehood</p> <p>Impact</p>	6	31-Mar-2025	
							Reduce	

Action no, Title,	Action description	Latest Note			Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
ENV-CO-GC 018a Partnership working	Continue to use Parkguard to engage with ASB offenders, and the Outreach Team regarding rough sleepers. Maintain and develop relationship with City	<p>We continue to work to identify a solution and improve the situation.</p> <p>We continue to work in partnership with Parkguard to engage with ASB offenders, and with the City's Outreach Team to engage with rough sleepers. We are feeding into the ASB Working Group</p>			Jake Tibbetts	12-Sep-2024	31-Mar-2025

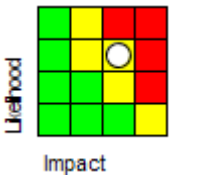
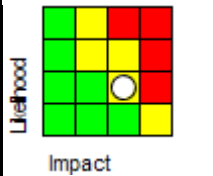
Appendix 2

	Police.	and providing data to them.			
ENV-CO-GC 018b Enforcement of byelaws	Explore the possibility of using Street Enforcement Officers to enforce byelaws within City Gardens.	We are working more closely with Street Environment Officers (SEOs). We are in the process of recruiting a Keeper who will have powers to enforce legislation. We will work with City Solicitor's Department to assess how appropriate it would be to introduce PSPOs across the City Gardens.	Jake Tibbetts	12-Sep-2024	31-Mar-2025

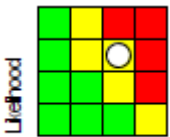
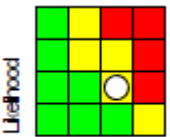
Appendix 2

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	Flight path
ENV-CO-GC 011 Tree and plant diseases and other pests 24-Feb-2022 Nicola Smith; Jake Tibbetts	Cause: Inadequate biosecurity, purchase or transfer of infected plants and soil. Invasion of pests and diseases from neighbouring areas e.g. Oak Processionary Moth, Massaria, Xyella; Box blight. Event: Sites become infected by plant or tree diseases. Effect: Threat to human health, either directly or indirectly; service capability disrupted; ineffective use of staff resources; damage to corporate reputation; loss of species; site closures (temporary) and associated access; increased costs for reactive maintenance.		12	This risk includes plant diseases such as Xyella which, while not known to be present in the UK, has spread in Europe, including France. City Gardens have been working to remove box hedging throughout the City. 85% of all box hedging has now been replaced with a range of pest-resilient species. 12 Sep 2024		12		
							Accept	

Action no, Title,	Action description	Latest Note	Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
ENV-CO-GC 011a	Ongoing action: Ensure staff training is kept updated to enable timely identification of pests and knowledge of correct treatment/prevention.	Provision of staff training is continuing. Information on training is shared through the Departmental Health and Safety Group, Equalities Board, SLT, and other avenues.	Nicola Smith	12-Sep-2024	31-Mar-2025
ENV-CO-GC 011b	Ongoing action: Annual tree inspections undertaken by qualified personnel through framework contract.	An annual programme is in place for cyclical inspections and targets are being met.	Jake Tibbetts	12-Sep-2024	31-Mar-2025
ENV-CO-GC 011c	Ongoing action: Maintain relationships with industry bodies, internal CoL departments, and neighbouring local authorities to ensure free flow of information.	Relationships with industry bodies, internal partners and neighbouring local authorities continue to be maintained.	Jake Tibbetts	12-Sep-2024	31-Mar-2025

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	Flight path
ENV-CO-GC 016 Staff resources Aug-2022 Jake Tibbetts	Cause: Aging workforce combined with difficulties in recruitment and retention of younger workforce due to remuneration and benefits package becoming increasingly uncompetitive for the market sector. Event: Reduction in skill and human resources within the service. Effect: Increased staff absence due to sickness; inability to deliver the necessary level of service or meet business objectives; increased number of complaints from the public; negative publicity/reputational damage.		12	Gardening resource will increase in recognition of the increased volume of work, with four additional posts currently going through the recruitment process. In addition, we recruited four new apprentice gardeners in January. With the increase in staff numbers, the overall average age of our gardeners is reducing. Greater resource should also increase staff satisfaction in the workplace. We aim to reduce the score of this risk when recruitment is complete and the Ambition 25 outcomes are realised.		8	30-Sep-2025	
							Reduce	

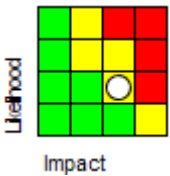
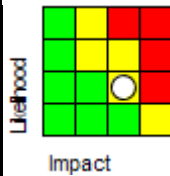
Action no, Title,	Action description	Latest Note	Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
ENC-CO-GC 016a Job desirability	Review the overall work package and consider how the offer can be developed to increase desirability of roles.	The new Corporate People Strategy has been published. We will re-evaluate the situation as the reward and development elements are clarified (Ambition 25).	Jake Tibbetts	12-Sep-2024	30-Sep-2025
ENV-CO-GC 016c Apprentice programme	Work towards securing a rolling apprentice programme to ensure continuous apprentices in City Gardens.	We recruited four new levy-funded apprentices in January 2024. The next recruitment of apprentices will take place in September 2025.	Jake Tibbetts	12-Sep-2024	30-Sep-2025

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	Flight path
ENV-CO-GC 017 Decline in condition of assets Page 55 12 Aug-2022 Jake Tibbetts	Cause: Poor maintenance of assets; failure to implement recommendations. Event: Failure to meet statutory regulations and checks. Built assets deteriorate to unusable/unsafe condition. Effect: Poor condition of assets; service failures; loss of value; cost of repair; potential fines from statutory bodies and insurance claims.	 Liveliness Impact	12	Lack of investment in building and infrastructure maintenance over the past few years has greatly increased leading to the potential for major failures in the future. We continue to liaise with City Surveyor's Department (CSD) to make them aware of issues and to compile an accurate, comprehensive, asset register for City Gardens. Funding to address the backlog of maintenance works has been approved. We are working with CSD to identify priority works but are aware of a resource issue within CSD to deliver the works. We aim to reduce the risk score further once priority works are underway.	 Liveliness Impact	8	31-Mar-2025	
							Reduce	

Action no, Title,	Action description	Latest Note	Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
ENV-CO-GC 017a	Undertake an annual review of the 20 year programme of investment and maintenance of all built assets.	The 20-year works programme is reviewed on an annual basis.	Jake Tibbetts	12-Sep-2024	31-Mar-2025
ENV-CO-GC 017b	Regular inspections and reporting of defects	Carry out inspections and report defects as they arise. Ensure that unresolved actions are highlighted to City Surveyor's Department.	Jake Tibbetts	12-Sep-2024	31-Mar-2025

Appendix 2

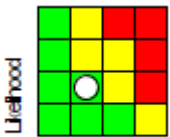
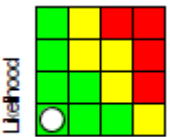
ENV-CO-GC 017c Review and monitoring	Undertake regular internal review and monitoring of condition and safety of assets.	Internal checks are carried out on an ongoing basis. These are monitored every quarter to ensure they have been completed.	Jake Tibbetts	12-Sep-2024	31-Mar-2025
ENV-CO-GC 017d Meetings with CSD	Re-establish regular liaison meetings with City Surveyor's Department (CSD).	Due to the complexity of City Gardens' sites, several teams from the City Surveyor's Department are involved in the repair and maintenance of our assets. We have established six-monthly meetings with all relevant CSD contacts in order to improve communication and awareness of our requirements.	Jake Tibbetts	12-Sep-2024	31-Mar-2025

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	Flight path
ENV-CO-GC 009 Risk to health and safety 24-Feb-2022 Nicola Smith; Jake Tibbetts	Cause: Failure to adhere to health and safety policies and procedures. Failure to link work activity with adequate procedures; risk assessments and safe systems of work not complied with; inadequate appropriate training; failure to implement the results of audits. Event: Staff, volunteers, contractors or licensees undertake unsafe working practices, notably working at roadside or at height in City. Effect: Injury to staff, volunteers, contractors or member of the public; prosecution and fine by HSE and/or Police; increased insurance premiums; reputational damage.		8	While we cannot remove this risk, we continue to take actions to mitigate it as far as possible and maintain the score at the current level. Health and safety procedures are kept under regular review and the Emergency Plan will be reviewed and updated during the coming months. A recent review of City Gardens' health and safety procedures produced positive results. Some additional practices were recommended, such as increasing the number of external audits that are carried out, and we are working to implement these. 12 Sep 2024		8		
							Accept	

Action no, Title,	Action description	Latest Note	Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
ENV-CO-GC 009a	Accident Reporting Ongoing action: Continue to develop a good culture of reporting accidents, incidents and near misses.	Officers continue to report accidents, incidents and near misses. Accidents are subject to investigation and review by the Departmental Health and Safety Group.	Jake Tibbetts	12-Sep-2024	31-Mar-2025
ENV-CO-GC 009b	Contractor protocol Ongoing action: Monitor compliance by contractors (City Surveyor's and external) with the Contractor Protocol. Regularly review documentation and processes in light of investigation findings and changes in legislation.	The Contractor Protocol covers works undertaken by City Surveyor's Department and external contractors. All contractors are required to sign up to, and comply with, the Protocol: it has been implemented with existing contractors and is rolled out to new contractors as required. Regular progress meetings are held with City Surveyor's Department and other service areas when working on larger projects.	Jake Tibbetts	12-Sep-2024	31-Mar-2025
ENV-CO-GC	Ongoing action: Essential and desirable	The staff training programme is reviewed regularly and individual training is monitored.	Jake	12-Sep-2024	31-Mar-2025

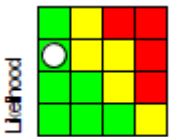
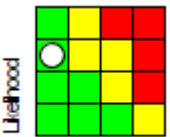

009d Training programme	training needs are identified for each staff role. All staff are required to undertake security and terrorism training, e.g. Project Griffin, Argus and Prevent. Completion of appropriate training is kept under review.		Tibbetts		
ENV-CO-GC-009f Emergency Plan	Review and update the Emergency Plan.	The Emergency Plan is to be updated and reviewed, taking into consideration the revised departmental and divisional structure.	Jake Tibbetts	12-Sep-2024	31-Mar-2025
ENV-CO-GC-009g Greater number of external audits	Seek options for a greater number of external audits.	We will look at options for introducing more external audits of City Gardens' health and safety practices.	Jake Tibbetts	12-Sep-2024	31-Dec-2024

Appendix 2

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	Flight path
ENV-CO-GC 015 Electric vehicles 04-Aug-2022 Jake Tibbetts	<p>Cause: Replacement of the entire fleet is required in order to meet the corporate requirement to operate an entirely electric fleet. There is a lack of electric vehicle options for the type of fleet we run, and lead-in periods are longer than the current contract runs for. The existing contract has been extended to the maximum permitted spend.</p> <p>Event: Existing contract expires before we are able to receive new vehicles, leaving us without a fleet.</p> <p>Effect: Service failure due to lack of vehicles, or significantly increased costs from procurement of a new temporary fleet.</p>	 <p>Lifehood</p> <p>Impact</p>	4	<p>We have awarded a contract for the lease hire arrangement of new electric vehicles. We have received two of the three vehicles and the final one is due to be delivered imminently.</p> <p>In addition, we have purchased one vehicle which is now in use. This vehicle is diesel as no electric option is available for this type of use.</p> <p>23 Sep 2024</p>	 <p>Lifehood</p> <p>Impact</p>	1	31-Oct-2024	Reduce

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Action no, Title,	Action description	Latest Note		Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
ENV-CO-GC 015a Source replacement and temporary vehicles.	Negotiate a contract with a supplier who can provide replacement vehicles but also temporary vehicles to bridge the period between the end of the existing contract and delivery of the new vehicles.	We have awarded a contract for the lease hire arrangement of the new vehicles. One has been received and two further vehicles are expected imminently.		Jake Tibbetts	23-Sep-2024	31-Oct-2024

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	Flight path
ENV-CO-GC 012 Climate and weather Page 60 24-Feb-2022 Nicola Smith; Jake Tibbetts	Cause: Severe wind events; prolonged drought conditions; extreme temperatures; prolonged precipitation or restricted precipitation. May be climate change influenced. Event: Severe weather/climate at one or more sites. Effect: 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; damage/loss of habitats and species; temporary site closures and associated access; increased costs for reactive management; injury or death to staff, visitors, contractors and volunteers; in the case of extreme temperatures, direct negative impact on the health of members of staff.	 Likelihood Impact	3	The Extreme Weather Policy is in place and improves our ability to reduce risk by closing sites before extreme weather events occur. The 'working in heat' risk assessment incorporates current guidance from the HSE regarding working in heat. The staff 'Working Safely' manual has been updated to reflect the changes in the risk assessment. We have now produced a plant species list which is being employed on all projects as business as usual. 12 Sep 2024	 Likelihood Impact	3	Accept	

Action no, Title,	Action description	Latest Note	Action owner	Latest Note Date	Due Date
ENV-CO-GC 012a Plant species	Increased variety of species planted in order to 'spread the risk', e.g. more drought tolerant species and those better able to cope with a range of temperatures/ rainfall levels.	We have produced a plant species list which we will review and improve annually as lessons are learnt. We will also share the list with external partners and ask for their feedback. This is captured in strategic documents e.g. CoL Tree Strategy SPD.	Jake Tibbetts	12-Sep-2024	31-Mar-2025
ENV-CO-GC 012c Monitor weather warnings	Ongoing action: Monitor weather warnings: fire severity index, hydrological outlook and water situation reports. Use staff email to advise on reactive reporting of weather warnings received through MET office and Resilience Forum.	An Extreme Weather Policy is in place to monitor extreme weather conditions and take appropriate actions. The Policy includes procedures to close sites with trees, where it is possible to do so, when there are severe alerts of amber and red with gusts of 45mph or more. An action log of these decisions is maintained in order to monitor patterns.	Jake Tibbetts	12-Sep-2024	31-Mar-2025



City of London Corporation Risk Matrix (Black and white version)

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 right (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 (D) below, a green risk is one that just requires actions to maintain that rating.

(A) 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)

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(B) Impact criteria

Impact title	Definitions
Minor (1)	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.
Serious (2)	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.
Major (4)	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.
Extreme (8)	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.

(C) Risk scoring grid

	Likelihood	Impact			
		X	Minor (1)	Serious (2)	Major (4)
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

(D) Risk score definitions

RED	Urgent action required to reduce rating
AMBER	Action required to maintain or reduce rating
GREEN	Action required to maintain rating

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

Contact the Corporate Risk Advisor for further information. Ext 1297

October 2015

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Agenda Item 8

Committee(s): Natural Environment Board	Dated: 17 October 2024
Subject: Project Prioritisation Process	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse engaged communities • Dynamic economic growth • Vibrant thriving destination • Flourishing public spaces • Providing excellent services • Leading sustainable environment
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	£ N/A
What is the source of Funding?	
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	N/A
Report of: Katie Stewart, Executive Director of Environment	For Decision
Report authors: Emily Brennan, Natural Environment Director	

Summary

The purpose of the report is to propose a project prioritisation process for the Natural Environment Division which will inform the development and implementation of the five year business plan. The project prioritisation process will enable production of a prioritised project list by applying a set of agreed prioritisation criteria. A prioritisation process is needed as the Corporation’s Natural Environment Division has limited resources (both monetary and staff) and does not have sufficient capacity to deliver everything on their ‘wish list’.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Approve the proposed project prioritisation criteria and process for the Natural Environment Division Business Plan, subject to the approval by the City Corporation acting in its capacity as trustee for each of the relevant Natural Environment charities.
- Authorise the Executive Director Environment to make minor amendments to the project prioritisation matrix to take on board comments/feedback arising

from its consideration by the different Natural Environment charity management committees.

Main Report

Current Position

One of the key priorities for the Natural Environment Division is to develop and implement a more strategic and joined-up approach to business planning and project prioritisation. This is needed to ensure that the charity objectives for each of the Natural Environment charities are being delivered and that charity resources are being used effectively and efficiently. It will also enable the Corporation's strategic priorities, business planning and project management processes to be taken into account as appropriate.

It is proposed to apply the project prioritisation process to the business and project planning for each of the following Natural Environment charities: Epping Forest (charity number 232990); Ashted Common (charity number 1051510); Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common (charity number 232987); Coulsdon and Other Commons (charity number 232989); West Wickham and Spring Park Wood (charity number 232988); West Ham Park (charity number 206948); Hampstead Heath (charity number 803392); and Highgate Wood and Queens Park Kilburn (charity number 232986). The proposed approach is therefore being put separately to the City Corporation in its capacity as trustee of each of these charities for their consideration and decision in relation to its application to the business plans and proposed activities of each charity.

The Corporation currently operates on annual departmental business plans which, for the Natural Environment charities, typically combine 'business as usual' (BAU) activities with projects. Projects with a value of greater than £50,000 must follow the Corporation's Project Gateway Process (Appendix 1), however this process does not apply to BAU activities or to projects with a value of less than £50,000. There is currently no central process for prioritising projects therefore business plans are typically a combination of essential BAU plus a 'wish list' of projects, which can result in unrealistic expectations and/or inability to deliver some activities.

Some projects are essential, for example those which relate to compliance and health and safety, whilst others are not. Capacity to deliver BAU and projects is limited but there is currently no clear way of assessing and deciding which activities can be delivered within existing capacity and budget, and which activities will require additional capacity and/or budget. The Corporation is seeking to address this by including in its new five-year Departmental Business Plans an estimation of the resources required to deliver each high-level activity. The proposed project prioritisation process for the Natural Environment Division also seeks to address this by agreeing and applying a list of priority criteria to each activity, thereby enabling production of a prioritised list of activities. This prioritised list can then be assessed against available staff and monetary resources to decide which activities will be included in the business plan.

The proposed project prioritisation process for The Natural Environment Division will feed into the Corporation’s comprehensive refresh of its project procedures which is due to begin in September 2024. By cutting down on bureaucracy, the Corporation aims to significantly quicken project delivery pace, whilst upholding its commitment to transparency and control. This streamlined approach will not only accelerate processes but also set a new standard for project management within the organisation.

The project prioritisation process will reflect the various governing documents for the Natural Environment charities, and charity law and guidance, as relevant. Projects will be considered in light of each charity’s objects and governing documents as appropriate and relevant; for example, whether they are compatible with and in furtherance of the charity’s objects. That will be relevant to the consideration in the matrix of whether the project is essential for operations. The inclusion of the charity objects category in the matrix helps to clarify which, and how many, of the objects are engaged; the analysis will be specific to each charity and its relevant objectives.

Proposed Prioritisation Criteria and Weighting

Each activity will be scored against the criteria listed below. Scores have been weighted according to the relative importance of the criteria: those shown in bold font have been allocated greater weight.

Criteria description	Scoring options
Is the project essential for operations (as opposed to desirable)?	Yes=4 / No=0
Will the project support one or more of the Corporate Plan Outcomes? (Diverse, engaged communities; Leading Sustainable Environment; Providing Excellent Services; Dynamic Economic Growth; Vibrant, Thriving Destination; Flourishing Public Spaces)	None =0, 1 outcome=1, 2 outcomes=2 etc (max=6)
Will the project support delivery of one or more of the Natural Environment Strategies: (Nature Conservation and Resilience; Community and Engagement; Access and Recreation; Culture, Heritage and Learning)	None=0, 1 strategy=1 etc (max=4)
Will the project support the Natural Environment charities’ objects?	None=0, 1 object=1 etc (max=5)
Will the project generate income (over and above the cost of delivery)?	Yes=4 / No=0
Has funding been secured?	Above 75% =4 51-75% =3 26-50% =2 Up to 25% =1 No=0
Will the project’s deliverables be sustainable in the longer-term?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financially sustainable 	Yes=1 / No=0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operationally sustainable 	Yes=1 / No=0
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmentally sustainable 	Yes=1 / No=0

Will the project deliver service improvement?	Yes=2 Partial=1 No=0
Will the project address a risk on the Natural Environment risk register?	Red risk=4 Amber risk=2 Green or No=0
What is the level of risk associated with the project? <i>Consider failure to deliver the project's outcomes, reputational risk etc</i>	Low=2 Medium=1 High=0
Will delivery of the project result in positive publicity and/or reputational benefit?	Yes=2 Possibly=1 No=0
Can the project be delivered within existing 'business as usual' capacity?	Yes=2 / No=0
Is the project to be delivered in partnership with another organisation/group?	Yes=2 / No=0
	MAXIMUM = 44

Conclusion

A project prioritisation process is urgently needed to inform the development, approval and implementation of an effective and affordable five year business plan for the Natural Environment Division. It is recommended that the process and criteria are approved by the Natural Environment Board and are then applied to proposed project activities to enable production of a prioritised list which will feed into the business plan.

Appendices

Appendix 1: CoL Project Gateway Process

Appendix 2: Natural Environment Project Prioritisation Spreadsheet

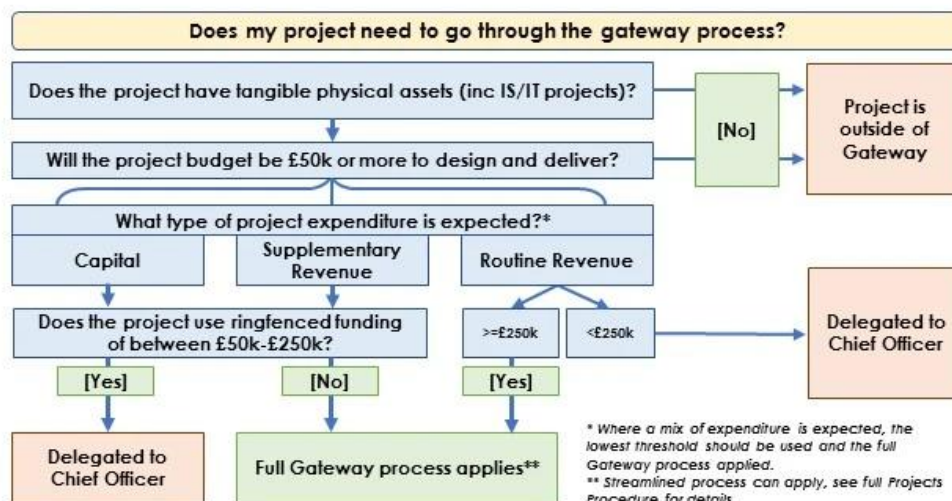
Contact

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Appendix 1: Project Gateway Process

Entering the Gateway Process

The Projects Procedure and Gateway Process applies to projects that result in tangible, physical deliverables or assets, including Information Systems / Technology projects where the assets are 'digital' in nature.



The difference between Capital, Supplementary Revenue and Routine Revenue is an accounting distinction and can be guided by Chamberlain's.

Capital: Major schemes (>£50,000) relating to the acquisition, creation or enhancement of an asset which yields benefits to the authority and the services it provides for a period of more than one year. Basic definition taken from the CIPFA Code of Practice on Local Authority Accounting, which has the force of law. Further conditions e.g. in relation to enhancements. Excludes regular or cyclical repairs, but includes cyclical replacement of major components, e.g. new windows etc.

Supplementary Revenue: (>£50,000) Project expenditure of a substantial or major nature which was previously classified as capital but is now revenue so as to conform to current accounting regulations, such as a major repair.

Routine Revenue: Traditional revenue project expenditure which is met from local risk budgets. e.g. cyclical painting and repairs.

Ringfenced funds: Designated Sales Pools, Cyclical Works Programme, Housing Revenue Account, Section 278, Section 106, and Area Strategies. Ringfenced funds also includes activities where the external funder (i.e. TFL) is providing funding for a restricted purpose.

Gateway Routes

Risk, Complexity and Uniqueness

	Low	Medium	High
Estimated Cost (£50k<£250k)	Light	Light	Regular
Estimated Cost (£250k~£5m)	Regular	Regular	Complex
Estimated Cost (£5m+)	Regular	Complex	Complex

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Project prioritisation process and criteria for scoring

Please complete the 'PROJECTS' tab as explained below.

COLUMN A: Add a the name/description of the project

COLUMN B: Is the project a statutory requirement or necessary for compliance (including health and safety)?
Select 'yes' or 'no' from the drop down box in column B.
If 'yes', there is no need to complete the remaining columns - notes can be added in column W.
If 'no', proceed to score the project against the criteria in columns C-T

COLUMNS C-T: Each column represents a criteria against which the project should be scored.
The scoring options are shown in row 3, and there is a drop down box in each row to choose from.
Scores have been weighted according to the relative importance of the criteria. Those in columns C-K (in red font) have been allocated greater weight than those in columns L-T.

COLUMN U: This will automatically sum the total score of each project. Once each project has been scored, the list can be ordered using this column to show the highest scored projects first.

COLUMN V: The estimated cost will then be added and the prioritised list assessed and selected for delivery in terms of available budget.

COLUMN W: Notes can be added in this column for further consideration.

Column	Criteria description	Scoring options
	Essential	
C	Is the project essential for operations (as opposed to desirable)?	yes=4 / no=0
D	Will the project support one or more of the Corporate Plan Outcomes?	yes=4 / no=0
E-H	Will the project support delivery of one or more of the Natural Environment Strategies:	(max=8)
	Nature Conservation and Resilience Strategy	yes=2 / no=0
	Community and Engagement Strategy	yes=2 / no=0
	Access and Recreation Strategy	yes=2 / no=0
	Culture, Heritage and Learning Strategy	yes=2 / no=0
I	Will the project support the individual charity's objects?	yes=4 / no=0
J	Will the project generate income (over and above the cost of delivery)?	yes=4 / no=0
K	Has funding been secured	Above 75%=4 / 51-75%=3 / 26-50%=2 / Up to 25%=1 / No=0
L-N	Will the project's deliverables be sustainable in the longer-term?	(max=3)
	Financially sustainable	yes=1 / no=0
	Operationally sustainable	yes=1 / no=0
	Environmentally sustainable	yes=1 / no=0
O	Will the project deliver service improvement?	yes=2 / partial=1 / no=0
P	Will the project address a risk on the charity's risk register?	Red risk=4 / Amber risk=2 / Green or No=0
Q	What is the level of risk associated with the project? <i>Consider failure to deliver the project's outcomes, reputational risk etc</i>	low=2 / medium=1 / high=0
R	Will delivery of the project result in positive publicity and/or reputational benefit?	yes=2 / possibly=1 / no=0
S	Can the project be delivered within existing 'business as usual' capacity?	yes=2 / no=0
T	Is the project to be delivered in partnership with another organisation/group?	yes=2 / no=0
		MAXIMUM SCORE = 45

Agenda Item 9

Committee(s): Natural Environment Board	Dated: 17 October 2024
Subject: Volunteering Audit	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Diverse Engaged Communities</i> • <i>Leading Sustainable Development</i> • <i>Providing Excellent Services</i> • <i>Flourishing Public Spaces</i>
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	N/A
Report of: Katie Stewart, Executive Director of Environment	For Information
Report author: Abigail Tinkler, Head of Learning, Natural Environment Division	

Summary

This report describes volunteering across the Natural Environment Division and City Gardens, providing an overview of the scale of volunteering activities, highlighting achievements and areas needing improvement. In the fiscal year 2023/24, approximately 50,000 volunteer hours were recorded, underscoring the substantial community involvement in conservation, wildlife monitoring, and public engagement activities across our open spaces. Despite this strong engagement and dedicated staff efforts, several challenges were identified, including the lack of centralised policies, inconsistent training, and resource constraints.

It is proposed to explore further, at the Natural Environment Board Away Day, the role of volunteering within Natural Environment Division and City Gardens and to help shape recommendations on its future management. These will be presented for approval in a subsequent report to Members.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

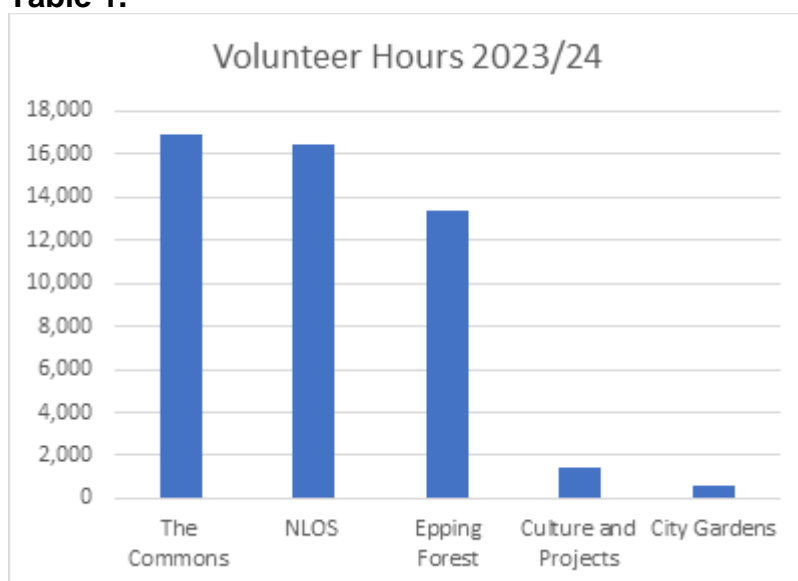
Background

1. Volunteers are integral to the success of the Natural Environment Division and City Gardens. This report analyses current volunteer activities and identifies key issues relating to volunteer management and support.

Current Position

2. In 2023/24, volunteers contributed nearly 50,000 hours, equivalent to approximately 1,394 full-time (35-hour) work weeks. This substantial commitment reflects the widespread involvement and dedication of volunteers across various sites.
3. The distribution of volunteer hours across the Natural Environment Division and City Gardens is shown in Table 1 below. An overview of volunteering activities is provided in Appendix 1.

Table 1.



Volunteer Audit

4. Several interviews were conducted with front line staff who work closely with volunteers in our open spaces. The feedback received demonstrated that staff members are dedicated to engaging volunteers, recognising volunteers' role as advocates and as crucial contributors to the sites. Staff also reported that they listen and respond to volunteer interests and needs.
5. Staff invest time in supporting and training volunteers, who learn important transferable skills such as gardening, conservation, wildlife identification, learning facilitation and visitor engagement. However, there is no formalised training on topics that may be relevant across the sites, such as understanding the role of

the Natural Environment Division and the role volunteering plays in delivering shared goals.

6. There is a mixed model of volunteering management. Some sites and teams (The Commons, Learning Team) utilise Corporation staff to manage volunteers, and other sites support external volunteer groups. Corporation staff invest time and expertise in working with external volunteer groups, for example planning, co-ordinating and providing experienced staff to support some sessions such as conservation work. External volunteer groups are listed below:
 - a. West Ham Park: Friends of West Ham Park.
 - b. Hampstead Heath: Heath Hands, Heath and Hampstead Society.
 - c. Highgate Wood: Heath Hands, Good Gym.
 - d. Epping Forest: Epping Forest Conservation Volunteers, Epping Forest Conservation Volunteers, Epping Forest Heritage Trust, Epping Forest Riders' Association, Friends of Wanstead Parklands, Friends of Wintry Wood, Highams Park Snedders, The Wren Wildlife and Conservation Group, Friends of Swains Green.
 - e. City Gardens: Friends of City Gardens, Barbican Wildlife Group, The Aldgate Gardening Club, Middlesex Street Estate Community Gardeners, and the Biodiversity Partnership Group.
 - f. Keats House: Keats Community Library, Heath Hands.
7. Volunteer hours are captured by these groups and included within the hours reported for each section. The largest external volunteering group is Heath Hands, which contributed 15,000 volunteer hours last year and has a City of London staff member seconded to manage the programme.
8. Appendix 2 'Report on Volunteering at Epping Forest' provides insight into a range of external volunteering groups.
9. There is an on-going challenge of balancing high volumes of volunteer requests with available staff resources to accommodate these requests.
10. A range of departmental policy and guidance documents were created between 2016 – 2021, when the Open Spaces Department had a 0.5fte staff member dedicated to volunteering across the department, reinforced, from 2019 onwards, by a pan-Corporation resource in the shape of the Corporate Volunteering Manager. A shared vision for volunteering was created within the Division, which highlighted how volunteering benefits both the volunteers and the organisation. See Appendix 3 'Open Spaces Vision for Volunteering' for information on previous policies and guidance. Whilst there has been an absence of up-to-date policy and procedure on volunteering for the Natural Environment Division and City Gardens, however, there is now an opportunity to implement the Corporation's 'Guidance for Managing External Volunteers' which was approved by the Corporation's SLT in summer 2023.
11. For staff managing volunteers, there has been an absence of centralised training and support, but this gap is being picked up through the recent recruitment of a Corporation-wide volunteering manager. Previously, staff training in volunteer

management was provided by a 0.5 fte role within the Open Spaces Department.

12. There is a lack of a straightforward method for reimbursing volunteer expenses (e.g., travel and refreshments) and limited recognition methods.
13. Corporate volunteering is managed differently across sites, with some managed by external groups and others by staff. At Hampstead Heath, City Gardens and Epping Forest, corporate volunteering is managed by external volunteer groups and the associated income is retained by these groups. For example, Heath Hands gained £42,000 income from corporate volunteering in 2023/24. At Epping Forest, staff are investigating opportunities to lead corporate volunteering sessions internally. At West Ham Park and The Commons, corporate volunteering sessions are led by Corporation staff. The levels of charging for corporate groups are currently decided at site level. For more information on the management of volunteering at site level, please see Appendix 4 'Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common Volunteering Report'.
14. There is a demand for corporate volunteering which requires staff time to manage. The City Gardens Team has recently recruited an apprentice to help meet this demand. Corporate volunteering in City Gardens sites was previously overseen by The Friends of City Gardens and supported by City Gardens team. This is now transferring back to City Gardens who have recently recruited an apprentice to develop a corporate volunteering programme, and the employment of a Gardener (Volunteer Facilitator). City Gardens are also looking at how they can work with external providers to improve the offer to corporate volunteers. Recently they have been working with "Leaves Breath" who have facilitated two events. It is planned to trial a longer partnership with them and explore how this type of relationship can be developed.
15. A Volunteering Manager is in post in the corporate Learning and Organisational Development Team to support volunteer initiatives across the Corporation. Key responsibilities include:
 - a. Managing LEAP – the Corporation's Employee Volunteering Programme, which promotes and supports Corporation staff volunteering including within the NE Division and City Gardens.
 - b. Collaborating with External Volunteer Departments, which includes working with staff who manage volunteers across the Corporation, including those in the Division, to ensure consistency of processes, develop tools and training, and share best practice around volunteer recruitment, management and recognition.
 - c. With the support of the 'Volunteer Ways of Working Group', implement the Corporation's "Guidance for Managing External Volunteers" signed off by the Corporation's SLT in Summer 2023.

Options

16. Options for alternative way of managing volunteers across Natural Environment Division and City Gardens will be presented for discussion with Members at the Natural Environment Board Away Day to seek their views informally.

Proposals

17. Proposals for the future management of volunteers within Natural Environment Division and City Gardens will be developed in conjunction with Members at the Natural Environment Board Away Day and presented to Members for their approval at a subsequent meeting.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Strategic implications: Volunteers working in our open spaces make a valuable contribution to our strategic aims and support our charitable objects. An updated policy on volunteering has been identified as a current gap.

Financial implications: Volunteer hours equated to 1,394 full-time (35-hour) work weeks in 2023/24, however, staff time is required to effectively manage our volunteers. For corporate volunteers, fees and charges are in place; these are decided on a site-by-site basis.

Resource implications: Volunteers provide a valuable resource to support the range of activities listed in Appendix 1.

Legal implications: Volunteers are not protected in law in the same way as employees. The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) has information on volunteers' legal status.

Risk implications: No significant risks, but a lack of a consistent approach to volunteer management may result in variable standards and poor engagement with volunteers, with a possible outcome being a reduction in our respective volunteer pool and/or a reputational impact on the Corporation.

Equalities implications: The management and recruitment of volunteers is undertaken in compliance with our Public Sector Equality Duty 2010.

Climate implications: Volunteers working in our open spaces make a valuable contribution to delivering our climate actions.

Security implications: None

Conclusion

18. The Natural Environment Division and City Gardens benefit greatly from volunteer support, with nearly 50,000 hours recorded in 2023/24 covering a range of activities. Several challenges in relation to volunteering are identified, relating to volunteering policy, management, training and support. It is proposed to explore further at the Natural Environment Board Away Day, the role of volunteering within Natural Environment Division and City Gardens, to help shape recommendations on its future management. This will be presented for approval in a subsequent report to Members.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Overview of volunteering activities
Appendix 2: Report on Volunteering at Epping Forest
Appendix 3: Open Spaces Vision for Volunteering and list of policies and guidance.
Appendix 4: Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common Volunteering Report

Abigail Tinkler

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Appendix 1: Overview of Volunteer Activities

West Ham Park

- **Sites:** Vegetable Garden, Park, Meadow Areas
- **Activities:** Bird surveys, vegetable garden maintenance, weeding, mulching, pruning, litter picking

Epping Forest

- **Sites:** Forest-wide, Higham's Park, Surrounding Areas, High Beech Visitors Centre
- **Activities:** Volunteer wardens, litter picking, insect monitoring, conservation tasks, public engagement (including managing a visitor centre and leading public walks and cycle rides, family workshops and storytelling sessions), championing sustainable transport to and from the Forest.

Hampstead Heath and Highgate Wood

- **Sites:** Various Locations across the Heath, Highgate Wood, including Parliament Hill, Golders Hill Park, East Heath, Hill Garden & Pergola, Heath Extension, Swimming Ponds.
- **Activities:** Event volunteering, wildlife monitoring, themed walks, conservation, gardening, litter picking, wildlife interpretation, community outreach, school and youth engagement, public engagement (including leading school and community activities and public walks).

Keats House

- **Sites:** Keats House, Keats House Garden, Keats Community Library
- **Activities:** Tours, poetry readings, front-of-house roles, garden maintenance, customer service

The Commons

- **Sites:** Burnham Beeches, Stoke Common, Ashted Common, West Wickham and the Coulsdon Commons.
- **Activities:** conservation, wildlife monitoring (e.g. bats, reptiles, butterflies), maintenance (car parks, cattle grids, forest). livestock management, event support and organisation, administrative support.

City Gardens

- **Sites:** Bunhill Fields, Barbican Wildlife Group, Barbers Surgeons, Nobel Street, Church Entry, Middlesex Street Estate, Postman's Park and numerous sites with birdfeeders.

- **Activities:** Gardening, habitat creation, conservation, wildlife monitoring (e.g. bats, plants and pollinators), applying for funding bids, engaging with schools and giving public walks, replenishing bird feeders.

The Learning Team

- **Sites:** West Ham Park, Epping Forest
- **Activities:** Learning facilitation



Epping
Forest
Registered Charity

VOLUNTEERING IN EPPING FOREST

Get involved in volunteering in
Epping Forest

June 2024



A local 14 year old boy interested in a career in conservation, and his Mother, attended our 'Lend a Hand Day'!

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WELCOME

The Oxford dictionary defines volunteering as “a person who does a job without being paid for it”. For those of us who choose to volunteer, we understand that there are lots of non-monetary benefits to doing so. Examples of this include learning new skills, improving mental and physical health, connecting with new friends in the community, improving confidence and achieving a sense of fulfilment from giving something back to a worthy cause.



The UK Government's People and Nature Survey at the end of the Covid-19 pandemic stated that 83% of children believe nature makes them happy and that natural spaces are critical for children to make social connections. The campaign to end loneliness in 2022 found that 50% of all adults reported that they felt lonely. However, the Government's Community Life Survey in 2022 shows an 18% decrease in volunteering between 2013 and 2022. We need to change that.

Our estimates show that 12,637 volunteer hours were donated to support Epping Forest in 2023. This year, with your support, we would like to see this number increase. To achieve this, we have invested in dedicated staff to help support volunteering and we are working with a range of community partners to diversify opportunities where you can get involved.

Don't forget, the most important thing about volunteering is that it should be fun! We welcome your ideas and feedback at epping.forest@cityoflondon.gov.uk

On behalf of the Conservators, I offer my sincere thanks to all those who continue to contribute their time, energy and skills to help us look after Epping Forest.

Benjamin Murphy CC,
Chairman of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee



A photograph of the Muslim Hikers event, hosted by one of our volunteer partners, Epping Forest Heritage Trust. Photo Credit: Kadeer Ali

EPPING FOREST VOLUNTEERS

We are extremely grateful to the groups of volunteers who offer valuable support with Epping Forest's mission and vision, helping us to achieve our strategic aims and priorities.



Mission:

To conserve and protect Epping Forest as London's largest biodiverse green space for the health, recreation and enjoyment of everyone.

Vision:

Epping Forest is a thriving, biodiverse green space that benefits the City of London's communities and enhances the wider environment as part of a larger, interconnected landscape.

Strategic aims:

We aim to conserve, enhance and protect the Forest's special natural environment and its heritage.

We aim to welcome encourage and inspire our visitors

We aim to support, collaborate and innovate, sustainably managing the Forest for future generations.

Strategic priorities:

1. A welcoming destination for all.
2. A beautiful Forest, sustaining an internationally and nationally important mosaic of wildlife habitats.
3. An inspiring space benefiting people's health, and providing opportunities for recreation and enjoyment.
4. A range of special heritage landscapes which are protected and celebrated.
5. A resilient environment, where challenges are embraced and opportunities explored.

EPPING FOREST VOLUNTEERS

City of London Epping Forest has a variety of volunteer roles including conservation work, surveys, patrolling with our Keepers, helping at our visitor centres, and lots more.

In 2023 Epping Forest had:



**102 active
volunteers**



**2,529 hours
volunteered**



**6 project
areas**

What motivates our volunteers:

"to help my local environment"

"To help protect and preserve our local natural environment"

"To connect with nature"

"Get my steps in while helping to make a difference"

"An interest in the heritage of the Forest"

"A desire to give back to the Forest after benefitting from having access to it."

"Meeting new people"

Interested in joining the team?

Email: EFVolunteering@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Register your interest [here](#)



VOLUNTEER GROUPS



EPPING FOREST CONSERVATION VOLUNTEERS

Hands-on conservation: Making a difference one task at a time.

Over the last 47 years The Epping Forest Conservation Volunteers (EFCV) have completed more than 2000 conservation tasks, leaving behind a legacy of positive impressions across the Forest.

Tasks usually take place every Sunday and the second Tuesday of the month. Each involves close coordination with the Corporation of London Conservation team to ensure they support the overarching management plan.

If you are interested in learning more about the Epping Forest Conservation Volunteers, please visit www.efcv.co.uk or contact Spencer Cleminson at efcv2@yahoo.co.uk

VOLUNTEER GROUPS



EPHING FOREST CONSERVATION VOLUNTEERS EVENTS

Sunday 2 June – Thames Valley Stream Leaders; Kevin Mason & Steve Ford
Removing small trees along the length of the Stream and tributaries.
Parking; Jacks Hill North CP , GR TQ435995

Tuesday 11 June – Honey Lane. Leaders; Brian McGhie & TBA
Himalayan Balsam pulling within the boggy area. Evening task followed by pub night in the Woodbine
Parking; Honey Lane CP, GR TQ413996

Sunday 16 June – Woodyard pond. Leaders; Steve Ford & TBA
Removing small trees in the area of the Purlieu Bank.
Parking; Woodyard CP, GR TQ472030

Sunday 23 June – Furze Ground Leaders; Spencer Cleminson & TBA
Bracken pulling & small tree removal around the heather areas. Pollard maiden Hornbeams.
Parking; Broadstrood CP, GR TQ428986

Sunday 30 June – Copley Plain Ditch. Leaders; Peter Smith & TBA
Bracken pulling & bramble removal to protect Marsh Fern. Pollarding maiden trees. Small tree removal.
Parking; Jacks Hill South CP, GR TQ435995

Sunday 6 July Jacks Hill bog. Leaders; Spencer Cleminson & TBA
Felling small trees on the west side as part of bog management.
Parking; Jacks Hill North CP, GR TQ435995

Tuesday 16 July - Warren Plantation/ St Thomas Quarters Leaders; Kevin Mason & TBA
Rhododendron regrown removal
Parking; Warren Plantation, GR TQ429010

Sunday 21 July – Wake Valley heath & bog Leaders; Peter Smith & TBA
Bracken pulling & small tree removal on heath. Bramble & Pendulate sedge removal from bog.
Parking; Wake Valley CP, GR TQ423988

EPPING FOREST CONSERVATION VOLUNTEERS EVENTS CONTINUED..

Sunday 2 June – Thames Valley Stream Leaders; Kevin Mason and Steve Ford
Removing small trees along the length of the Stream and tributaries.
Parking; Jacks Hill North CP , GR TQ435995

Sunday 28 July – Long Running Leaders; Kevin Mason and TBA
Annual bracken pulling in the orchid area.
Parking; Jacks Hill South CP, GR TQ435995

Sunday 4 August – Lower Forest* Leaders; TBA
Felling small trees and holly.
Parking; Woodyard CP, GR TQ472030

Tuesday 13 August – Wake Valley Pond Leaders; Brian McGhie and Neil Redgwell
Bracken management and small/medium tree felling. Removing dried material away from pond area. No working in pond.
Parking; Mount Pleasant CP, GR TQ417981

Sunday 18 August – Knighton Wood* Leaders; Spencer Cleminson and Ruth Moore
Felling small trees and holly.
Parking; Knighton CP, GR TQ407935

Sunday 25 August – Honey Lane* Leaders; Peter Smith and TBA
Felling/removal of small trees.
Parking; Honey Lane CP, GR TQ413996

Sunday 1 September – Long Hills* Leaders Steve Ford and TBA
Holly removal and haloing veteran trees.
Parking; The Warren, GR TQ409956

Tuesday 10 September – Warren Wood Slopes* Leaders; Brian McGhie and Neil Redgwell
Felling small trees and holly.
Parking; Connaught Water CP, GR TQ405955

Sunday 15 September – Lower Forest* Leaders; Steve Ford and TBA
Felling small trees and holly.
Parking; Woodyard CP, GR TQ472030

Sunday 22 September – Walthamstow Forest*
Leaders; Spencer Cleminson and TBA
Felling small trees and holly.
Parking; Mill Plain

Sunday 29 September – Barn Hoppitt
Leaders; Peter Smith and TBA
Clearing bramble and small trees around the
ant hills only.
Parking; Barn Hoppitt CP, GR TQ398947



VOLUNTEER GROUPS

EPPING FOREST CONSERVATION VOLUNTEERS



“It’s light exercise in one of the most beautiful places in London, and it helps maintain a site of immense natural value... It adds a real sense of meaning and purpose to spending time outdoors.” - Dan, Epping Forest Conservation Volunteer.

VOLUNTEER GROUPS



EPPING FOREST HERITAGE TRUST

Epping Forest Heritage Trust (EFHT) is a charity and membership organisation that works to help the City of London Corporation's aims to preserve and protect Epping Forest and its irreplaceable biodiversity, culture, and heritage now and for generations to come.

Our vision is a thriving Forest, rich in biodiversity, heritage and culture, enjoyed and conserved now and for generations to come.

We aim to:

1. educate and inspire people about Epping Forest
2. do hands-on work to conserve and grow the Forest
3. protect the Forest through research and advocacy.

Our areas of work are:

- Inspiring people from all background to visit and love the Forest through regular guided walks, talks and community outreach events
- Sharing information about the ecology, history and culture of the Forest through talks and various collaboration events
- Organising the annual 'Epping Forest Big Walk'
- Managing the Epping Forest Visitor Centre at High Beach on behalf of the City of London Corporation
- Leading regular hands-on conservation sessions with volunteers to improve the biodiversity of the Forest, including women only sessions
- Advocating on planning proposals to ensure the Forest does not suffer damage from more development, traffic or pollution
- Championing sustainable transport to, from and around the Forest in order to reduce pollution and protect the Forest's biodiversity and enjoyment by the public
- Campaigning to raise awareness of the Forest with decision-makers and policymakers

Volunteering opportunities:

We have a range of volunteering opportunities, from one off volunteering to help conserve the Forest, to regular monthly shifts at the Visitor Centre. If you care about the Forest we are sure we have an opportunity for you to help!

- Helping at hands-on conservation sessions – either ad hoc or as part of a regular team
- Being an Information Assistant at the Epping Forest Visitor Centre at High Beach
- Leading or helping to marshal guided walks
- Helping develop our policy work, on planning proposals, the ecology of the Forest or engaging politicians and policy makers in the importance of the Forest
- Helping with our fundraising or office administration

Visit <https://efht.org.uk/volunteering/> to find out more.

Upcoming events

For more details see the links below:

- Friday 31 May: [conservation volunteering day](#) (women* session, for women, non-binary and trans people)
- Friday 7 June: [conservation volunteering day](#) (part of The Big Help Out)
- Saturday 8 June: [conservation volunteering day](#) (part of The Big Help Out)
- Sunday 23 June: [Guided Walk – Ancient Woodlands and Loughton Camp](#)
- Saturday 13 July: [Guided Walk – A Stroll in the Forest at Walthamstow](#)
- Sunday 18 August: [Guided Walk – The North Frontier](#)
- Sunday 15 September: [Epping Forest Big Walk](#)

To find out more

- Facebook, Instagram, X: @EppingForestHT
- Eventbrite: efht.eventbrite.com
- Visit our website: www.efht.org.uk
- Email admin@efht.org.uk, or call us on 020 8508 9061

What's new

Epping Forest Walks App: Explore Epping Forest and some of its most iconic trails with our simple to use GPS-enabled app that offers access to 20 unique trails, including 10 official waymarked trails by the City of London Corporation.

- Google play: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=uk.org.efht.eppingforest>
- Apple app store: <https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/epping-forest-walks/id6496284584>



VOLUNTEER GROUPS



EPPING FOREST RIDERS' ASSOCIATION

The Epping Forest Riders' Association (EFRA) are always looking for volunteers to assist them with organising their events in and around Epping Forest. Volunteers do not need to be able to ride horses themselves, just happy to help with things. It is of course useful if volunteers understand being around horses but it also provides an opportunity for people who might want to know more about working with horses to get involved in an easy way.

For the escorted rides EFRA need people to act as stewards at road crossings, to assist with car parking and to help serve refreshments at the end of the rides. All volunteers at the escorted rides are provided with a free picnic following the event. Escorted rides are normally 10.30am -12.30/1pm. Volunteers should arrive at 9am to help with car parking. Venues are Bury Road Car Park or the Gardens of Hanbury.

The group also require volunteers to help at showing shows which currently take place in the Epping Forest area at Barnfields, Sewardstone Road. For these, volunteers are required to help with setting up/ taking down courses, gazebos, signs etc., helping with car park management. Volunteers are also required to assist the judges and the secretary.

Showing Shows timings: Help set up from 7.30-8.30am. Car parking from 8am-10am and 12-2pm. Ensuring arenas and car parking are clear between 9.30 am - 5pm. It may be possible to work as a volunteer in shifts for the longer days.

To find out more please contact efranews@gmail.com

EFRA EVENTS

Sunday 30 June - Horseman's Sunday - High Beach Village Green in conjunction with High Beach Church

Sunday 14 July - Midsummer Ride - Bury Road or Gardens of Hanbury

Sunday 27 October - Halloween Ride - Bury Road or Gardens of Hanbury

Friday 29 December - Mince Pie Ride - Bury Road or Gardens of Hanbury

VOLUNTEER GROUPS



FRIENDS OF WANSTEAD PARKLANDS

The Friends of Wanstead Parklands (FWP) (www.wansteadpark.org.uk) is a campaigning group working with the City of London to improve access, heritage features and ecology in Wanstead Park. The group run events, fund improvements and raise awareness of the Park's history and natural beauty. The main priorities for the Group are restoration of the lakes, improved paths, and a new Visitor Centre hub.

Friends of Wanstead Parklands Events

Saturday 8 June, 10am: Bee Walk in Wanstead Park with bee expert Tony Madgwick.

Sunday 9 June, 11am: Litter pick and bookstall.

Saturday 22 / Sunday 23 June: Wren Wanstead Wildlife Weekend: various events such as guided walks, workshops, pond dip, picnics, stories for children run by Wren Group with support from Friends of Wanstead Parklands.

Sunday 7 July, 10am: Family cycle ride around the Ornamental Waters, led by Redbridge London Cycling Campaign with Friends of Wanstead Parklands supporting with marshals etc. Fundraiser for play area.

Sunday 14 July, 11am: Litter pick and bookstall.

Sunday 15 September: Stall at Wanstead Festival.

Sunday 29 September, 10am: Late summer history walk in the Park.

VOLUNTEER GROUPS



FRIENDS OF WINTRY WOOD

The Friends of Wintry Wood is an informal group, formed in the summer of 2021, via the Epping Forest Forum, with the aim of raising awareness of the most northerly part of Epping Forest, shown on old maps and known locally as Wintry Wood, that is now recognised by the City of London Corporation as The Lower Forest.

This area is a gem, full of history, beauty, wildlife and interest.

In autumn 2022, following news of impending fuel costs, raising inflation and very gloomy news and in the hope of raising peoples spirits it was decided to trial a regular walk always an amble - not a ramble, in this part of the Forest, advertised as Wintry Wood Wanderers Winter Warm Ups. Proving to be a success the walks have continued, and are now in their second year.

The walks are led by Dee Spence a local resident with a love of this part of the forest. We note the changing seasons with spring strolls, summer saunters and autumn ambles. There is no charge made and dogs on leads are welcome. The group walk at a leisurely pace, taking time to see what is around them, chat, with some taking photographs, all in the company of like minded people. The group walk in all weathers and have walked in rain, snow and on hot summer days, always glad they made the effort because they have an enjoyable time, whatever the weather.

The group meet on the second Wednesday of the month, meeting at Forest gate 11, which is opposite St Margaret's Hospital, The Plain, Epping CM16 6TH. Public Transport is convenient and parking is available close by. Time: 11am duration of walk approx 1 - 1.5 hours. There is a [Friends of Wintry Wood Facebook page](#) where contact can be made as well as via eppingforestforum.com/foww or email info@eppingforestforum.com

FRIENDS OF WINTRY WOOD EVENTS

Summer Saunters: 12 June, 10 July, 14 August

Autumn Ambles: 11 September, 9 October, 13 November

Winter Warm ups: 11 December

VOLUNTEER GROUPS



HIGHAMS PARK SNEDDERS

The Highams Park Snedders are a friendly group of local volunteers from the Highams Park Planning Group (HPPG) who help the City of London Corporation to look after Highams Park Lake and the surrounding Forest. The name Snedders comes from the old Saxon word “sned”, which means to prune.

The Snedders work closely with the Epping Forest Conservators from the City of London Corporation who provided helpful logistical support and training when the Snedders were set up. The works they undertake in the woods form part of a management conservation programme set by the conservators' ecologists.

They have undertaken a variety of works in the local woods, such as clearing undergrowth, which was necessary after the cows stopped grazing in the mid-1990s and opening up windows in the vegetation and reed planting to improve the wildlife habitat and water quality at the Lake.

The Snedders have also undertaken other projects such as establishing Humphry's Café and the new path across the park to the café; signage throughout the woods and the new viewing platform at Highams Park Lake.

This year the Snedders have been focussing on restoring the bluebell patches in Great Sale Wood and maintaining the windows at the Lake.

HIGHAMS PARK SNEDDERS EVENTS

Outside of the bird nesting season, the Snedders usually meet on one weekday and Saturday each month, although sometimes more often. Sessions generally run from 9.30 am until 12.30 pm and tea/coffee and biscuits are provided.

New volunteers are welcome and you can sign up to help out on this link:
<https://highamparkplan.org/home/get-involved/>

VOLUNTEER GROUPS



THE WREN WILDLIFE AND CONSERVATION GROUP

The Wren Group (www.wrengroup.org.uk) work with the City of London Corporation to conserve local open spaces in the south of Epping Forest. They run practical work sessions in the winter, do recording work on flora and fauna, and run events to educate and increase enjoyment and awareness of the biodiversity of the area.

The Group does habitat management work in the autumn and winter in the Wanstead Park area. Sessions are each Thursday morning for two hours and also the first Sunday of the month. Tools and training provided.

If you are interested, please sign up for updates by emailing wrengroup.distribute@gmail.com.

The group also conducts survey work - including of birds, invertebrates and plants - throughout the year. If you are interested in updates on this, please email tharris0457@gmail.com.

The Wren Group have recently been helping us to conserve the last remaining skylark population so close to the centre of London, at Wanstead Flats



VOLUNTEER GROUPS

THE WREN WILDLIFE AND CONSERVATION GROUP

WREN GROUP EVENTS

Sunday 9 June, 10am - 12noon: Bee Walk in Wanstead Park with bee expert, Tony Madgwick. Meet at the Tea Hut in Wanstead Park. All children must be accompanied by adults. This is a free walk for all ages.

Saturday 22 / Sunday 23 June: Wren Wanstead Wildlife Weekend: various events such as guided walks, workshops, pond dip, picnics, stories for children etc. run by Wren Group with support from Friends of Wanstead Parklands.

Sunday 7 July, 2pm: Redbridge London Cycling Campaign Family cycle ride around the Ornamental Waters in Wanstead Park to raise funds for equipment in the Woodland Play Area. This is a very easy ride, suitable for beginners and young children. Entry is free. (Contact Redbridge London Cycling Campaign to book)

Sunday 29 September, 10am: History Walk in Wanstead Park, Friends of Wanstead Parklands, Guided Walk. Meet at the Park gate, Warren Road, Wanstead E11 2LS

Join the Friends for a gentle morning ramble through the Park in late summer. Follow this with a short tour of the historical highlights of the Park, led by Committee Member Adrian Russell, and finish with a cuppa, lunch and a chat at the Tea Hut.

Please note that some of the paths are uneven and may be muddy.

Nearest public transport: Wanstead tube station. Car Parking in Warren Road. Disabled parking bays near the Temple.

More information: see www.wansteadpark.org.uk

Contact: info@wansteadpark.org.uk



VOLUNTEER GROUPS

FRIENDS OF SWAINES GREEN

Swaines Green is a 26 acre area of woodland and wildflower meadow on the edge of Epping, comprising partly City of London land and partly Epping Town Council land, and is designated as Epping Forest Buffer Land.

The Friends of Swaines Green help to ensure the habitat is maintained through regular conservation days in the winter, and also monitor the wildlife present. We are always in need of volunteers to help with these activities.

Our wildlife monitoring comprises the management of a large complement of nestboxes, as well as surveys of plants, animals and birds to see what is doing well and what might need some further help. Volunteers to undertake any work in this area would be very welcome.

For more information about Swaines Green, how you can help the Friends and how to contact us, please visit our website swainesgreen.org.uk or email swainesgreen@gmail.com

SWAINES GREEN EVENTS

Our conservation days are held from 10am on the second Sunday of each winter month (October to March inclusive). Please meet at the kissing gate entrance to Swaines Green, Lower Lincoln Field at the end of the Coronation Hill cul-de-sac. We provide all the tools, just wear working clothes, stout footwear and gardening gloves.

One of the ways we raise awareness and money is through the popular annual May Fayre held on Lower Swaines Recreation Ground. The May Fayre involves a lot of people helping to prepare, set up, run stalls and clear away again afterwards. Volunteers to help with this are always needed.



FIND OUT MORE...



To find out more about volunteering opportunities in Epping Forest please visit:
www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/eppingforest

E-mail: efvolunteering@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Telephone: 020 8532 1010

To subscribe to receive our free, monthly digital newsletter please [click here](#).

Follow Epping Forest on social media:



[X](#)

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[Instagram](#)

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Vision for Volunteering 2019: Open Spaces Dept.

- 1. A volunteer's experience with us stimulates well-being and connection to the green spaces with which they are involved.*
- 2. Time spent volunteering with us benefits the green space, the individual and their community. Our aspiration is for volunteers, staff and communities to feel rewarded through the fulfilment of achievable tasks or roles.*
- 3. Our volunteers represent the diversity of local communities surrounding, accessing and benefiting from our green spaces. We reach out into marginalised and disenfranchised sections of society.*
- 4. We nurture volunteers and staff involvement by developing understanding and confidence to put learning into practice.*
- 5. Volunteers and staff are valued for helping to shape green spaces, through hands-on involvement and by championing their benefits.*
- 6. We encourage volunteers and staff to share experiences with each other and the wider community, stimulating discussion about the future of green spaces.*
- 7. We support our staff by developing training, policies and procedures; so that staff feels confident in providing diverse and quality opportunities for volunteer involvement which support our aims.*
- 8. Our policies, procedures and practices are live, which enables continual development and improvement. We welcome volunteers and staff input to keep them relevant.*
- 9. The list of policies and guidance is as follows: Guidance documents: volunteer induction, conducting a volunteer exit interview, DBS, insurance, recording volunteer achievements, storing volunteer data, writing a volunteer role description, recruitment and selection, volunteer support framework, volunteering during pregnancy. Policies: Young Volunteers, Learning Team volunteers.*

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Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common Volunteer Report 2023



Martin Thomson

Page 101

Annual Summary of Volunteer Hours 2023

2023 was another strong year for volunteer involvement at Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common covering a wide variety of different volunteer roles. These range from the regular Thursday practical work sessions (including students from Berkshire College of Agriculture), weekend practical sessions (both Burnham Beeches and Friends of Stoke Common), ad hoc practical work days with smaller numbers of volunteers (e.g. helping out with pre-livestock turnout fence repair), corporate groups, ecology and hydrology monitoring volunteers, admin and support volunteers, and livestock lookers (covering Stoke Common and Hedgerley).

The table below details the month-by-month volunteer involvement split into under and over-18s, including hours of BB staff time contributed and whether or not they were directly supported.

Month	No. Attending	Running Total Hours	Hours over 18s	Hours under 18s	BB Staff time	Directly supported	Indirectly supported
January	78	440.75	416.25	24.5	70.5	245.25	195.5
February	113	557	527.5	29.5	87.5	520	30
March	92	423.5	413.5	10	67.5	383.5	26
April	123	783	632.5	150.5	93.5	387	138
May	135	723.5	702.5	21	77	479	238.5
June	89	468	450.5	17.5	90.5	378	90
July	99	454	451.5	2.5	103	404	50
August	33	270	270	0	12	218	46
September	98	428	411	17	94.5	383.5	44.5
October	93	506.5	478.5	28	72.5	451	55.5
November	89	365.5	347.5	18	94	350.5	15
December	68	348.5	341	7.5	39	297.5	46
	1110	5768.25	5442.25	326	901.5	4497.25	975

Volunteer Projects—scrub cutting and burning season

- The bulk of the winter volunteer tasks (Thursday BB and FOSC) were spent over at Stoke Common, working on a number of scrub clearance areas on the main and west common, along with track edge thinning. This included extensive young birch, pine and gorse removal in the mire area of the main common as well as clearance of dense encroaching birch and pine in the area surrounding the Starfruit Pond
- Cut and lay Aspen adjacent to bridleway on north common to form effective barrier
- Cutting and burning birch scrub in BB mire
- Two sessions clearing young birch scrub around the Junipers on the BB heath
- Scrub and small tree clearance / thinning in the WD5 wood pasture restoration areas at BB
- Constructing brash barriers at top and middle pond made from existing materials resulting from contractor thinning works in preparation for future pond silt removal
- Removal of small beech regeneration along Burnham Walk to maintain open grassy glade
- Cutting of small holly regeneration around old pollards on Mendelsohns Slope and in Egypt
- Constructing dead hedge at top of swallow holes along Burnham Walk
- Set up birch Christmas trees at BB café and SC Main Common
- Cutting and bundling small birch scrub in BB Mire, removing to quarry for use in later dead hedging tasks
- Small birch clearance in Hartley Court Inner Moat, using arisings to top up brash barriers to reduce foot traffic across banks



Volunteer Projects—Spring and Summer 2023

- Car park maintenance, comprising weeding out the French drains in bays 1-4, digging out the drainage grips and weeding round the car park machines and cafe
- Removing and clearing out the four main cattle grids on Sir Henry Peeks Drive and Juniper Drive, as well as the two mini grids on Lord Mayor's Drive, in preparation for the return of livestock
- Stoke Common reptile survey—preparing and numbering survey sheets in workshop then setting out sheets in survey areas J and K with BB Thursday volunteers, then setting out the remaining survey areas (A-I) with Friends of Stoke Common on their weekend task in April. The sheets were also lifted as a volunteer task in June at the end of the survey period
- FOSC supported and undertook National Bat Monitoring surveys at both SC and BB
- Taking down the blue rope used to close off more sensitive areas of the reserve during the wetter winter months (Sevenways Plain, Hartley Court Moat, area of Egypt woods etc.)
- Litter pick covering all areas of Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common, split across multiple tasks
- Removal of remaining section of redundant invisible fence cable in Egypt
- Invasive species removal—Variegated Archangel at Nile stream
- Digging out drainage grips on path going downhill past the quarry and fitting new re-vestment boards
- Surfacing work—Topping up and resurfacing areas of footpath with gravel from the BB quarry:
 - Path leading from Hawthorn Lane up to Crossways gate
 - Path from Little Common down to Nile Stream
 - Topping up areas around dog bag dispensers
 - Stoke Common—resurface corner down by Woodman's Cottage
- Replace foot bridge over Nile stream
- Coronation volunteer event—one day event celebrating the contribution of volunteers to the Reserves. This included a stall staffed by both volunteers and BB staff to promote volunteer involvement, a practical dead hedging demonstration and a guided walk highlighting recent volunteer projects

Volunteer Projects—Spring and Summer 2023

- Volunteer visit and guided walk at National Trust Cliveden, hosted by Ranger Josh Turner
- Taking down temporary fence around Stoke Common Starfruit Pond before return of livestock
- Replacement of damaged section of Boviguard invisible fence cable at Pumpkin Hill
- Topping up wood chip path in Egypt
- Installation of new information sign board at Hartley Court Moat with edged gravel path
- Weed and tidy garden behind Burnham Beeches Estate Office
- Hosted a stall at the Stoke Poges Village Fete to promote volunteering at Stoke Common
- Bracken control
- Cutting back encroaching vegetation along bridleways and footpaths at Stoke Common
- Middle Pond
 - Replacement of middle pond fence
 - Clear channel through vegetation along edge up to inlet to help maintain effective drainage
 - Install new interpretation signs at top and middle pond



Eco Volunteer Projects 2023

As well as the practical volunteer work focussing on habitat management and estate works, a hugely valuable contribution is made by the team of eco volunteers who carry out a wide variety of ecological survey and monitoring work. Working across a number of different projects, the data that is gathered and recorded helps to measure the success of our management techniques across both National Nature Reserves, as well as providing valuable guidance on future management. This builds into a bank of available data that can be drawn upon at both a local and wider level.



Collecting Juniper berries from the heath



Eco Volunteer Projects 2023

Key projects with which the eco volunteer team have been involved over this year are:

- Annual Vegetation surveys – monitoring various survey plots on an annual basis to assess changes in species presence and proliferation over time
- Butterfly transects—monitoring for presence and population health of the different species
- Cutting of experimental pollard plots—trees are cut in specific moon phases by staff using pole saw and Silky saw, with volunteers measuring and counting branches cut from each tree and recording data to assess tree health and response to cutting
- Fixed point photography, monitoring changes over time at specific locations
- Investigating the viability of our Juniper seeds, including analysis and writing up of data
- Re-examination of *Pyrenula nitida* (lichen) transplants done back in 2002, last checked in 2016, many of which were still in place and had healthy lichen on them
- Working with an undergraduate student on Stoke Common who is analysing and writing up collected information regarding the grazing exclusion plots (photo below)
- Training day on the use of lichens for monitoring air quality (in preparation for full project)



Key Project Highlights—Middle Pond Fence Replacement



Period: Monday 24th—Friday 28th July

Number of days: 4

Number of volunteers involved: 9

Total volunteer hours contributed: 118

Total staff time: 53.5

The project was led by Martin Thomson and involved replacing the 30 metre length of post and rail fence running along the edge of the outflow at Middle Pond, which had become rotten. Machined round 1.8 metre wooden stakes with a flat face milled into them were secured to the dam wall with metal retaining clips. Four rows of half round machined 3.6m rails were screwed onto the posts to create the fence. As the project had been well planned and we had strong numbers of volunteers offering to help, the actual Middle Pond fence was largely completed within the first two days, leaving the last two days to work on the replacement of the fence at Upper Pond. This was approximately half completed as it was necessary to order longer stakes due to the Upper Pond being deeper at the outflow. The decision was made to complete the Upper Pond works the following year.

Key Project Highlights—Hartley Court Moat Information Board



Period: Monday 8th—Friday 15th June

Number of days: 2

Number of volunteers involved: 11

Total volunteer hours contributed: 61.5

Total staff time: 19.5

The project was led by Chris Morris and involved replacing the worn interpretation board at Hartley Court Moat with a new board. To minimise ground damage from visitors walking up to the information board a new gravel path was created from McAulliffe Drive up to and around the new board. The path was edged with recycled plastic composite battens and lined with Terram secured to the battens with staples to prevent the new gravel being in direct contact with the Scheduled Ancient Monument. The gravel was levelled out with shovels and rakes then compacted down with a Wacker Plate to achieve a smooth surface with a slightly raised profile in the middle to allow for effective water run-off.

Stoke Common Reptile Survey

Date	Group	Task	No: Attend- ing	Hours over 18s	Hours under 18s	BB Staff time	Directly supported	Indirectly supported
30/03/23	BB Vols	Reptile sheet prepara- tion and laying on the West Common	11	59.5	0	14	59.5	
01/04/23	FOSC	Laying reptile survey sheets Main Common	20	77.5	3.5	14	81	
30/04/23	FOSC/BB	SC reptile survey	17	95				95
31/05/23	FOSC/BB	SC reptile survey	17	81.5				81.5
01/06/23	BB Vols	Lift reptile sheets / final survey	9	40		12	40	
03/06/23	BB Vols	Lift reptile sheets / final survey	1	4		4	4	

Period: 30th March to 3rd June

Number of days: 66

Total volunteer hours contributed:
357.5 (of which 176.5 unsupported)

Total staff time: 44 hours



Key Project Highlights—Coronation Volunteer Event



Period: Monday 8th May

Number of days: 1

Number of volunteers involved: 8

Total volunteer hours contributed: 37.5

Total staff time: 22

As part of the national celebration of volunteering undertaken to mark the Coronation of King Charles, we hosted a celebration event next to the café run by staff and volunteers. This included:

- 'Meet and greet' stall allowing members of the public to find out more about volunteering and the management of both Nature Reserves including a display by the Eco Volunteers
- Practical demonstration of volunteer work building a dead hedge at Victory Cross
- Guided walk by volunteer Katie Ayers highlighting recent volunteer projects and achievements
- Staff interviews by Martin Thomson and Jordan Payne on BBC Radio Berkshire promoting the event and volunteering at Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common

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Committee(s): Natural Environment Board – For Information	Dated: 17 October 2024
Subject: Biodiversity Action Plan – Progress Report	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	2,5,11 & 12
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	NA
What is the source of Funding?	NA
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	NA
Report of: Katie Stewart, Executive Director of Environment	For Information
Report author: Joanna Leyden, Waste Strategy and Biodiversity Group Manager	

Summary

The current version of the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) was launched in 2021 and outlines a 5 year plan to make improvements to the Biodiversity of the Square Mile. At the half way point, this paper provides an update on the progress of the BAP. The BAP is made up of 4 action plans covering the following topics:

- Open Spaces and Habitat Management
- The Built Environment
- Education and Community Engagement
- Data collection, surveys and monitoring

At the time of writing this report, the BAP sits at an average completion rate of 47% across the 21 actions which puts it on track for the 2026 planned completion date.

Some key highlights from the BAP include the completion of the SINC (site of importance for nature conservation) management plan for our Noble Street SINC, the completion of underground mapping and the engagement of the BAP Partnership group who are supporting in the completion of a number of BAP actions.

Work will continue to complete the remaining actions of the BAP and prepare for the incoming Local Nature Recovery Strategy from the GLA which we will look to reflect in the next iteration of our biodiversity planning.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. The Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) was launched in 2021 with the purpose of providing a strategic focus to ensure species and habitats are understood and considered throughout the decision-making processes in the Square Mile. The BAP provides a framework to ensure all legislative requirements, regional and national targets for protecting, conserving and enhancing biodiversity are met at a local level.

Current Position

2. Good progress has been made across the various actions, with the overall completion level of the action plan sitting at an average of 47% across the 21 actions. There are 2 items which have been successfully completed out of the 21 key actions and progress has been made on all actions bar one. There are a number of challenges that are ongoing which are causing delays for some of the actions. This includes elements which are outside the control of the BAP action owners such as policy documents being adopted, and London wide legislation being created. BAP owners include City Gardens, Planning and Planning Policy teams along with a number of other officers across the organisation.
3. A key success of the BAP so far is the relaunch of the BAP partnership group. This group brings together a range of stakeholders including biodiversity experts, relevant city officers, other landowners in the city, resident groups and city businesses, who collaborate on and progress BAP actions. Currently a guidance document is being put together to support landowners in the city to comply with our Biodiversity Action Plan and this work is being led by Pollinating London Together (PLT) through the partnership group.
4. Another key success is the completion of the Noble Street SINC management plan. This has been a collaborative piece of work between Friends of City Gardens, the City Gardens team, the Environmental Resilience team and the Heritage team and has produced a document we can use as a template for all other SINC management plans.
5. Next steps for the BAP are:
 - Feeding into the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) consultation from the GLA to ensure that our target species are featured, and work with them to have aligned species action plans.
 - Work to align the BAP more closely with the GLA's LNRS so that in 2026 the City Corporation will transition to creating a Local Nature Recovery Plan for the City.

- Continue to progress and develop Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) management plans for all the City's SINC's and review options to carry out a full SINC review to assess current SINC's and potential to propose additional sites.
- Support the implementation of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) through the planning process by providing evidence to inform biodiversity gain plans and other opportunities for net gain and nature recovery.
- Continue to drive engagement, awareness and education of the BAP and biodiversity in general both within the City Corporation and with the wider stakeholders of the square mile.

Key Data

6. The BAP currently stands at a 47% completion rate and is on track.

Strategic implications

7. The Biodiversity Action Plan continues to support the Corporate Plan 24-29 in particular in Leading Sustainable Environments.
8. The Natural Environment & Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 states that "Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity".
9. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that local planning authorities should set out a strategic approach to their Local Plans by planning positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks for biodiversity and green infrastructure.
10. The London Environment Strategy 2017 of which conserving and enhancing wildlife and natural habitats is a key element of the strategy, which recognises that important social, health and economic benefits result from greening the city.
11. The Intended Draft London Plan Policy G6: Biodiversity and access to nature reads:

Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC's) should be protected.

Boroughs, in developing Development Plans, should:

- 1) use up-to-date information about the natural environment and the relevant procedures to identify SINC's and ecological corridors to identify coherent ecological networks
- 2) identify areas of deficiency in access to nature (i.e. areas that are more than 1km walking distance from an accessible Metropolitan or Borough SINC) and seek opportunities to address them

- 3) support the protection and conservation of priority species and habitats that sit outside the SINC network, and promote opportunities for enhancing them using Biodiversity Action Plans
- 4) seek opportunities to create other habitats, or features such as artificial nest sites, that are of particular relevance and benefit in an urban context
- 5) ensure designated sites of European or national nature conservation importance are clearly identified and impacts assessed in accordance with legislative requirements.

Financial implications

12. None

Resource implications

13. The development of the BAP actions will continue to be resourced by City Gardens staff, internal partnership members and relevant support services. There will not be the need for additional resources in addition to this.

Legal implications

14. There would be risk of non-compliance of policy should the City not have an up to date BAP in place.

Risk implications

15. There is a reputational and legal risk of not having a current BAP as the Corporation has obligations towards the protection and enhancement of biodiversity.

Equalities implications

16. None

Climate implications

17. It is widely recognised that Biodiversity and Climate change are interconnected. Protecting and restoring ecosystems can help us reduce the extent of climate change and cope with its impact. The BAP continues to support the delivery of the City's Climate Action Strategy.

Security implications

18. None

Conclusion

19. The BAP is on track to complete in 2026 and the Corporation team will continue to work with the external partners to ensure completion of actions

to a good standard. The next iteration of the BAP will align closely to the LNRS from the GLA and will likely be a Local Nature Recovery Plan.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – BAP Progress Report
- Appendix 2 – City of London Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-26

Background Papers

City of London Biodiversity Action Plan

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City of London

Biodiversity Action Plan 2021–2026

Progress Review Sept 2024

Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2026

Mid-Term Progress Report

The Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) was launched in 2021 with the purpose of providing a strategic focus to ensure species and habitats are understood and considered throughout the decision-making processes in the Square Mile. The BAP provides a framework to ensure all legislative requirements and regional and national targets for protecting, conserving and enhancing biodiversity are met at a local level.

At the half-way point of the action plan, this report aims to review the progress of the BAP actions, comment on achievements made and discuss where focus will be applied moving forward to close out the actions by 2026.

The actions are grouped into 4 key areas:

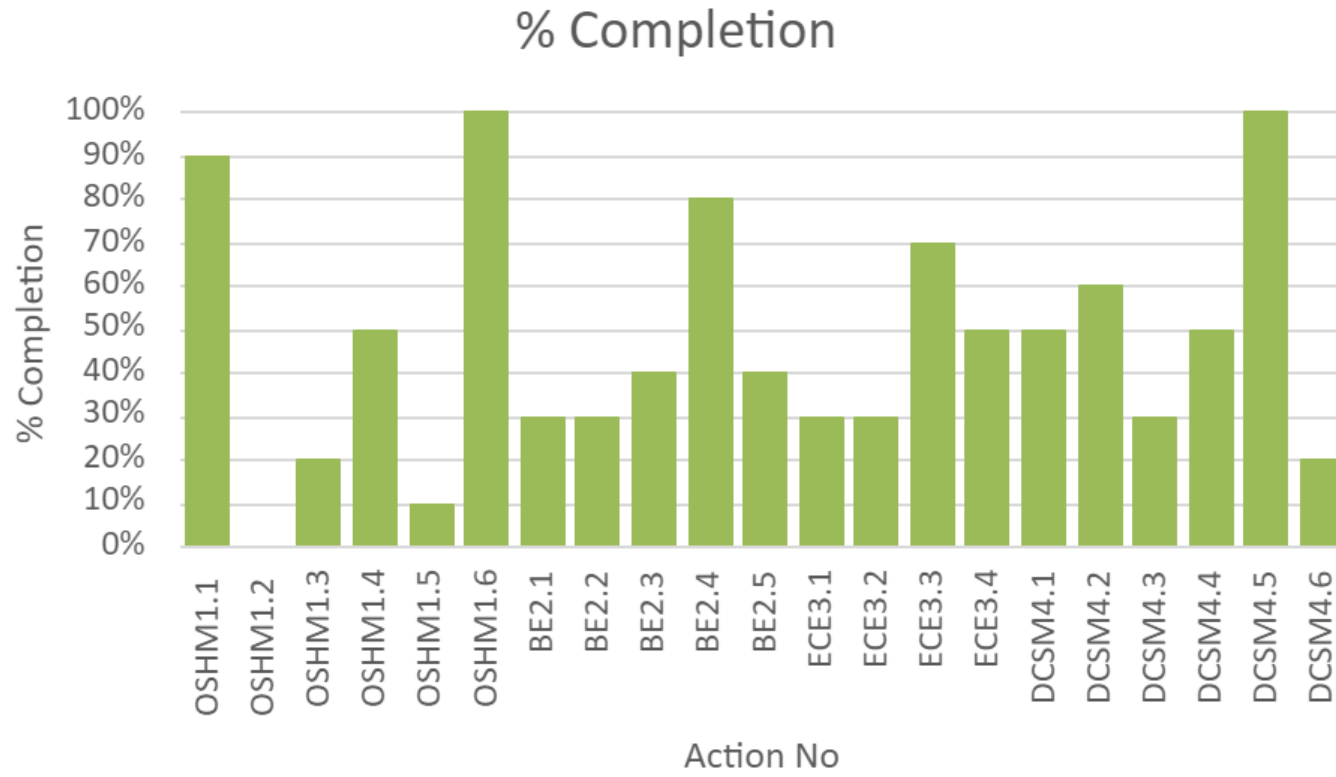
- Open Spaces and Habitat Management
- The Built Environment
- Education and Community Engagement
- Data Collection, Surveys and Monitoring

As shown by Figure 1, good progress has been made across the various actions with the overall completion level of the action plan sitting at 47%. There are 2 items which have been successfully completed and progress has been made on all actions bar one. Appendix 1 provides detail of each action and its current completion status. There are a number of challenges that are ongoing which are causing delays for some of the actions. This includes elements which are outside the control of the BAP action owners such as policy documents being adopted, and London wide legislation being created.

Key focuses moving forward will be:

- Feeding into the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) consultation from the GLA to ensure that our target species are featured, and work with them to have aligned species action plans.
- Work to align the BAP more closely with the LNRS so that post completion of the current BAP in 2026 the City Corporation will instead move to create a Local Nature Recovery Plan for the City.
- Continue to progress and develop Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) management plans for all the City's SINC's and review options to carry out a full SINC review to assess current SINC's and potential to propose additional sites.
- Support the implementation of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) through the planning process by providing evidence to inform biodiversity gain plans and other opportunities for net gain and nature recovery.
- Continue to drive engagement, awareness and education of the BAP and biodiversity in general both within the City Corporation and with the wider stakeholders of the square mile.

Figure 1: % Completion of the BAP Actions



A large amount of work has been completed to complement and assist in the delivery of the actions for the BAP to continue to support biodiversity thriving within the City. This includes:

Re-vitalisation of the Biodiversity Action Plan Partnership Group: The BAP Partnership Group is a key vehicle which has been established in order to utilise the knowledge and support of the wider city community to progress the BAP actions. This group is made up of biodiversity experts, other CoL colleagues, resident and volunteer groups, businesses within the city and other landowners/managers. The group meets bi-annually to review the BAP progress and to discuss any issues, challenges or opportunities.

The group was established at the initiation of the BAP but has recently been revitalised with working groups set up to have dedicated focus on 3 key areas:

- Communication, Education and Awareness
- Pollinators in the City
- Biological Recording

These working groups are made up of volunteers from the Partnership Group that have a specific interest in one of the three topics and meet every 2 months to progress actions of the BAP related to these topics.

- **The Communication, Education and Awareness group** are focusing on ensuring the right channels of communication are in place for this different stakeholders of the BAP. An internal/external facing SharePoint page has been created to allow for the collaboration of the Partnership Group on documents as well as to house key information documents.
- **The Pollinators in the City group** are focused on creating a guidance document for the land managers and owners within the

city to raise awareness of key pollinators and the “Dos and Don’ts” of how to create thriving habitats for them.

- **The Biological Recording group** are reviewing the many different methodologies of recording currently practiced in the City and plan to create a formalised recording strategy. This will aim to support those that want to make biological recordings in the City whilst also ensuring that as much of this information as possible is fed into Greenspace Information for Greater London (GiGL), our local recording centre, so that there is a full picture of the City’s biodiversity.

Recruitment of a Business Admin Apprentice: A business admin apprentice has been appointed to support with biodiversity related volunteering within the city’s gardens. Their role is to:

- Work with the City Garden’s team to establish potential projects for volunteers to engage with
- Engage and coordinate with Friends of City Gardens and other potential third-party volunteer facilitators to arrange volunteering opportunities
- Manage and respond to corporate enquiries with regards to volunteering.

With this volunteering programme established, The City Corporation can ensure that meaningful volunteering can happen within the Square Mile which supports the advancement of the BAP.

Establishment of The Biodiversity and Nature Recovery Group: A cross-corporation working group focusing on the various responsibilities and roles of the City Corporation relating to Environment Act duties including BNG and consulting on Local Nature Recovery Strategies. The group facilitates collaboration, communication and offers an opportunity to consult on relevant activities.

Establishment of The Biodiversity and Nature Recovery Group: A cross-corporation working group focusing on the various responsibilities and roles of the City Corporation relating to Environment Act duties including BNG and consulting on Local Nature Recovery Strategies. The group facilitates collaboration, communication and offers an opportunity to consult on relevant activities.

Running of the Pollinator Panel: Bought together a diverse range of stakeholders in the field of ecology, conservation and planning to communicate key messages on the challenges and opportunities for urban pollinators. This included support from: Pollinating London Together, Royal Holloway University of London, UrbanBees, Greengage Environmental, and the Inner Temple.

Deployment of AgriSound Monitors: An innovative trial to utilise sensors across the Green Spaces in the City to automate pollinator monitoring. This will not replace in-person monitoring but will hopefully provide a good level of data to demonstrate improvements made to biodiversity where other initiatives have been put in place.

Working with Universities: Imperial College has deployed three Masters students to complete their theses on the value of green roofs and open spaces in the City of London, specifically to study the bio-acoustic activity of bats, bird communities and black redstarts. They carried out 4 weeks of data collection across 16 - 20 sites in the City. They also embedded an independent researcher who carried out a thorough literature review to condense relevant literature.

Increase in Pollinator Friendly Planting: Through the implementation of the Cool Streets and Greening phase 1 - 4 projects, pollinator friendly planting is being incorporated into City Gardens and Public Realm sites. This includes the Replanting for Resilience project which is delivering 14

replanting schemes to increase climate resilience and biodiversity value in existing gardens.

Climate Champions Volunteering: Two activities have taken place in Q1 and Q2 to increase volunteering opportunities for City Corporation employees which also support biodiversity initiatives.

City Nature Challenge: took place in April, endorsed by the Lord Mayor, staff joined the Climate Champions in three City Gardens to record biodiversity. See the results here: [City Nature Challenge 2024: London · iNaturalist United Kingdom](#) / [City of London Bioblitz · iNaturalist United Kingdom](#)

Lunch and Learn presentation for the Big Butterfly Count: delivered to encourage staff from across the City Corporation to get involve in the simple community science project to collect data on the health of butterflies and our environment.

Work to promote GiGL across the organisation: GiGL did a presentation to the GIS Liaison Group to help promote the SLA and also a lunch 'n' learn was hosted for all colleagues to learn more about GiGL and the work they do as part of our SLA.

Input into policy documents: including a policy and process for Biodiversity Net Gain, Sustainability SPD, Draft City Plan 2040 and biodiversity related policies reaching Reg 19 consultation.

Other engagement and education: 3 bat walks and 3 moth trapping events through the year, learning and training sessions the Friends of City Gardens carry out at Bunhill as part of the Rewild London Fund project to support BAP objectives

Conclusion

At the half-way point of the Biodiversity Action Plan there is a lot of positive progress that has been made. The focuses moving forward for the second half of the BAP are:

- To continue to complete the actions of the BAP through the actions and workings of the BAP Partnership Group.
- Continue to raise awareness through the City Corporation, to both the local resident and business communities, and visitors to the city of the importance of biodiversity.
- To work with the GLA in feeding into the wider London LNRS.
- Support the work of colleagues implementing the BNG legislation.

Action Update

Category	Action Number	Action	Update	% Completion
AP1	OSHM1.1	Adopt via the City Plan 2036, the recommendations of the 2016 review of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) in the City of London.	The recommendations of the 2016 SINC Review are to be adopted by the 2040 City Plan when it is launched (circa July 2025 – the adoption of the new City Plan was delayed beyond the control of the BAP).	90%
	OSHM1.2	Schedule and secure funding for a future SINC review. Identify any proposed new sites, boundary changes or upgrades to be included as part of the review.	Due to the delay in the City Plan 2040’s adoption, this action has been put on hold. This will commence once the City Plan is adopted.	0%
	OSHM1.3	Assess the potential of the Barbican Wildlife Garden to qualify as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and consider if that is an appropriate designation for this garden.	This action is ongoing, working with the Barbican Estates Office team to look at sources of funding.	20%
	OSHM1.4	Secure funding and commission for an ecologist to produce SINC management plans for all City Corporation managed SINC sites. Work with landowners and managers to develop management plans for privately owned/managed sites.	The City Corporation instructed a consultant, Greengage, to complete SINC management plans for St Pauls and Cleary Gardens which are complete and in place. A robust and thorough SINC management plan has been created for Nobel Street with the support of the FoCG team and in collaboration with Heritage Estates and the district surveyors team. This will be used as a blueprint for future SINC management plans which will be worked on over the coming years leading up to 2026.	50%
	OSHM1.5	Carry out a baseline survey and commission and adopt a Black Redstart species action plan.	As part of the London Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), species action plans are to be developed. It is anticipated that this action will be picked up through this work carried out by the GLA and will ensure we are aligned with our neighbouring boroughs. Monitoring work has however commenced with UCL on a project basis which will be able to feed into this species action plan.	10%

	OSHM1.6	Set up of a multi-departmental working group to develop guidance on managing historic walls, memorials and structures for biodiversity.	The work completed for the Noble Street management plan required the collaboration of heritage estates to agree a mutually beneficial approach to managing habitats that overlap with historic structures/features. The need for the working group is no longer required as the advice and guidance agreed can be applied to all historic walls, memorials and structures across the City. This action is complete.	100%
AP2	BE2.1	Develop an ecology toolkit and biodiversity checklist for the City of London Corporation staff as tool to support projects and public realm schemes.	There has been some work commenced on how this will be brought together. The work being carried out by the BAP Pollinators working group will help contribute to this along with existing resources that need to be consolidated. A key next step is the creation of an intranet page for CoL colleagues to access which is being carried out by the Comms Partnership Group.	30%
	BE2.2	Following the enactment of the Environment Bill, assess how the City Corporation will meet its duties as a local planning authority in respect to aspects of the bill that are covered by amendment to the Town and Country Planning act, such as Biodiversity net gain.	Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) legislation came into effect in February 24. CoL instructed a third-party report to be generated by Greengage on how the City Corporation should approach BNG. The findings of the report recommend a 3 biodiversity unit/Ha approach to be taken as opposed to the 10% gain stipulated by government due to the densely urban nature of the City. This is being adopted as part of the 2025 City Plan. As for next steps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greengage has been commissioned to carry out an additional piece of work to establish the best ways to incorporate biodiversity in new developments in the Square Mile • training sessions will be run from September for CoL staff on BNG • monitoring techniques and technologies are being explored in order that we are prepared to enforce this legislation moving forwards. 	30%

	BE2.3	Following the enactment of the Environment Bill, assess how the City Corporation will meet its duties as a local authority and implement strategies that are not covered by amendments to the Town & Planning Act.	Within the City Corporation a corporation wide working group has been established on Nature Recovery and Biodiversity. This group is responsible for ensuring the adequate reporting on Biodiversity Duty along with other requirements for the LNRS. Other elements such as tree felling are being reviewed by our City Gardens team with a number of items that still need review.	40%
	BE2.4	Develop Sustainability Planning guidance encompassing, but not limited to, Green infrastructure, Biodiversity and Climate Resilience to ensure Developers and Planning officers take appropriate steps at pre-planning application and design development stages to meet local policy and national legislation.	The most recent Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has undergone consultation and is under review. This contains guidance on biodiversity, urban greening and BNG. Once the SPD is finalised, this action will be complete.	80%
	BE2.5	Review and amend the existing planning application validation process to incorporate consideration of whether biodiversity surveys and reports are relevant and necessary for an application.	Improvements have been made with the provision of biodiversity assessments being included in the current validation checklist with plans to updated in the near future. However, there is still work to be done here to ensure that it aligns with BNG requirements.	40%
AP3	ECE3.1	Provide advice, guidance and training to support the BAP both for City Corporation employees and the wider City community including residents, businesses, visitors, schools, colleges, developers and land managers.	There has been adhoc progress made in this space with numerous training sessions run for City Corporation employees (e.g. lunch and learn on GiGL) however a more comprehensive approach is being worked on. This will be covered mainly by the work of the Comms Partnership working group to have clear communication channels for key stakeholders in addition to better capture of training records that is already taking place.	30%

ECE3.2	Support resident and community groups that contribute to local and national species recording and monitoring initiatives, through providing direct support for initiatives, by providing training and by collecting and promoting best practice that current groups have demonstrated.	<p>There is a close working relationship with a number of volunteering groups within the city and the City Corporation. Friends of City Gardens support with garden maintenance and upkeep, biological recording and monitoring as well as supporting corporate volunteering groups. The City Corporation has also run a number of public events to support educate and train the community such as The City Nature Challenge. As part of the BAP working groups, guidance on habitat management is being developed and there is also work being carried out to alleviate some of the pressures of arranging corporate volunteering by the City Corporation taking over the management of this.</p> <p>There are a number of gardening groups that the City Corporation has yet to fully engage with and this will be a priority moving forward.</p>	30%
ECE3.3	Develop guidance on supporting pollinators in the built environment by enabling biodiversity partnership working group.	The creation and running of the BAP Partnership Group has enabled the coming together of experts and key stakeholders from across the City to drive forward the BAP agenda. With regards to this particular action on supporting pollinators, the Pollinators BAP Partnership group headed up by Pollinating London Together (PLT) is creating a support document for all land managers/owners in the city to provide clear guidance on the “Dos and Don’ts” to support pollinators in the city.	70%
ECE3.4	Promote and disseminate guidance for the London Invasive Species Initiative (LISI) species to raise awareness of these species and how they should be managed.	With the SharePoint page set up for the BAP Partnership group, this information is shared here. Work still needs to be done to ensure a wider audience can access this information and so will feature once the CoL internal Biodiversity intranet page is established.	50%

AP4	DCSM4.1	Maintain, improve, promote and utilise the information and services available via the GiGL SLA(Service Level Agreement) including to be achieved through providing internal training.	Good progress has been made in this space. A lunch and learn was held for City Corporation staff to learn more about GiGL and the work they do. There has been an SLA group established to ensure that key stakeholders are aware of the SLA and the services GiGL can provide. Further work needs to be done on how we best use these services across the corporation (including outside of the Square Mile) and make best use of the resource.	50%
	DCSM4.2	Develop and implement a planning condition which requires developers of relevant schemes to collect and submit relevant biological data of their site to the CoL PA to improve data monitoring and assessment on biodiversity trends in the City.	Requirement for data has been included in the Sustainability SPD with a request that GiGL is sent this data also. Planning condition updates will come with BNG implementation.	60%
	DCSM4.3	Produce a biological recording strategy to target SINC's with under-recording of species and promote good practice. To include identification of target sites, under-recorded and desired species, promotion of best practice, identifying and promoting appropriate recording methods for different audience and supporting existing citizen science and species-specific campaigns.	<p>This is a key action for the Biological Recording BAP Partnership Groups. The group have so far established key stakeholders and the current recording methods used across the city. The plan is to now consolidate this and have clear direction as to the best approach to recording in order that all the information finds its way to GiGL. This will enable a spatial map to be produced and poorly recorded areas can be addressed. There are already a number of key species-specific events that are supported by the City Corporation such as the Big Butterfly Count but a regular calendar of these events is to be established.</p> <p>Risk management will be a key element of the strategy in order that we maintain good records of the biodiversity of the city. An example of this is one of our key volunteers and top recorders is moving out of the City which will have a great impact on our</p>	30%

			<p>monitoring.</p> <p>GiGL are going to support with some info-graphics on most common and rarest finds in the city to help as promotional material for the biological recording strategy.</p> <p>To support the work of recording, the City Corporation is in the process of deploying Agrisound sensors which work to record pollinators. This will be a tool to support the work of biological recording but is not in the position to replace recording.</p>	
	DCSM4.4	Identify funding to carry out a Black Redstart and bat baseline survey to guide future management interventions and enhancements.	As stated previously, the intention is that this will be supported by the LNRS species action plans. This will be supported by a bioacoustics project being undertaken by students from Imperial College London's ecology evolution and conservation course, and one of the college's readers in conservation ecology Cristina Banks-Leith.	50%
	DCSM4.5	Undertake below ground mapping to identify opportunities and barriers for establishing new green infrastructure and SuDS within the public realm.	The Environment Resilience team carried out this work and the report is utilised in decision making processes for new green infrastructure and SuDS. This action is complete.	100%
	DCSM4.6	Research and establish an approach to monitoring earthworms as an indicator of soil health and condition.	A member of the City Garden's team is researching and developing a recording methodology and survey to monitor earthworms in the City's gardens.	20%

Glossary

Explanation of terms used in BAP:

All London Green Grid: The All London Green Grid (ALGG) is a Greater London Authority (GLA) framework to promote the design and delivery of 'green infrastructure' across London.

Barbican Wildlife Group (BWG): The BWG is a group of volunteer local residents who, with the City Gardens team, preserve, protect and enhance biodiversity in Barbican Wildlife Garden for the education and enjoyment of all Barbican Estate residents and guests. BWG also promotes the conservation of the Garden's many habitats and its retention as a wildlife haven within the City. It also aims to foster and promote biodiversity within the Estate and to work with like-minded groups and organisations to promote and foster biodiversity within and beyond the Square Mile.

Biodiversity: Biodiversity is the term used to describe the variety of life on Earth. This includes wildlife such as animals, birds and plants, the habitats which are the places they live and how they all interact within their surroundings as part of the ecosystem.

Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment

Methodology (BREEAM): BREEAM is the world's leading sustainability assessment method for master planning projects, infrastructure and buildings. It addresses a number of lifecycle stages such as new construction, refurbishment and in-use.

Citizen Science: Citizen science is scientific research conducted by amateur or nonprofessional enthusiasts. Citizen science may be performed by individuals or groups of volunteers and interested parties.

City of London Corporation: The City of London Corporation provides local government and policing services for the financial and commercial heart of Britain, the 'Square Mile'.

City Gardens: The City Gardens team are responsible for tree and green space management for around 200 open spaces in the Square Mile including parks, gardens, churchyards, plazas and highway planting. The City Gardens team is also responsible for Bunhill Fields Burial Ground just outside the City boundary in the London Borough of Islington.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR): CSR is a process which companies choose to follow to take responsibility for their actions and encourage positive impacts through their activities on the environment, consumers, employees, shareholders, communities and all other members of the public who may also be considered as stakeholders.

Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (Defra): Defra is a UK government department responsible for safeguarding our natural environment, supporting our world-leading food and farming industry, and sustaining a thriving rural economy. Our broad remit means we play a major role in people's day-to-day life, from the food we eat, and the air we breathe, to the water we drink.

Friends of City Gardens (FoCG): A community group of volunteers comprising City residents, City of London Guides, City workers and other interested parties. They support the City Gardens Team and have a special interest in promoting and enhancing biodiversity.

Greenspace Information for Greater London (GiGL): GiGL is the capital's environmental records centre that collates, manages and makes available detailed information on London's wildlife, parks, nature reserves, gardens and other open spaces.

Green Corridors: Almost continuous areas of open space which are linked. They can act as wildlife corridors and serve amenity, landscape and access roles.

Green Infrastructure: A strategically planned and managed network of green spaces and other environmental features vital to the sustainability of any urban area. This includes although not exclusively trees, biodiverse roofs, green walls and green corridors.

Draft City Plan 2036: The City Corporation's Local Plan for the future development of the City of London, setting out what type of development the City Corporation expects to take place and where. It sets out the City Corporation's vision, strategy and objectives for planning up to 2036, together with policies that will guide future decisions on planning applications.

Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS): Local nature recovery strategies will agree priorities for nature recovery and propose actions in the locations where it would make a particular contribution to achieving those priorities. The responsible authorities and people involved in preparing a strategy can choose how they want it to look, but every strategy must contain:

- A local habitat map.
- A written statement of biodiversity priorities.

Local Nature Recovery Plan: A localised plan for our own area of responsibility using the LNRS as guidance.

London Biodiversity Partnership: The London Biodiversity Partnership was formed in 1997 to bring together organisations to benefit wildlife and boost the capital's green space.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF): Sets out government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

Open Mosaic Habitat: Open Mosaic Habitats on Previously Developed Land (OMH) is defined by the Defra. They are found mainly in urban and formerly industrial areas and have high biodiversity value. This value includes rare plants, mosses, lichens and a large number of rare invertebrates, especially bees, wasps and beetles.

Open Space: Open space is land which is not built on and which has some amenity value or potential for amenity value. Amenity value is derived from the visual, recreational or other enjoyment which the open space can provide, such as historic and cultural interest and value. This includes open spaces in public or private ownership.

Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs): Sites are designated as SINCs to highlight areas of ecological value in the City. The sites are graded as being of Metropolitan (SMINCs), Borough (SBINCs), or Local (SLINCs) importance.

Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS): A range of sustainable measures for surface water management which reduce the amount, flow or rate of surface water discharge into sewers.



City of London

Biodiversity Action Plan 2021–2026

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The City of London Biodiversity Action Plan 2021–2026 was approved by the Open Spaces and City Gardens Committee on 13 July 2021.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The City: A unique urban environment

The City of London Corporation is the governing body of the Square Mile dedicated to a vibrant and thriving City, supporting a diverse and sustainable London within a globally-successful UK.



1.2 What is Biodiversity?

Biodiversity is the term used to describe the variety of life on Earth. This includes animals, plants and fungi as well as recognisable wildlife such as birds, mammals and insects. The habitats are the places they live and how they interact with their surroundings as part of the ecosystem. Conserving biodiversity involves restoring and enhancing species populations and habitats as well as implementing measures to promote them in the future. The value of biodiversity extends beyond habitat and species with the benefits extending to a range of economic, social and intrinsic values.

... biodiversity involves restoring and enhancing species populations and habitats ...

1.0 Introduction

1.3 Biodiversity in the City

The City of London has just under 33 hectares of open spaces which includes parks, gardens, churchyards and hard open spaces such as plazas and improvements to the highway. Most of the open spaces are small, primarily consisting of pocket parks smaller than 0.1 hectares. There is a need for additional open space in the City to provide facilities for workers, residents and visitors. These spaces help mitigate the effects of pollution and climate change, provide facilities for relaxation, tranquillity, agile working, leisure and sport, health and wellbeing and to increase biodiversity.

Ground level open spaces are mostly the result of two significant events in the City of London: the Great Fire of London in 1666 and bomb damage caused during World War II. These traumatic events resulted in damaged or destroyed buildings being repurposed and in many cases eventually becoming open spaces for the public to enjoy. Together these small, high quality and intensively used open spaces are highly valued and offer an important

resource for biodiversity in the Square Mile. There is also an increasingly important resource for biodiversity at roof top level with the addition of biodiverse roofs and roof terraces.

Historically the City’s open spaces have been managed primarily for amenity value and public enjoyment. However, recent changes in management practices have placed a greater emphasis on the importance of promoting biodiversity. Raised awareness of the natural environment amongst workers, residents and visitors has changed the ways in which the public enjoy, value and engage with open space in the Square Mile through interpretation, activities and events.

A full list of types of open spaces in the City of London is listed in [Appendix 3: Open space typology and categorisation](#).

1.4 Why does the City need a Biodiversity Action Plan?

According to the intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) the world is facing a biodiversity crisis. Nature is declining globally at rates unprecedented in human history, and the rate of species extinctions is accelerating, with grave impacts on people around the world now likely. The Report also tells us that it is not too late to make a difference, but only if we start now at every level from local to global.

The Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) provides a strategic focus to ensure species and habitats are understood and considered throughout the decision making process. The BAP directly supports the overall aim of the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan to shape outstanding environments.

The BAP provides a framework to ensure all legislative requirements and regional and national targets for protecting, conserving and enhancing biodiversity are met at a local level.

Outside of the Square Mile, the City Corporation owns or manages almost 4,500 hectares of historic and natural open spaces including Hampstead Heath and Epping Forest. These sites are of significant importance for habitats and species and include Sites of Special Scientific Interest, National Nature Reserves and Special Areas of Conservation.

The BAP covers the open spaces, habitats and species in City of London only, regardless of ownership. Open spaces outside of the City of London are covered by the relevant local authorities’ Biodiversity Action Plans or alternative policy or strategy. The City Gardens team is responsible for tree and green space management for around 200 sites in the Square Mile including parks, gardens, churchyards, plazas and highway planting.

1.0 Introduction

1.5 Structure of the Biodiversity Action Plan

The aim of the BAP is to produce a set of objectives and actions to assist members of the City of London Biodiversity Action Plan Partnership Group (Partnership Group) and the wider City community in delivering

strategically planned biodiversity networks for both the City and Greater London, taking into consideration both local and national priorities.

The BAP will be delivered under the following themes:



Open space and habitat management

Aim: to protect and enhance habitats and species in the City.

Enable land owned and managed by both the City Corporation and privately, to be maintained and enhanced for biodiversity.



The built environment

Aim: to improve infrastructure for biodiversity in the built environment

Enable biodiversity to be incorporated into the built environment to enhance and connect green spaces.



Education and community engagement

Aim: to promote a greater understanding of the City's biodiversity

Identify and encourage best practice amongst private landowners and managers as well as develop the skills and knowledge of residents, City workers, school children and students through events, activities and volunteering opportunities.



Data collection, surveys and monitoring

Aim: to improve monitoring and data on biodiversity in the City.

Establish a structured approach to surveying and monitoring of sites to inform ongoing management decisions and identify future areas of priority. This includes professional ecology surveys, citizen science opportunities and records collected by voluntary groups and individuals.

Contents	Introduction	National and regional policy context	Local policy context	Biodiversity in the City of London	Target species	Target habitats	Action plans	Funding opportunities	How the BAP will be monitored and delivered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendices • Tables • Figures
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2.0 National and regional policy context

... planning should contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment ...

2.1 National policy

In 2018 the Government published 'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment' which sets goals and targets for improving the environment.

The Plan focuses on a number of cross-cutting themes including embedding an 'environmental net gain' principle for development, creating additional green infrastructure, planting trees and developing a Nature Recovery Network to support landscape-scale restoration of nature.

Under the Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC), as a public authority in England, the City Corporation has a duty to 'in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity'. This may include promoting biodiversity in planning and development, recognising the importance of conserving and enhancing biodiversity in public authority managed land and buildings and managing green infrastructure to support biodiversity.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019 states that planning should contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment, habitats and biodiversity.

The City Corporation will participate in the emerging requirements to develop a Nature Recovery Strategy and co-ordinate with neighbouring boroughs.

The BAP should also consider national strategies such as The National Pollinator Strategy, which seeks to protect pollinating insects that support food production and the diversity of our environment.

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2.0 National and regional policy context

2.2 Regional policy

The London Plan 2021 is an overall strategy document and policy framework for London, which includes green infrastructure, urban greening and biodiversity. Many of the objectives of the London Plan are incorporated and delivered as part of the City Corporation's Local Plan.

The London Environment Strategy includes action to make London cleaner, greener and ready for the future. The strategy includes policies to protect nature conservation sites, create priority habitats, conserve priority species and to ensure net gain in biodiversity.

... planning should contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment ...



3.0 Local policy context

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3.1 Local policy

The proposed new City of London Local Plan, call the City Plan 2036 and currently referred to as the draft City Plan 2036, sets out the City Corporation’s vision, strategy and objectives for planning up to 2036, together with policies that will guide future decisions on planning applications.

Once adopted, the draft City Plan 2036 will replace the current City of London Local Plan adopted in January 2015.

... development should aim to secure net gains for biodiversity where possible by incorporating measures to enhance biodiversity ...



3.0 Local policy context

... positive contribution to the biodiversity value of the City through appropriate plant choice and habitat creation.



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Policy OS3 of the draft City Plan 2036 specifically addresses biodiversity and states that development should aim to secure net gains for biodiversity where possible by incorporating measures to enhance biodiversity, including:

- Retention and enhancement of habitats within Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs), including the River Thames
- Measures recommended in the City of London Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) in relation to particular species or habitats
- Green roofs and walls, gardens and terraces, soft landscaping and trees
- Green corridors and biodiversity links
- Wildlife-friendly features, such as nesting or roosting boxes
- A planting mix and variation in vegetation types to encourage biodiversity
- Planting which will be resilient to a range of climate conditions, with a high proportion of native plants
- A lighting scheme designed to minimise impacts on biodiversity

The City Corporation has developed a series of strategies for improving streets and public spaces in the Square Mile which incorporate elements such as tree planting and urban greening. These are integral to supporting biodiversity in the planning process.

The BAP supports the City Corporation's Corporate Plan's aims to:

Contribute to a flourishing society

- People enjoy good health and wellbeing
- Communities are cohesive and have the facilities they need

Support a thriving economy

- Businesses are trusted and socially and environmentally responsible
- We have access to the skills and talent we need

Shape outstanding environments

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

The City of London Open Space Strategy, which was adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in January 2015, sets out the principles to help improve the quality, management and accessibility of the open spaces of the Square Mile. The strategy comprises of ten strategic objectives which include ensuring that existing and new spaces make a positive contribution to the biodiversity value of the City through appropriate plant choice and habitat creation. A full list of the policies that support biodiversity in the City is set out in [Appendix 1](#).

3.0 Local policy context

3.2 Climate Action Strategy

The City Corporation has adopted its radical Climate Action Strategy 2020–2027 which breaks new ground and has the following goals:

- City Corporation scope 1 and 2 emissions are net zero by 2027 and scope 3 emissions are net zero by 2040.
- The City Corporation and its assets are resilient to climate change.
- The City Corporation supports UK and overseas organisations to become climate responsible.

The City Corporation is enacting a variety of measures to mitigate against impact of this on the Square Mile. This is to ensure that the City of London public spaces and infrastructure are resilient to the effects of climate change.

The following Climate Action Strategy aims are supported and enhanced by the BAP:

- Introduce new land management practices across our open spaces aiming to maximise their ability to remove carbon, and optimise their biodiversity and resilience value
- Advocate the importance of green spaces and urban greening as natural carbon sinks, and their contribution to biodiversity and overall wellbeing
- Enhance greening and biodiversity across our public realm and open spaces

Biodiversity and climate change are interconnected. Protecting and restoring ecosystems can help us reduce the extent of climate change and cope with its impact. The BAP supports the creation of biodiverse green infrastructure to support the climate resilience of the Square Mile. This also assists with mitigating and adapting to the impacts on habitats and species and changes in prevalence of pests and diseases.

The BAP plays an important role in raising awareness of the importance of green spaces and urban greening as natural carbon sinks, and their contribution to biodiversity, access to nature and overall wellbeing.

The aim to incorporate more greenery in the City’s streets and public spaces is supported by both the City of London Air Quality Strategy and Transport Strategy.

3.3 Lighting

The City of London Lighting Strategy aims to deliver a creative, holistic and smart approach in which light and darkness are better balanced to meet both a functional and aesthetic need. It is vital that impacts of lighting on sensitive species such as bats are considered during design, construction and operation of new developments especially in sensitive areas adjacent to SINCs and near lakes and rivers.



Protecting and restoring ecosystems can help us reduce the extent of climate change and cope with its impact.

3.0 Local policy context

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3.4 Urban Greening Factor

The London Plan 2021 states that major development proposals should contribute to the greening of London by including urban greening from the outset of the development design process. Boroughs should develop an Urban Greening Factor (UGF) to identify the appropriate amount of greening required in new developments.

In response to this requirement, the draft City Plan 2036 requires that major development proposals will be required to include a UGF calculation demonstrating how the development will meet the City Corporation's score of 0.3 as a minimum.

3.5 Biodiversity Net Gain

The draft City Plan 2036 states that development should aim to secure net gains for biodiversity where possible by incorporating measures to enhance biodiversity. The emerging Environment Bill will ensure that the delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) through development becomes a mandatory part of the planning process.

The draft City Plan 2036 major development proposals will be required to include a UGF calculation ...

4.0 Biodiversity in the City of London

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The City Gardens team commissioned Greengage Environmental Ltd to undertake an audit of the BAP. The audit was a desk based exercise primarily based on data provided by Greenspace Information for Greater London (GiGL) and reviewed the City's habitats, species and policy.

4.0 Biodiversity in the City of London

The audit highlighted the successes of the BAP 2016-2020 and deficiencies which include:

- Greenspace connectivity and species distribution;
- Habitat diversity;
- Under recording of species;
- Invasive species awareness

To address these deficiencies, recommendations have been identified that can be delivered as part of the Action Plan. The recommendations of the audit target three key areas:

- Improved greenspace connectivity
- Diversification of City habitats and strategic habitat management
- Raising the profile of ecological issues and importance in the minds of the people who access and develop within the City.

Partnership Group

The Partnership Group was established to support the review of the BAP, assist with delivery of the actions and SINC review and selection process. The Group consists of representatives from the relevant departments of the City of London Corporation, business, community and resident representatives as well as ecology, species and biodiversity professionals.

As the City is unique in terms of its size, structure, opportunities and challenges for biodiversity, a more landscape-scale approach was developed for the current BAP. This means all the elements that influence habitats and species will be considered. Specific action plans will be developed for some species such as the Black Redstart and detailed guidance such as for pollinators in the built environment. This will maximise the benefits across all open and green spaces with specific objectives developed to prioritise actions for specific sites, species or areas of opportunity. Priority habitats and species have been identified at both a UK and London level by the London Biodiversity Partnership.

4.1 Habitat

The main types of habitats located in the City of London are:

- Amenity grassland
- Scattered trees
- Introduced shrub

The BAP can assist with the diversification of habitats in the long term which will both encourage greater species diversity and create habitats that are more resilient to a changing climate.

The ‘priority habitats’ identified by the London Biodiversity Partnership that are most relevant to the Square Mile are ‘parks and urban green spaces’ with an ‘important habitat’ identified as ‘built structures’. The Action Plans have been developed to take into consideration these priority habitats. A further habitat recognised as a London biodiversity target within the City of London is standing water and the Tidal Thames, which is also the City’s only Site of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation (SMINC).

Whilst there are some sites with standing water that are dealt with in the BAP, the Tidal Thames is the prime responsibility of the Port of London Authority, with the City Corporation’s responsibilities for the riverside and foreshore are detailed in draft City Plan 2036 Strategic Policy S17, Thames Policy Area. This states that development should not have an adverse impact on the SMINC and should seek opportunities to create or enhance riverside habitats.



4.0 Biodiversity in the City of London

4.2 Species

Species can be categorised into the following. It should be noted that a single species can have multiple categories. The definitions are as follows:

- **Protected species** – protected by national and international legislation
- **Priority species** – species identified of particular conservation importance regionally including at a London and England scale.
- **Target species** – flagship species to consider during development and conservation in the Square Mile.

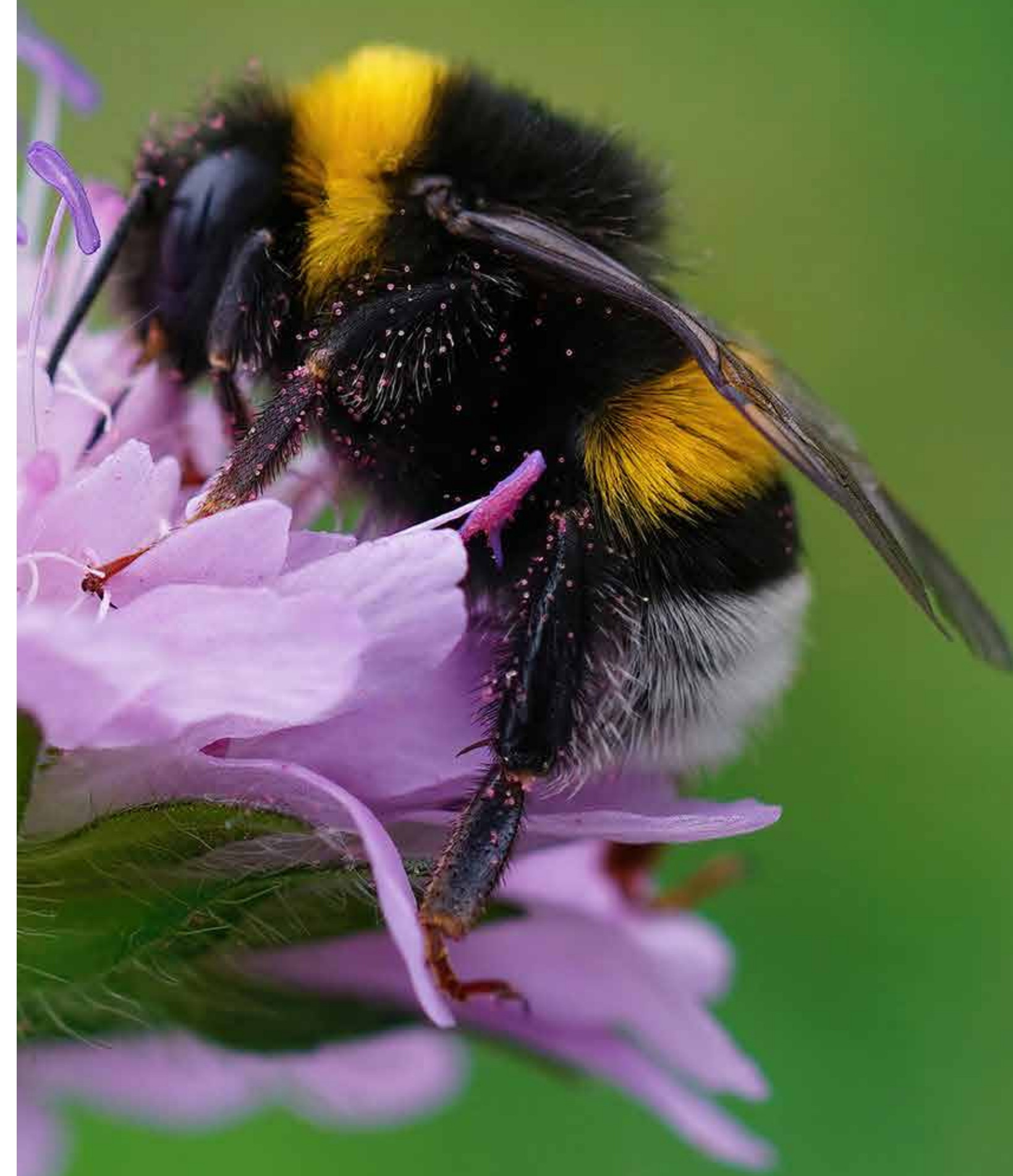
Protected and priority species that GiGL data shows frequently occur in the City and should be considered in the planning process and conservation interventions are detailed in Appendix 2: Protected Species and/or Priority Species records in the City of London.

Following consultation with the Partnership Group and taking into consideration local, regional and national priorities the following species have been selected as target species:

- House Sparrow – *Passer domesticus*
- Black Redstart – *Progenitures ochruros*
- Swift – *Apus apus*
- Peregrine Falcon – *Falco peregrinus*
- Bats – *Chiropter spp.*
- Wild Bees – Bumblebees and Solitary Bees
- Stag Beetle – *Lucanus cervus*

These species are exemplars of their ecological niches, the interaction the species has with the surrounding environment, and also are in many cases highly adapted to the urban environment. They have been selected to highlight their importance within the City of London and to focus conservation management and monitoring. The target species selected also take into consideration national priority habitats and species are defined under Section 41 of the Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act 2006.

In addition to the identified target species, records held by GiGL show there are 60 species which are either legally protected or considered of national, regional or local policy.



4.0 Biodiversity in the City of London

4.3 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs)

The London Plan 2021 identifies the need to protect biodiversity and to provide opportunities for people to access nature through local green spaces. The best examples of key habitats and green spaces are identified as SINCs. SINCs are non-statutory designated sites identified by local authorities and are recognised as part of the planning process.

In London, sites are categorised of importance at a Metropolitan, Borough and Local level. The London Plan 2021 and London Environment Strategy states that SINCs should be protected.

The following sites have been identified in the City:

Table 1
Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation in the City of London

Site ref	Sites
Sites of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation (SMINC)	
M031	The River Thames and its Tidal Tributaries
Sites of Borough Importance for Nature Conservation (SBINC) Grade 2	
CiBII01	The Temple Gardens
CiBII02	The Barbican and St Alphage's Garden
Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINC)	
CiL01	Pepys Garden and St Olave's Churchyard, Seething Lane
CiL02	St Paul's Cathedral Garden
CiL03	Cleary Gardens
CiL04	St Botolph without Bishopsgate Churchyard
CiL05	Aldermanbury Gardens
CiL06	The Roman Wall, Noble Street
CiL07	Finsbury Circus



...provide opportunities for people to access nature through local green spaces.

4.0 Biodiversity in the City of London

SINCs are key to how the City Corporation delivers biodiversity. The small fragmented nature of the greenspaces across the highly built urbanised Square Mile need to meet many, often competing needs. This results in many SINCs having limited biodiversity potential. The focus needs to be on improving the biodiversity value of the SINCs and linking these sites with new green infrastructure.

In December 2015, the City Gardens team commissioned the London Wildlife Trust to review SINCs within the Square Mile. This included reviewing existing sites for their grading and boundary as well as three new proposed sites at Postman’s Park, St Dunstan in the East Church Garden and Portsoken Street Garden.

The following changes including new and upgraded sites and boundary changes have been recommended. It is intended that these changes will be adopted as part of the draft City Plan 2036:



Table 2
Proposed Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation in the City of London

Site ref	Sites
Sites of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation (SMINC)	
M031	The River Thames and its Tidal Tributaries
Sites of Borough Importance for Nature Conservation (SBINC) Grade 1	
pCiBI01	Barbican Estate, St Alphage Garden and Barber Surgeons’ Garden
Sites of Borough Importance for Nature Conservation (SBINC) Grade 2	
CiBII01	The Temple Gardens
pCiBII03	Roman Wall, Noble Street and St Anne & St Agnes Churchyard
Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINC)	
CiL01	St Olave, Hart Street Churchyard
CiL02	St Paul’s Cathedral Churchyard Gardens
CiL03	Cleary Garden
CiL04	St Botolph without Bishopsgate Churchyard
CiL05	Aldermanbury Gardens
CiL07	Finsbury Circus Gardens
pCiL08	Postman’s Park
pCiL09	Portsoken Street Garden
pCiL010	St Dunstan in the East Church Garden

4.0 Biodiversity in the City of London

Figure 1
Map of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) in the City of London

4.4 Local Natures Reserves

The City of London does not currently have any sites designated as Local Nature Reserves (LNR). Action Plan 1 includes an objective for the potential for a site to qualify as an LNR and consider if this is an appropriate designation.

4.5 Open Spaces Audit

A comprehensive audit of all open spaces owned and managed by the City Corporation and private landowners is carried out by the Department of the Built Environment (DBE).

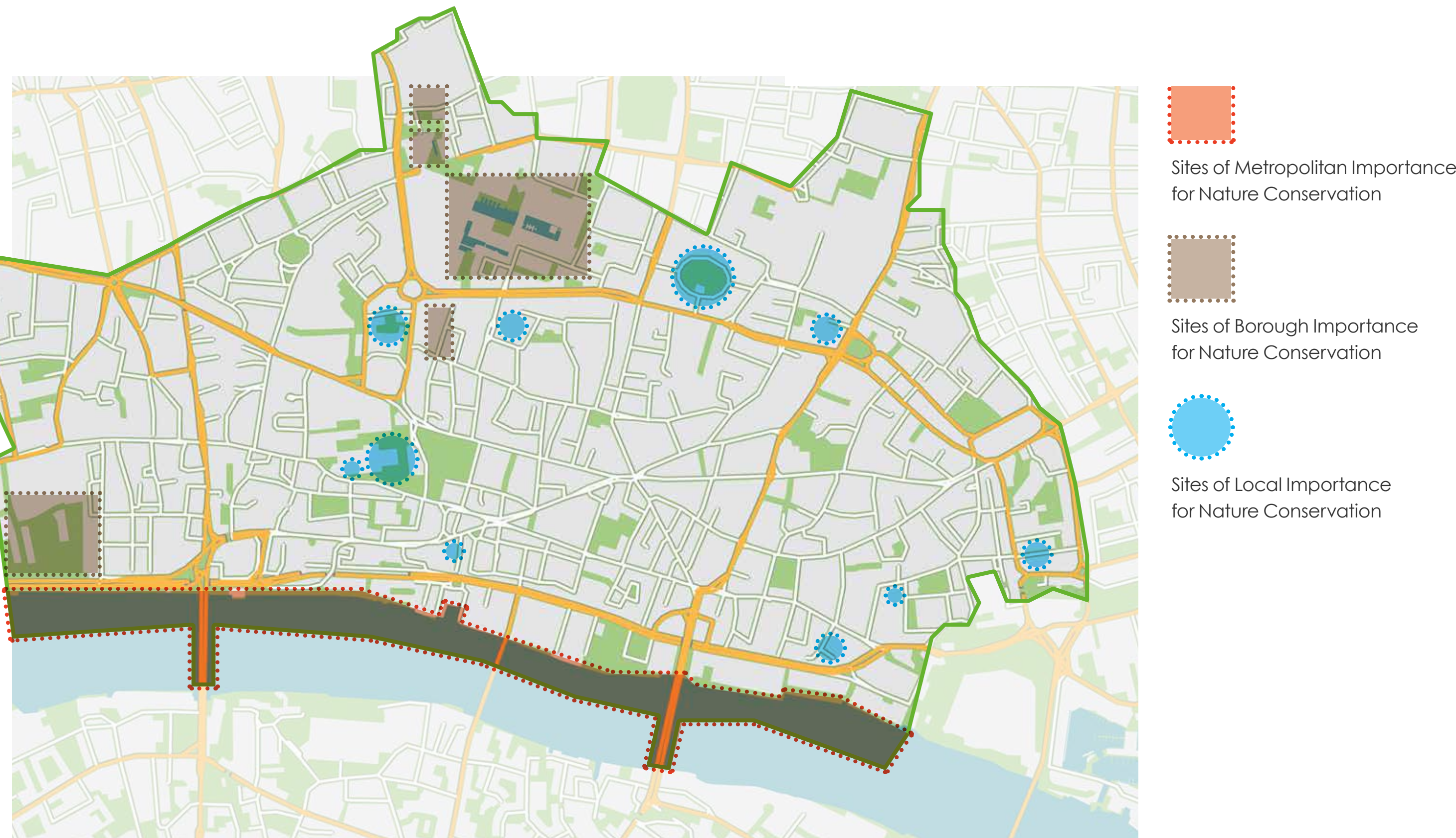
The draft City Plan 2036 sets out seven Key Areas of Change areas that are likely to experience significant change over the Plan period and present particular opportunities and challenges that warrant a specific policy focus.

The Key Areas of Change are:

- Blackfriars
- Pool of London
- Aldgate
- Tower and Portsoken
- City Cluster
- Fleet Street and Ludgate
- Smithfield and Barbican
- Liverpool Street

The Open Spaces Audit will be used to support the BAP by identifying and prioritising biodiversity enhancements and providing access to nature and green space in the Square Mile.

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Sites of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation
 Sites of Borough Importance for Nature Conservation
 Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation

4.0 Biodiversity in the City of London

4.6 Access to nature and green space in the City

Areas of deficiency in access to nature are areas in London where people have to walk more than one kilometre to reach an accessible Metropolitan or Borough Site of Importance for Nature.

Parts of both the Sites of Borough Importance for Nature Conservation (SBINC) Grade 2 located in the City of London have reduced or limited public access because they are privately owned or designated for residents' use. The nearest publicly accessible SBINC to the City of London that is managed by the City Corporation is Bunhill Fields Burial Ground. This site is located just outside the City's boundary in the London Borough of Islington.

The review recommended that the The Roman Wall, Noble Street SINC was both updated to a SBINC Grade 2 and extended to include St Anne & St Agnes Churchyard. The SINC has been renamed Roman Wall, Noble Street and St Anne & St Agnes Churchyard as a result.

Once the current recommendations have been adopted via the draft City Plan 2036, it is recommended that a future SINC review follows any major changes to a SINC. A SINC review would therefore be commissioned following



There is a clear deficiency in access to nature in the east of the City...

the reinstatement and establishment of the SLINC at Finsbury Circus Gardens including any other proposed changes that are identified.

The opportunity to identify or upgrade sites to SBINC status may be identified as part of a SINC review. However, due to the dense urban nature of the City and the limited size of current local sites, opportunities may be limited. There is a clear deficiency in access to nature in the east of the City and particularly the City Cluster and Aldgate.

The London Plan defines deficiency in access to open space in relation to both the maximum distance residents should have to travel to access a public open space and the size and quality of that open

space. The London Plan categorises public open spaces based on their structure and size. Most open spaces in the City are identified as 'Pocket Parks' with a minority of 'Small Open Spaces'. As identified in the London Plan, individuals should have access to these types of spaces within 400 metres of their homes with residential areas outside of this distance potentially defined as deficient in access to open space. Open space provision and types across London are detailed in [Appendix 4](#).

Identifying and maximising both the biodiversity potential and access for public enjoyment of these small sites in the City are of key importance. Management plans will be developed to focus both on enhancing the quality and accessibility of SINC.

4.0 Biodiversity in the City of London

4.7 Achievements and recommendations

The City of London Biodiversity Action Plan 2016–2020 has made the following significant achievements:

- A review of SINCs in the City of London was completed by the LWT in 2016.
- A Service Level Agreement (SLA) with GiGL was secured for the Open Space Department (OSD).
- Delivery of a Biodiversity Audit for the City.
- Nine predator-secure bird feeding cages were funded and installed by Friends of City Gardens (FoCG) and bird feeding is carried out by volunteers in ten City gardens.
- FoCG monitor and clean bird boxes each autumn which provide valuable information on usage.
- Barbican Wildlife Group (BWG) has made improvements to habitats in the Barbican Wildlife Garden also undertaking species monitoring and community engagement activities and events.
- Annual breeding bird survey and black redstart sightings report carried out by FoCG.
- Bat activity monitored at 14 different locations over two years and talks and walks funded, organised and delivered by FoCG.
- Bat detection workshops organised by FoCG with support from the Bat Conservation Trust and funded by the City Corporation’s Central Grants Programme.
- Lunch’n’Learn event on bats and birds in the City delivered to City Corporation staff.
- Planting improvements at Postman’s Park to support its proposed status as a SLINC.
- Annual participation in the RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch by volunteers at targeted SLINC sites including the production of a report and the provision of data to GiGL for inclusion in the regional wildlife records dataset.
- Working with corporate volunteers to improve habitats within the parks, gardens, and churchyards of the Square Mile such as increasing shrub cover, installing log piles and leaf composting.
- Bulb planting of nectar-rich early flowering species for early emerging pollinators.
- Enhancement of two churchyard garden with pollinator-friendly species.



Barbican Wildlife Group (BWG) has made improvements to habitats...

4.0 Biodiversity in the City of London

Access to nature is linked to improving mental health and wellbeing...

4.8 Health and wellbeing benefits of biodiversity

As well as the importance of conserving habitats and species, biodiversity and activities that enhance the environment are beneficial to people. The opportunities that exist for individuals to engage and promote biodiversity in the City of London contribute to an active and healthy lifestyle. Examples include taking part in planting activities in a green space, working to create new habitats, community food growing or using walks and trails to explore nature in the City. Biodiversity is also an important contributing factor in mitigating air pollution with specific planting used to improve local air quality and raise awareness within the community.

The City Corporation is also working with external organisations based in the Square Mile, such as Bart’s Health NHS Trust to increase green infrastructure across their sites. Both participating in biodiversity related activities earning Tempo Time Credits and redeeming them on physical activities such as gyms and swimming pools have a positive impact on health and wellbeing.

Access to green space and nature is also linked to improving the mental health and wellbeing of individuals as well as creating quiet and tranquil areas for workers, residents and visitors.

4.9 Education and community engagement

The work of promoting and enhancing SINC provides a valuable opportunity for individuals to share and learn new skills, knowledge and experience as well as bringing together workers, residents and visitors with a shared passion for biodiversity. This form of engagement can be vital in encouraging local residents to become champions in promoting the quality and understanding of biodiversity in the City. For this reason, biodiversity enhancement is used as a platform for many events and activities in the City’s green spaces.

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4.0 Biodiversity in the City of London

4.10 Sustainability in the built environment

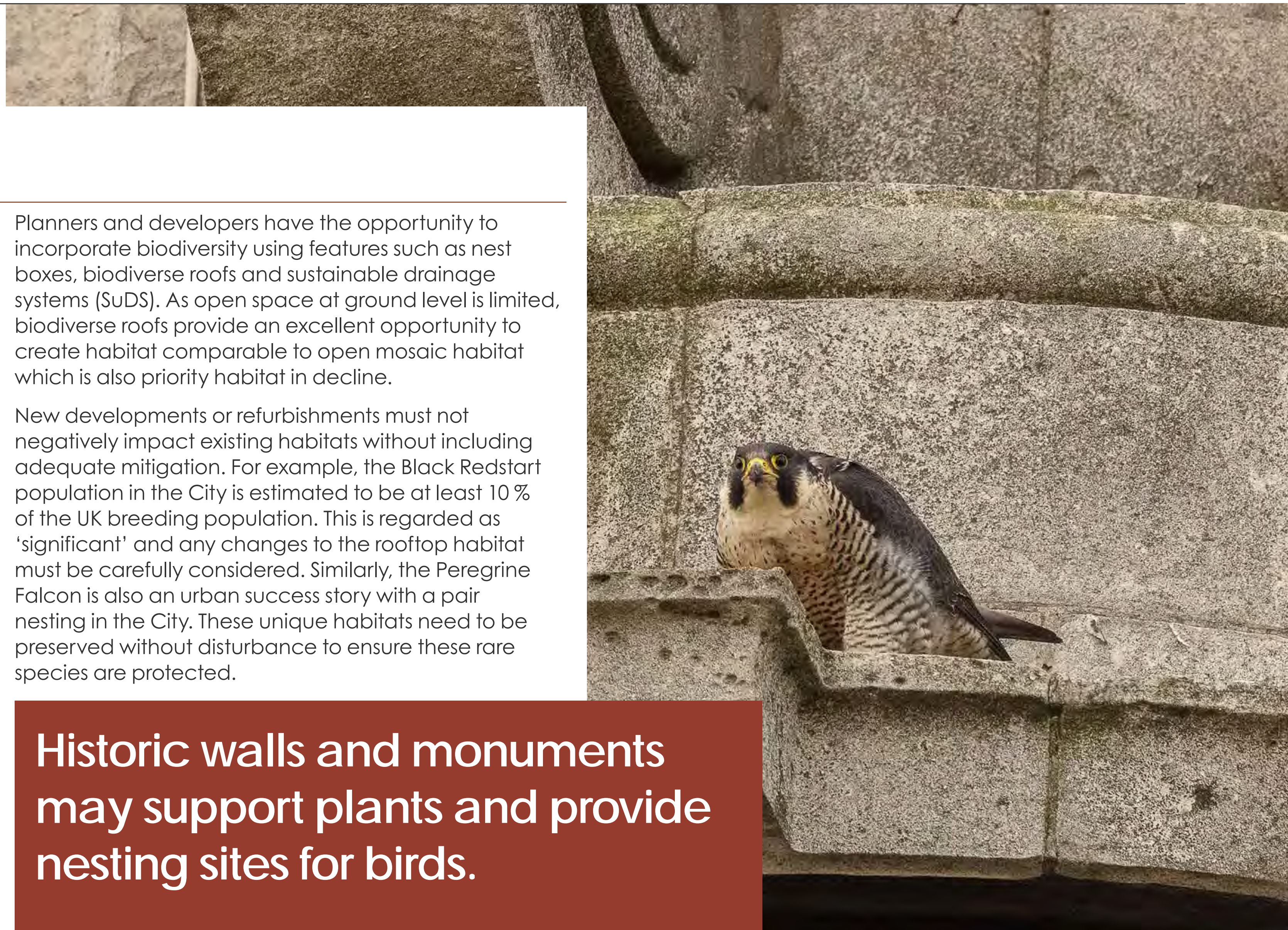
The built environment represents an important habitat in the City. It includes historic structures and monuments as well as new developments. Historic walls, churchyards and monuments may support plants which are protected or of notable species of local importance as well as provide nesting sites for birds. The sustainability of new structures in the built environment is now a crucial element of building design, with opportunities to support and enhance biodiversity. Developers can include green roofs and walls to contribute towards Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Methodology (BREEAM) certification through the creation of new habitats to support local biodiversity. At rooftop level there is increasing space for biodiversity to be delivered through biodiverse roofs.

As set out in the draft City Plan 2036 proposals for major developments will be required to achieve a minimum BREEAM rating of ‘excellent’ and aim for ‘outstanding’ against the current, relevant BREEAM criteria at the time of application. It is important that both existing structures and new developments include features that enhance and compliment the network of green infrastructure across the City and take habitats and species into consideration.

Planners and developers have the opportunity to incorporate biodiversity using features such as nest boxes, biodiverse roofs and sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). As open space at ground level is limited, biodiverse roofs provide an excellent opportunity to create habitat comparable to open mosaic habitat which is also priority habitat in decline.

New developments or refurbishments must not negatively impact existing habitats without including adequate mitigation. For example, the Black Redstart population in the City is estimated to be at least 10 % of the UK breeding population. This is regarded as ‘significant’ and any changes to the rooftop habitat must be carefully considered. Similarly, the Peregrine Falcon is also an urban success story with a pair nesting in the City. These unique habitats need to be preserved without disturbance to ensure these rare species are protected.

Historic walls and monuments may support plants and provide nesting sites for birds.



5.0 Target species

The following target species have been selected as flagship species for their wider conservation value and importance. In general, they have been selected for their low population and vulnerability in the City as species to consider within development and conservation.

They also act as a focus for raising awareness and targeting biodiversity conservation actions. Many of the actions to promote these species will have wider positive benefits to biodiversity in the Square Mile.



5.0 Target species

5.1 House Sparrow – *Passer domesticus*

Once a common sight in parks and gardens across the UK, it is now widely acknowledged that there has been a severe decline in the UK House Sparrow population. It is estimated that Greater London lost 70% of its House Sparrow population between 1994 and 2001. Due to this rapid population decline the species has received the highest level of conservation concern, red status, with the species needing urgent action. The reasons for this decline are complex and include disease, availability of food, air pollution and loss of habitat and nesting sites. The decline in House Sparrows has also been observed in the City with a few isolated colonies on the City fringes including Fortune Street Park and the Tower of London.

The priority actions for House Sparrows may also have a positive impact on all bird species present in the City, with interventions based in specific sites. Guidance will be developed and included in an ecology toolkit and SINC management plans to ensure habitat interventions are tailored to the needs of the House Sparrow.

These recommendations will include provision of nest boxes, planting seed rich species, trialling supplementary feeding of protein-rich food during the nesting season and establishing more areas of dense shrub cover. It is also vital to engage with partner organisations and residents through citizen science initiatives to gain a greater understanding of the House Sparrows' remaining presence in the City.



It is estimated that Greater London has lost 70% of its House Sparrow population ...

5.0 Target species

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5.2 Black Redstart – *Phoenicurus ochruros*

The Black Redstart is a small robin-sized bird that has adapted to live in the urban environment. There are fewer than 100 breeding pairs in the UK and the Black Redstart features on the red list of birds of conservation concern. The Black Redstart was first reported in London in the 1920s and the species has adapted to living in industrial and urban areas. The population increased significantly following the Blitz when bombsites provided the ideal habitat. The rubble between the bombed-out shells of buildings replicated the bare and stony cliffs of the Black Redstarts' natural habitat.

Central London and specifically the City of London are an extremely important location for this species, with a significant percentage of the national breeding population located in the Square Mile. The population is probably made up of resident pairs and breeding birds that travel from western to southern England between March and May and returning to wintering sites from September. The Black Redstart's population has seen a drop in numbers over the decades which have mainly been linked to loss of breeding sites as buildings have been redeveloped. The increase in the number of green roofs in the City is likely to be the key to continued success of this species in the Square Mile. A Species Action Plan will be developed to provide developers and building managers with advice on enhancing their roofs for the Black Redstart.

... the city of London is an extremely important location for this species ...

5.0 Target species

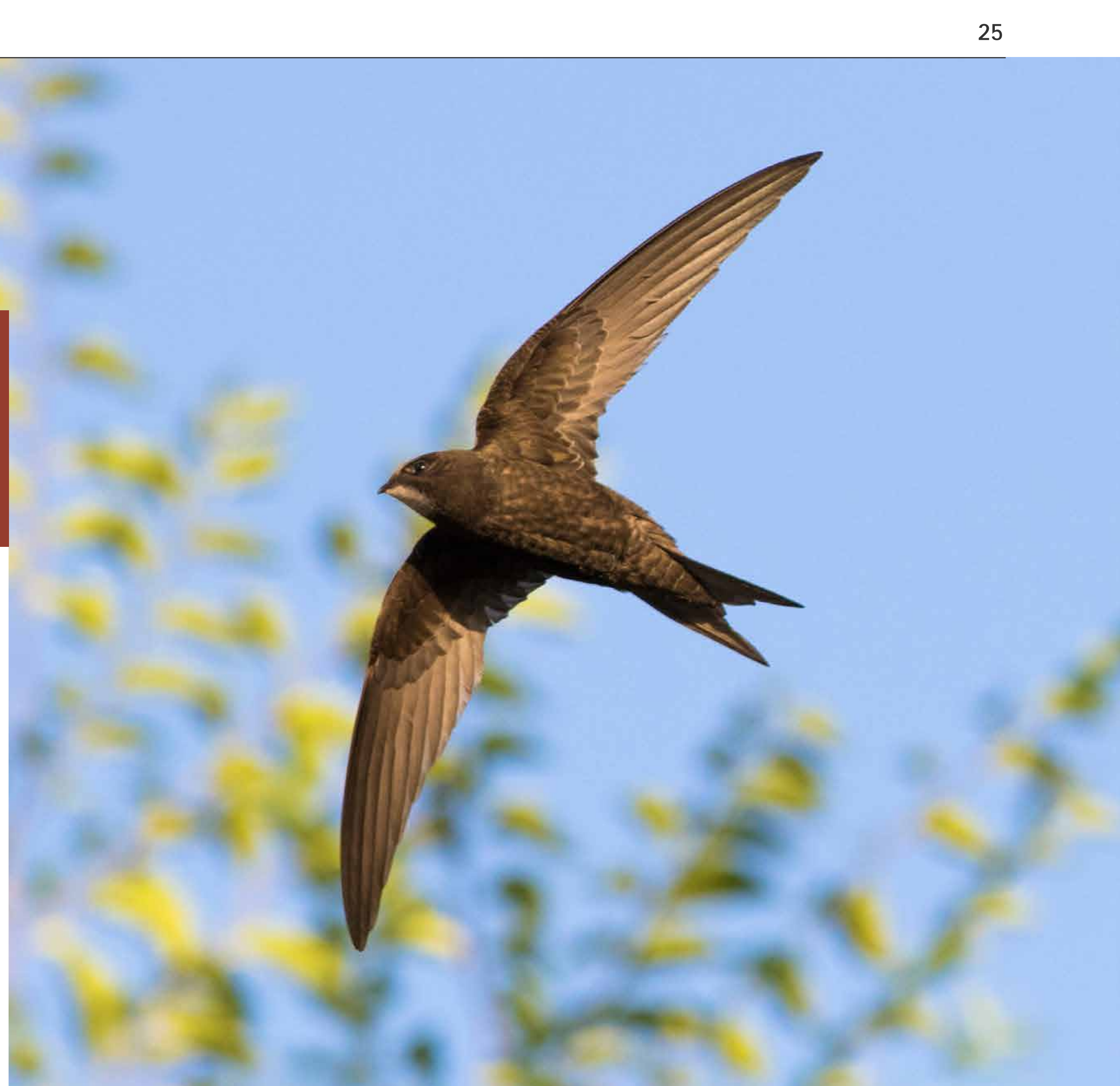
Swifts are summer visitors to London that arrive in April and leave in August to over-winter in Africa.

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5.3
Swift – *Apus apus*

Swifts are summer visitors to London that arrive in April and leave in August to over-winter in Africa. They feed on insects and other invertebrates. Swifts nest in the crevices of cliff faces and have adapted to make the urban landscape their home by taking advantage of features that replicate this environment, favouring the eaves and roof space of buildings. Modern building design and the redevelopment of buildings have meant Swifts have been

excluded from suitable breeding sites which have led to their significant decline in the UK. It is recommended that building management guidelines include retrofitting of Swift nesting boxes in refurbished buildings as well as new developments along the Thames riverside. Once there's a greater understanding of the Thames Riverside environment, opportunities for other species such as the House Martin may be identified.



5.0 Target species

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5.4
Peregrine Falcon – *Falco peregrinus*

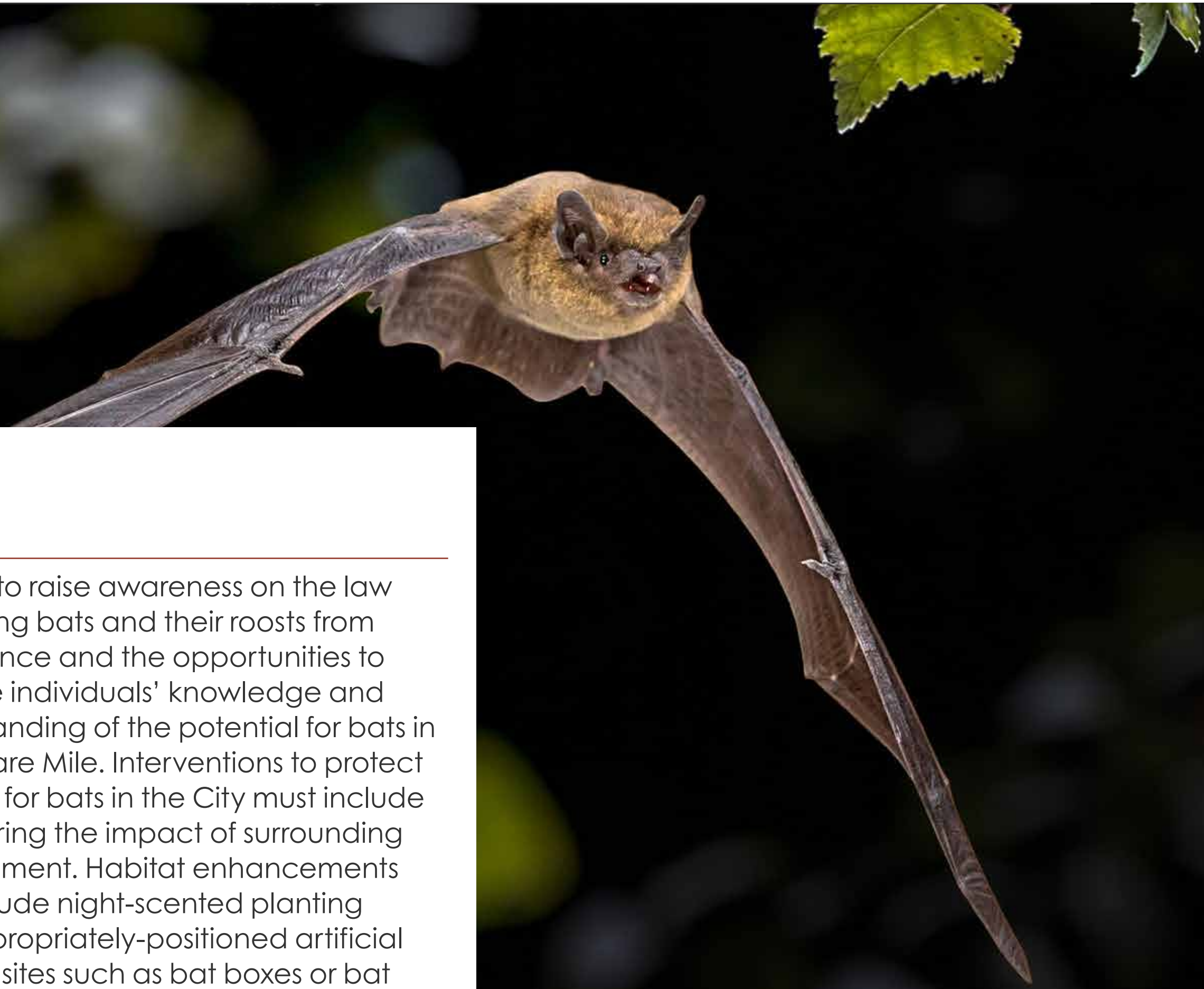
Peregrine Falcons have been present in the City for several years. They are given the highest degree of legal protection under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. The species is present in many urban areas with the nesting sites closely monitored. Around 20% of the European peregrine population breeds in the UK and therefore it is important to protect this species.

The Peregrine Falcon’s natural habitat is cliff ledges. These birds are attracted to the City as tall buildings mimic this habitat. The species also act as a natural predator of pigeons. One pair regularly nests in the City and has successfully raised young for several years. It is important that the nesting sites of these birds are protected, that artificial nests are installed at appropriate locations and building managers and occupiers are made aware of their significance and protected status.



The Peregrine Falcon’s natural habitat is cliff edges.

5.0 Target species



5.5 Bats – *Chiroptera spp.*

There are 17 species of bats in the UK with the Common Pipistrelle, *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, being the most common species in the inner London boroughs. Bats forage on insects such as moths and beetles and have specific roosting and hibernating preferences. They forage over water and use tree lines to aid navigation. The Common Pipistrelle is the species that has been identified most frequently as roosting and foraging within the City but other crevice-roosting species are also likely to be present.

Bat activity monitoring by FOCG has provided a vital insight and valuable data on presence of bats across the City. This data can support further opportunities to target monitoring to gain knowledge of

roosts and commuting and foraging routes. Bats are regularly seen over the Barbican lakes and gardens, but they are also widespread elsewhere in the City.

Further surveying and monitoring are required to establish their distribution in the Square Mile. A group of volunteers has now been trained by FoCG to undertake bat walks which will take place during the summer months.

There continues to be a significant threat to bats in the UK in terms of loss of roosting, maternity and hibernating sites in both natural and artificial structures.

Loss of suitable feeding sites and disruption of flight paths due to artificial lighting also have an impact on bat populations.

It is vital to raise awareness on the law protecting bats and their roosts from disturbance and the opportunities to increase individuals' knowledge and understanding of the potential for bats in the Square Mile. Interventions to protect habitats for bats in the City must include considering the impact of surrounding development. Habitat enhancements can include night-scented planting and appropriately-positioned artificial roosting sites such as bat boxes or bat bricks incorporated into buildings.

It is vital to raise awareness on the law protecting bats ...

5.0 Target species

5.6 Wild bees (bumblebees and solitary bees)

Wild bees, which includes bumblebees and solitary bees, face serious decline from a range of pressures including habitat loss, pesticide use and climate change. Along with other types of pollinators such as wasps, butterflies, moths and hoverflies, these insects are vital to our environment with many of our food crops dependant on pollinators. The City is also home to domesticised honey bees managing in hives, often at roof level, by beekeepers.

Urban areas can provide a diverse range of flowering plants which extend the season and availability of pollen and nectar as well as providing nesting opportunities. This can be achieved by including nectar-rich planting in landscaping schemes and providing suitable nesting sites, either within the landscape or as artificial structures. Biodiverse roofs which provide an open mosaic habitat can also contribute towards providing suitable habitat.

Several of the Action Plans support wild bees and other pollinators in a number ways. This includes developing guidance on supporting pollinators in the built environment, producing an ecology toolkit and biodiversity checklist and guidance for developers. SINC management plans will identify site specific opportunities, protect existing features and amend maintenance regimes to improve the quality and diversity of habitats.

Solitary bee species are typically under recorded in the City. The action to develop a biological recording strategy will assist with developing a greater understanding of pollinators and supporting flora in the Square Mile so interventions can be tailored to support specific species.



Urban areas can provide a diverse range of flowering plants which extend the season ...

5.0 Target species

... foxes can disrupt the Stag Beetles from completing their life cycle.



5.7 Stag Beetle – *Lucanus cervus*

The Stag Beetle is the UK's largest ground living beetle with concentration in population in south-west London. The Lesser Stag Beetle has been observed in the Barbican Wildlife Garden. Stag Beetles have a lengthy life cycle lasting up to seven years from egg to adult. The larvae rely on dead or decaying wood such as fallen trees, branches and stumps. The Stag Beetle is a nationally threatened species. The population decline is related to habitat loss due to development and the sanitisation of parks and gardens with the removal of dead and rotting material. Predators such as foxes can also disrupt the Stag Beetles from completing their life cycle.

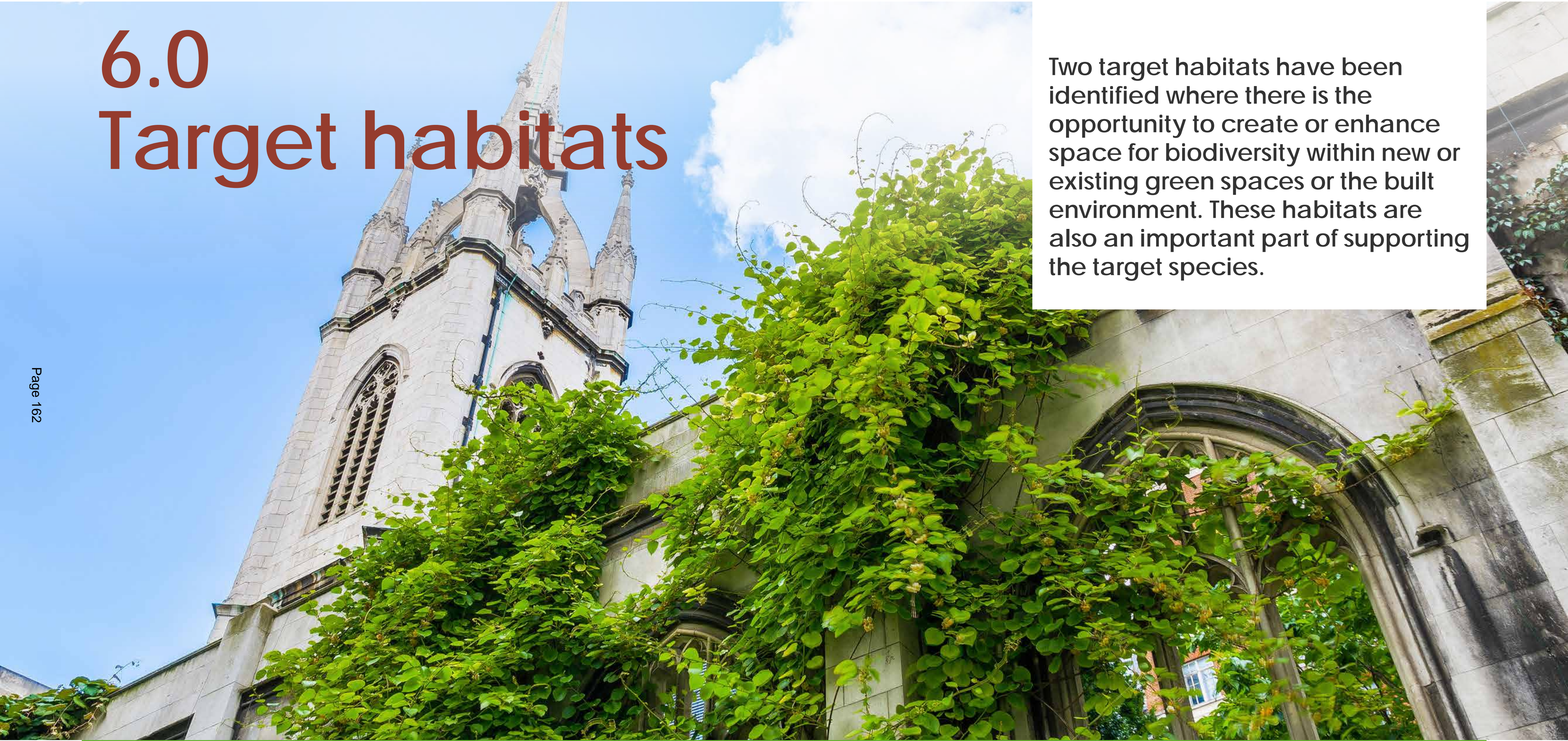
Rising public awareness of the Stag Beetle, its life cycle and the benefits of dead and decaying wood, leaf litter and not 'tidying up' green spaces will help create suitable habitats for the wider invertebrate population. Leaf composting areas will be one of the features considered for all SINC sites as an outcome of site-specific SINC management plans. Log piles have been installed in many of the existing SINC sites and will be considered for newly designated sites. Stag Beetles act as an excellent flagship species to both engage with the public and promote positive habitat management for all invertebrates.

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6.0 Target habitats

Two target habitats have been identified where there is the opportunity to create or enhance space for biodiversity within new or existing green spaces or the built environment. These habitats are also an important part of supporting the target species.

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6.0 Target habitats

6.1 Open mosaic habitat

‘Open mosaic habitats on previously developed land’ has been identified as a priority habitat to create or restore in the London Environment Strategy. This habitat is typical of old industrial sites and was common in the City in the form of rubble of bomb damaged buildings following the Second World War. Biodiverse roofs can be created to replicate this habitat to create a range of conditions to support flora and invertebrate communities. This can be achieved with varying substrate depths, areas of bare ground and appropriately selected wildflower seeds and plug plants to suit the conditions. Features can include pebbles and stones, sandy mounds, logs and rope as well as areas with water. Singing posts and nesting boxes for Black Redstarts can also be incorporated.

6.2 Standing open water

Standing water, in the form of ponds and lakes in the City, is identified as a priority habitat in the London Environment Strategy. Ponds and lakes are important for supporting a range of wildlife including fish, invertebrates, dragonflies, amphibians and birds as well as feeding ground for bats.

There is the opportunity to improve the quality of existing ponds and lakes, create new ponds and incorporate access to water into the design of biodiverse roofs. SuDS schemes can also contribute towards increasing access to water for wildlife including pollinators as well as incorporating features such as bird baths.



... ponds and lakes are identified as a priority habitats ...

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7.0 Action Plans

To deliver the objectives of the BAP, four Action Plans have been developed. These deliver the key themes that support both the priority species and wider biodiversity priorities in the Square Mile.



Action Plan 1: Open space and habitat management

Aim: to protect and enhance habitats and species in the Square Mile



Action Plan 2: The built environment

Aim: to improve infrastructure for biodiversity in the built environment



Action Plan 3: Education and community engagement

Aim: to promote a greater understanding of the City's biodiversity



Action Plan 4: Data collection, survey and monitoring

Aim: to improve monitoring and data on biodiversity in the City

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7.0 Action Plans



7.1 Action Plan 1: Open space and habitat management

It is intended that the recommendations of the review of SINCS in 2016 will be adopted via the draft City Plan 2036. The BAP also requires the City Corporation to both develop SINC management plans for sites managed by the City Corporation and to explore what equivalent documents may be in place for privately owned/managed sites.

The SINC management plan for each site will identify and develop agreed biodiversity enhancements and promote good management with a clear framework for delivery and annual review of progress. The SINC management plans will identify the specific actions for each site enabling the City Corporation to engage in a dialogue with interested parties and identify funding opportunities. The range of enhancements will include:

- Increasing shrub cover and berry-bearing plants including hedges.
- Providing continuous vertical habitats from ground level to the tree canopy to create dense cover for roosting and nesting.

- Planting a range of nectar and pollen-rich species, including night-scented varieties that will provide forage for pollinators throughout the year.
- Amending management practices that may harm biodiversity, and introducing practices that will enhance habitats, such as leaf composting and mulching.
- Considering the biodiversity value of planting when redesigning, refurbishing or enhancing current open spaces.
- Considering the impact of climate change on biodiversity and choosing plants that are resilient to a range of climate impacts.
- Retaining and increasing deadwood for invertebrates in open space sites either as log piles or as a support for ivy, as well as for fungi.

Many of the City’s open spaces such as the churchyards have a strongly historic character that underscores their biodiversity to powerful effect.

A number include historic structures such as parts of the Roman and medieval City wall, exposed Victorian building basements, elements of former churches damaged or altered after the Second World War, gravestones damaged or destroyed in the Blitz, and memorial structures. Their structures provide an excellent host for mosses, lichens and ferns, as well as other wall-dwelling species. Many of these sites are unique habitats that will be surveyed and monitored. The SINC management plans for those sites will require all interested parties, including departments within the City Corporation, Historic England and Natural England, to be made aware of any proposed developments. The sites will be managed taking into consideration the habitat features identified and the desirability of maintaining their unique historic character. Many of these sites and structures are designated assets such as scheduled ancient monuments, listed buildings, or within conservation areas and Historic Parks and Gardens, all of which have statutory protection.

BAP will identify opportunities to understand and contribute towards the River Thames as a Site of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation. The City’s artificial structures and river walls and foreshore provide an important habitat for wildlife with the Thames itself providing an important ecological corridor through the heart of London.

Developments guided by the Thames Strategy and Riverside Walk Enhancement Strategy must protect biodiversity and encourage enhancements to this wildlife corridor as well as improve water quality with the use of SuDS. The City Corporation works with both the Environment Agency and Port of London Authority to enhance biodiversity along the River Thames. The Thames Tideway Tunnel which will improve water quality and associated biodiversity in the Thames by reducing sewer discharges into the river.

Contents	Introduction	National and regional policy context	Local policy context	Biodiversity in the City of London	Target species	Target habitats	Action plans	Funding opportunities	How the BAP will be monitored and delivered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendices • Tables • Figures
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7.0 Action Plans

7.2 Action Plan 2: The built environment



The built environment includes all new and existing buildings, structures and public realm developments. Action Plan 2 focuses on the important contributions the built environment can make to supporting biodiversity. These include:

- Biodiverse roofs and green walls
- Tree planting
- Environmental enhancement schemes
- Biodiversity-rich planting schemes
- SuDS
- Installation of artificial nest boxes for targeted species

The draft City Plan 2036 supports the installation of biodiverse extensive or intensive green roofs and green walls on all appropriate developments. This has the potential to contribute significantly to the biodiversity and climate resilience of the City of London, complementing the network of green spaces at ground level. Well-designed biodiverse roofs provide the ideal opportunity to create the open mosaic habitat typical of brownfield sites, replicating the habitat favoured by species such as the Black Redstart.

Although biodiverse roofs may have constraints depending on their location, they can provide favourable growing conditions such as a sunny aspect, which may be limited at ground level. This can increase the planting palette available to designers and provide opportunities for biodiversity. Roof gardens and terraces also play an important role in allowing access to amenity space for building occupiers and the wider community with the added value of providing connected aerial habitats. These spaces should be designed with consideration to supporting any biodiversity enhancements.

The City has an established network of ground level open spaces. Both street trees and environmental enhancement projects have the potential to improve the connectivity of SINC, green spaces and associated habitats. The draft City Plan 2036 acknowledges the importance of enhancement schemes which include trees and soft landscaping that promote biodiversity and link existing green spaces and routes in green corridors.

The City of London Tree Strategy Part 2 also promotes the aim to increase existing stock and encourage green corridors that contribute to the biodiversity of the City.

Significant opportunities exist to improve the connectivity of green spaces and their biodiversity value. Development of the built environment has the potential to enhance the habitats of priority species that have adapted to and made the Square Mile their home. All buildings and infrastructure must therefore positively contribute to a range of sustainability issues and opportunities with biodiversity a key component. It is imperative that at an early stage in any development or landscape improvement that consideration is given to both the impact of new developments and potential for biodiversity enhancements. To ensure the maximum benefits to biodiversity are realised, the context of where the site sits in relation to the local biodiversity network, assessing assets such as individual trees, open spaces, SINC, standing water and how the development can enhance, contribute and not detract from what is already there.



7.0 Action Plans

Considerations for not negatively impacting on the existing biodiversity network include:

- Ensuring lighting associated with construction sites does not unnecessarily illuminate nearby open spaces and disrupt bat foraging routes.
- Ensuring new lighting in public realm enhancement schemes does not have an adverse impact on biodiversity.
- Over provision of nesting boxes for territorial species in an area that can only support small numbers e.g. Peregrine falcon

Assets that should be considered to be included in any enhancement include:

- Installing well positioned and specified artificial nesting boxes or habitats.
- Retrofitting artificial structures to improve habitats for species such as bats and pollinators.
- Providing standing water on site
- Introducing log piles and other deadwood habitats
- Diverse planting schemes that provide habitat and food for wildlife

Temporary assets that can be introduced during development or on vacant sites include:

- Introducing temporary green walls or other pollen and nectar-rich features on construction sites and on hoardings which in some circumstances may be in place for many years.
- Taking advantage of vacant sites such as planters, beds or borders or areas undergoing redevelopment by sowing wildflower species to provide pollen and nectar as well as a temporary visual amenity.

Wherever possible providing interpretation on the background and history of a site as well as importance of features such as street trees and green roofs. Such suggestions can be developed in guidance to support the BAP.



... consider installing well positioned and specified artificial nesting boxes ...



7.0 Action Plans

7.3 Action Plan 3: Education and community engagement



Action Plan 3 covers a wide remit, including:

- Promoting a greater understanding of the City’s biodiversity and informing stakeholders how their work or leisure might impact on the natural environment.
- Providing opportunities for stakeholders to contribute towards initiatives designed to enhance biodiversity in open spaces and to learn new skills.
- Encouraging volunteers and City Gardeners to work together on biodiversity projects.

The City has several established community and voluntary groups that engage in activities which promote and enhance the value of biodiversity in the City. These activities include:

- Weekly gardening sessions to support biodiversity at the Barbican Wildlife Garden by the BWG supported by a City Gardener.
- Workshops and other activities organised by BWG.
- Bird feeding and bird bath cleaning in 10 City gardens by FoCG volunteers.

- Weekly garden maintenance sessions and one-off green space projects organised by FoCG volunteers for residents and corporate volunteers.
- Monthly Bee Walks to support the national recording scheme run the Bumblebee Conservation Trust.
- Data collection and reporting to GiGL by FoCG and BWG volunteers.
- Nic’s Secret Garden and Plant Rescue Nursery created and maintained by a City Gardener, with the assistance of BWG volunteers in an otherwise unused City space.
- Middlesex Street Gardeners’ Club and Golden Lane Estate Allotment Group – “Golden Baggers”.
- Support of and participation in campaigns such as the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) It’s Your Neighbourhood and London in Bloom that bring together City businesses and community and voluntary groups to have a positive impact on biodiversity in the Square Mile.

- The use of social media and dedicated websites by FoCG, BWG and Golden Baggers.

Community and voluntary groups provide a significant contribution in supporting biodiversity in terms of raising awareness of species and improving habitats. Their work should be supported and assistance provided in identifying funding streams that support their work.

National award schemes such as RHS Britain in Bloom and the Green Flag Awards and Green Heritage Site Accreditation managed by Keep Britain Tidy recognise the importance of considering biodiversity in all aspects of parks and open spaces management. The schemes also provide a stimulus for managers to strive for excellence and promote their achievements to a wider audience.



7.0 Action Plans

The City Gardens team will encourage City businesses to undertake corporate social responsibility (CSR) commitments in the City's green spaces. This will provide the ideal opportunity for City businesses and their employees to gain a greater understanding of the network of open spaces available in the City and make a positive contribution to biodiversity. This has a positive impact on building a stronger and engaged community in the City as well as developing the skills of individuals.

The City Gardens team will support raising awareness of the value of biodiversity in the urban landscape and how colleagues, workers, businesses and residents can help to protect and enhance it. The City Corporation supports the London-wide campaign to raise awareness of what SINC's are and their importance in the context of both the City and Greater London.

Biodiversity is an excellent platform to engage with children and to increase their understanding of the natural world. There are two state primary schools that take the majority of the City's resident children – The Aldgate School in the east of the City and Prior Weston, a London Borough of Islington primary school on the north-west edge of the City, adjoining Fortune Street Park,

as well as another primary school, City of London Academy Islington (CoLPAI) also on the north-west edge of the City. In addition to these state schools there are several private schools and nurseries in or on the fringes of the Square Mile. Volunteer groups already work with both state schools and other nurseries to provide learning opportunities and support gardening activities. Both the City Corporation and volunteer and community groups can be of key importance in working with schools to support curriculum-based biodiversity activities. The City Gardens team will also identify and support opportunities for adult learning, both for individual personal development and to support biodiversity.

The City Corporation website will be developed to include information on biodiversity of the City, raise awareness of SINC's and explain what individuals and businesses, especially though volunteering and CSR, can do to support biodiversity in the Square Mile. Communication channels should be used to raise awareness of how biodiversity is being supported as well as disseminate good practice guidance. They will also be used to signpost respondents to other more detailed sources of information and how they can engage with delivery of the BAP.



... explain what individuals and businesses can do to support biodiversity ...



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7.0 Action Plans



7.4 Action Plan 4: Data collection, surveys and monitoring

It is essential that data on species and habitats is systematically collected and digitally recorded. This information can be used to inform planners and developers, help shape management plans and demonstrate the importance of green spaces and associated green infrastructure features. The data collected is a vital element for developing an evidence base for evaluating the success of interventions, and guiding future work. It is important to promote the value of the data to potential user groups and that the City Corporation contributes to the regional and national agenda to understand and protect biodiversity.

Analysis of the available data on protected species in the City shows a varied distribution of species which can possibly be linked to under-recording and monitoring of species. The lack of species records does not necessarily mean lack of presence. There is no evidence of recent species records for several SINCs, which limits the ability to assess their current situation. Therefore, there is a need to target the monitoring of SINCs and in particular underreported SINCs.

The management and monitoring of biodiverse roofs once installed is also an important factor to improve the understanding of how these roofs contribute to urban biodiversity.

GiGL is London's environmental record centre. It receives, collates and manages detailed information on aspects of open spaces, including habitat and species information. This data is available to planners and developers, to enable them to make informed decisions to protect and enhance biodiversity. GiGL's habitat and species datasets provide valuable information and it is important that this information is understood and considered to ensure that informed decisions are made.

More can be done to encourage the monitoring of successful habitats, provide information to make enhancements and inform future projects. The City Gardens team, planners and volunteers will actively engage with developers and building managers to encourage more ecological surveys of these habitats and the sharing of information.

Data is invaluable to support funding bids and further ensure that projects and developments take into consideration the specific conditions that influence biodiversity in the City.

The OSD SLA with GiGL which provides access to data and services that can inform the decision making process to protect and enhance biodiversity. The data and interpretation provided by GiGL has been essential for supporting the SINC Review process and Biodiversity Audit as well as providing the evidence base for the BAP. Action Plan 4 highlights the need to continue to maintain an SLA with GiGL and promote and utilise the data and services available. The datasets held by GiGL should be reviewed to ensure they are an accurate reflection of the open space provision and urban greening in the Square Mile. The OSD will work in conjunction with the DBE when commissioning, collating and monitoring data.

The BAP identifies the need to monitor protected, priority and City specific target species.

This can be achieved by a combination of data collection methods including commissioning systematic and targeted species surveys to gain a better understanding of the species and supporting habitats. A biological recording strategy will be developed to identify the priorities for monitoring from a species data perspective. The strategy will identify opportunities to inform the City's community about the City's open spaces and biodiversity and identify both existing and new opportunities to engage, such as RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch and City Nature Challenge. Species monitoring and recording also provides an accessible, achievable and measurable outcome for investment in biodiversity identification and survey training.

The strategy will identify existing and new opportunities.

8.0 Funding opportunities

The City Gardens team will work with community and voluntary groups to access funding and sponsorship opportunities as they arise. These may be national schemes run by corporates, Heritage Lottery funding, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds, planning obligations commonly referred to as section 106 agreements or other City funds including the Social Value element of the City Corporation’s procurement process.

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9.0

How the BAP will be monitored and delivered

As progress towards achieving the actions of the BAP is made, it is important to record and communicate this to the members of the Partnership Group as well as the wider public. Lead Partners will update their actions on an annual basis and meet to review progress made. Biodiversity information, including the annually updated actions which will be provided to committee and made available to the Partnership Group.



9.0 How the BAP will be monitored and delivered



Table 3
Action Plan 1: Open space and habitat management

Action No	Action	Lead Partner	Contributing Partner	To be completed by
OSHM1.1	Adopt via the City Plan 2036, the recommendations of the 2016 review of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) in the City of London.	CoL PP	CoL OSD	2022
OSHM1.2	Schedule and secure funding for a future SINC review. Identify any proposed new sites, boundary changes or upgrades to be included as part of the review.	CoL OSD	SINC landowners/ managers	2025
OSHM1.3	Assess the potential of the Barbican Wildlife Garden to qualify as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and consider if that is an appropriate designation for this garden.	CoL CCS CoL OSD	BWG CoL PP	2023
OSHM1.4	Secure funding and commission for an ecologist to produce SINC management plans for all City Corporation managed SINC sites. Work with landowners and managers to develop management plans for privately owned/managed sites.	CoL OSD		2026
OSHM1.5	Carry out a baseline survey and commission and adopt a Black Redstart species action plan.	CoL OSD	FoCG	2024
OSHM1.6	Set up of a multi-departmental working group to develop guidance on managing historic walls, memorials and structures for biodiversity.	CoL HES	CoL OSD CoL CS	2024

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9.0 How the BAP will be monitored and delivered



Table 4
Action Plan 2: The built environment

Action No	Action	Lead Partner	Contributing Partner	To be completed by
BE2.1	Develop an ecology toolkit and biodiversity checklist for the City of London Corporation staff as tool to support projects and public realm schemes.	CoL OSD	CoL DBE	2022
BE2.2	Following the enactment of the Environment Bill, assess how the City Corporation will meet its duties as a local planning authority in respect to aspects of the bill that are covered by amendment to the Town and Country Planning act, such as Biodiversity net gain.	CoL PP	CoL OSD	2026
BE2.3	Following the enactment of the Environment Bill, assess how the City Corporation will meet its duties as a local authority and implement strategies that are not covered by amendments to the Town & Planning Act.	CoL OSD	CoL PP	2026
BE2.4	Develop Sustainability Planning guidance encompassing, but not limited to Green infrastructure, Biodiversity and Climate Resilience to ensure Developers and Planning officers take appropriate steps at pre-planning application and design development stages to meet local policy and national legislation.	CoL PP	CoL OSD	2024
BE2.5	Review and amend the existing planning application validation process to incorporate consideration of whether biodiversity surveys and reports are relevant and necessary for an application.	CoL DM	CoL OSD	2022

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9.0 How the BAP will be monitored and delivered



Table 5
Action Plan 3: Education and community engagement

Action No	Action	Lead Partner	Contributing Partner	To be completed by
ECE3.1	Provide advice, guidance and training to support the BAP both for City Corporation employees and the wider City community including residents, businesses, visitors, schools, colleges, developers and land managers.	CoL OSD	BAP PG	2026
ECE3.2	Support resident and community groups that contribute to local and national species recording and monitoring initiatives, through providing direct support for initiatives, by providing training and by collecting and promoting best practice that current groups have demonstrated.	CoL OSD	FoCG BWG	2026
ECE3.3	Develop guidance on supporting pollinators in the built environment by enabling biodiversity partnership working group.	CoL OSD	BAP PG	2023
ECE3.4	Promote and disseminate guidance for the London Invasive Species Initiative (LISI) species to raise awareness of these species and how they should be managed.	CoL OSD		2022

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9.0 How the BAP will be monitored and delivered



Table 6
Action Plan 4: Data collection, surveys and monitoring

Action No	Action	Lead Partner	Contributing Partner	To be completed by
DCSM4.1	Maintain, improve, promote and utilise the information and services available via the GiGL SLA including to be achieved through providing internal training.	CoL OSD	CoL DM CoL PP CoL M&I GiGL	2026
DCSM4.2	Develop and implement a planning condition which requires developers of relevant schemes to collect and submit relevant biological data of their site to the CoL PA to improve data monitoring and assessment on biodiversity trends in the City.	CoLPP CoL DM		2022
DCSM4.3	Produce a biological recording strategy to target SINC's with under-recording of species and promote good practice. To include identification of target sites, under-recorded and desired species, promotion of best practice, identifying and promoting appropriate recording methods for different audience and supporting existing citizen science and species specific campaigns.	CoL OSD	BAP PG GiGL	2023
DCSM4.4	Identify funding to carry out a Black Redstart and bat baseline survey to guide future management interventions and enhancements.	CoL OSD		2025
DCSM4.5	Undertake below ground mapping to identify opportunities and barriers for establishing new green infrastructure and SuDS within the public realm.	CoL ERT		2024
DCSM4.6	Research and establish an approach to monitoring earthworms as an indicator of soil health and condition.	CoL OSD		2025

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9.0 How the BAP will be monitored and delivered

Table 7
Key for action plan tables

Abbreviation	Organisation
CoL OSD	City of London Corporation, Open Spaces Department
CoL DBE	City of London Corporation, Department of Built Environment
CoL PP	City of London Corporation, Planning Policy
CoL DM	City of London Corporation, Development Management
CoL M&I	City of London Corporation, Monitoring & Information team
CoL CS	City of London Corporation, City Surveyor's Department
CoL ERT	City of London Corporation, Environmental Resilience team
CoL CCS	City of London Corporation, Community and Children's Services
BAP PG	City of London Biodiversity Action Plan Partnership Group
FoCG	Friends of City Gardens
BWG	Barbican Wildlife Group
GiGL	Greenspace Information for Greater London



10.0 Appendices



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10.0 Appendices

10.1 Appendix 1: National, regional and local policy

The list below outlines the key policy and legislation at a local, regional and national level to which the BAP contributes towards their delivery and support:

National policy

- A Green Future: Our 25 Year environment Plan
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (2006)
- National Planning Policy Framework 2019

Regional policy

- The London Plan 2021
- London Environment Strategy 2018

Local policy

- City of London Local Plan 2015

- Draft City Plan 2036
- City of London Climate Action Strategy 2020–2027
- City of London Air Quality Strategy 2019–2024
- City of London Transport Strategy May 2019
- City of London Lighting Strategy 2018
- Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2017–2020
- City of London Tree Strategy Part 1 SPD 2012
- City of London Tree Strategy Part 2 2012
- City of London Open Spaces Strategy SPD 2015
- City Gardens Management Plan 2017–2022

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10.2 Appendix 2: Protected Species and/or Priority Species records in the City of London

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Frequently occurring		Rarely occurring		Rarely occurring	
Common name	Scientific name	Common name	Scientific name	Common name	Scientific name
Black Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>	Arctic tern	<i>Sterna paradisaea</i>	Nathusius's Pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus nathusii</i>
Buff-tail Bumblebee	<i>Bombus Terrestris</i>	Avocet	<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>	Pied Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>
Common Cardar Bee	<i>Bombus Pascuorum</i>	Cinnabar	<i>Tyria jacobaeae</i>	Purple Emperor	<i>Apatura iris</i>
Common Frog	<i>Rana temporaria</i>	Common Porpoise	<i>Phocoena phocoena</i>	Red kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>
Common Pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	Common Seal	<i>Phoca vitulina</i>	Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	Early Bumblebee	<i>Bombus pratorum</i>	Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>
Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinereal</i>	Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>	Rudy Darter	<i>Sympetrum sanguineum</i>
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinereal</i>	Gadwall	<i>Anas Strepera</i>	Shag	<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>
Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	Short-eared Owl	<i>Asio flammeus</i>
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	Hedgehog	<i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>	Silver-washed Fritillary	<i>Argynnis paphia</i>
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>
Lesser Black Backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	Jersey Tiger	<i>Euplagia quadripunctaria</i>	Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>
Peregrine falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	Kittiwake	<i>Rissa tridactyla</i>	Stag Beetle	<i>Lucanus cervus</i>
Small Garden Bumblebee	<i>Bombus Hortorum</i>	Red-tailed Bumblebee	<i>Bombus lapidarius</i>	Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	Lesser Redpoll	<i>Acanthis cabaret</i>	Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	Little egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>	Tawny Owl	<i>Strix aluco</i>
White-tailed Bumblebee	<i>Bombus Lucorum</i>	Meadow Pippit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>
Wigeon	<i>Anas Penelope</i>	Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>
Woodcock	<i>Scolopax rusticola</i>	Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	Wryneck	<i>Jynx torquill</i>

10.0 Appendices

10.3 Appendix 3: Open space typology and categorisation

Civic Spaces

Civic and market squares, and other hard-surfaced areas designed for pedestrians. Providing a setting for civic buildings, public demonstrations and community events.

Primary Civic Spaces

Civic and market squares.

Secondary Civic Spaces

Other hard-surfaced areas designed for pedestrians.

Parks and Gardens

Accessible, high-quality opportunities for informal recreation and community events.

Cemeteries and Churchyards

Quiet contemplation and burial of the dead often linked to the promotion of wildlife conservation and biodiversity.

Amenity Spaces

Opportunities for informal activities close to home or work or enhancement of the appearance of residential or other areas.

Natural and semi-natural greenspaces

Wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education and activities.

Local Green Corridors

Wildlife conservation, biodiversity, environmental education and activities.

Provision for Children and Young People

Areas designed primarily for play and social interaction involving children and young people, such as equipped play areas, ball courts, (and) skateboard areas.

Outdoor Sports Facilities

Participation in outdoor sports, such as pitch sports, tennis, bowls, athletics or countryside or water sports.

Allotments, Community Gardens and Urban Farms

Opportunities for those people who wish to do so to grow their own produce as part of the long-term promotion of sustainability, health and social inclusion. Open countryside located on the boundary of an urban area.



10.0 Appendices

10.4 Appendix 4: Public Open Space Categorisations

The table below provides an overview of the Public Open Space categories as defined in the London Plan 2021. Spaces are categorised according to their size, facilities and local importance and provide a clear method to evaluate open space provision and type across Greater London.

Open Space Categorisation	Size Guidelines	Distances from homes
Regional Parks	400 hectares	3.2 to 8 kilometres
Metropolitan Parks	60 hectares	3.2 kilometres
District Parks	20 hectares	1.2 kilometres
Local Parks and Open Spaces	2 hectares	400 metres
Small Open Spaces	Under 2 hectares	Less than 400 metres
Pocket Parks	Under 0.4 hectares	Less than 400 metres
Linear Open Spaces	Variable	Wherever feasible

10.5 Appendix 5: Registered Parks & Gardens

The following sites in the City of London feature on the Historic England ‘Register of Historic Park and Gardens of special historic interest in England’ which identifies sites of particular historic significance:

Site	Grade
Finsbury Circus	II
Golden Lane Estate Designed Landscape	II
Inner Temple	II
Middle Temple	II
The Barbican	II*

10.0 Appendices

10.6 Appendix 6: Glossary

Explanation of terms used in BAP:

All London Green Grid

The All London Green Grid (ALGG) is a Greater London Authority (GLA) framework to promote the design and delivery of ‘green infrastructure’ across London.

Barbican Wildlife Group (BWG)

The BWG is a group of volunteer local residents who, with the City Gardens team, preserve, protect and enhance biodiversity in Barbican Wildlife Garden for the education and enjoyment of all Barbican Estate residents and guests. BWG also promotes the conservation the Garden’s many habitats and its retention as a wildlife haven within the City. It also aims to foster and promote biodiversity within the Estate and to work with like-minded groups and organisations to promote and foster biodiversity within and beyond the Square Mile.

Biodiversity

Biodiversity is the term used to describe the variety of life on Earth. This includes wildlife such as animals, birds and plants, the habitats which are the places they live and how they all interact with their surroundings as part of the ecosystem.

Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Methodology (BREEAM)

BREEAM is the world’s leading sustainability assessment method for master planning projects, infrastructure and buildings. It addresses a number of lifecycle stages such as new construction, refurbishment and in-use.

Citizen Science

Citizen science is scientific research conducted by amateur or non-professional enthusiasts. Citizen science may be performed by individuals or groups of volunteers and interested parties.

City of London Corporation

The City of London Corporation provides local government and policing services for the financial and commercial heart of Britain, the ‘Square Mile’.

City Gardens, Open Spaces Department

The City Gardens team are responsible for tree and green space management for around 200 open spaces in the Square Mile including parks, gardens, churchyards, plazas and highway planting. The City Gardens team is also responsible for Bunhill Fields Burial Ground just outside the City boundary in the London Borough of Islington.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

CSR is a process which companies choose to follow to take responsibility for their actions and encourage positive impacts through their activities on the environment, consumers, employees, shareholders, communities and all other members of the public who may also be considered as stakeholders.

Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs (Defra)

Defra is a UK government department responsible for safeguarding our natural environment, supporting our world-leading food and farming industry, and sustaining a thriving rural economy. Our broad remit means we play a major role in people’s day-to-day life, from the food we eat, and the air we breathe, to the water we drink.

Friends of City Gardens (FoCG)

A community group of volunteers comprising City residents, City of London Guides, City workers and other interested parties. They support the City Gardens Team and have a special interest in promoting and enhancing biodiversity.

Greenspace Information for Greater London (GiGL)

GiGL is the capital’s environmental records centre that collates, manages and makes available detailed information on London’s wildlife, parks, nature reserves, gardens and other open spaces.

10.0 Appendices

10.6 Appendix 6: Glossary continued

Green Corridors

Almost continuous areas of open space which are linked. They can act as wildlife corridors and serve amenity, landscape and access roles.

Green Infrastructure

A strategically planned and managed network of green spaces and other environmental features vital to the sustainability of any urban area. This includes although not exclusively trees, biodiverse roofs, green walls and green corridors.

Draft City Plan 2036

The City Corporation’s Local Plan for the future development of the City of London, setting out what type of development the City Corporation expects to take place and where. It sets out the City Corporation’s vision, strategy and objectives for planning up to 2036, together with policies that will guide future decisions on planning applications.

London Biodiversity Partnership

The London Biodiversity Partnership was formed in 1997 to bring together organisations to benefit wildlife and boost the capital’s green space.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Sets out government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

Open Mosaic Habitat

Open Mosaic Habitats on Previously Developed Land (OMH) is defined by the Defra. They are found mainly in urban and formerly industrial areas and have high biodiversity value. This value includes rare plants, mosses, lichens and a large number of rare invertebrates, especially bees, wasps and beetles.

Open Space

Open space is land which is not built on and which has some amenity value or potential for amenity value. Amenity value is derived from the visual, recreational or other enjoyment which the open space can provide, such as historic and cultural interest and value. This includes open spaces in public or private ownership.

Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs)

Sites are designated as SINCs to highlight areas of ecological value in the City. The sites are graded as being of Metropolitan (SMINCs), Borough (SBINCs), or Local (SLINCs) importance.

Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS)

A range of sustainable measures for surface water management which reduce the amount, flow or rate of surface water discharge into sewers.





City of London Corporation

The City of London Corporation is the governing body of the Square Mile dedicated to a vibrant and thriving City, supporting a diverse and sustainable London within a globally-successful UK.

We aim to:

- Contribute to a flourishing society
- Support a thriving economy
- Shape outstanding environments

By strengthening the connections, capacity and character of the City, London and the UK for the benefit of people who live, work and visit here.

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Committee(s): Natural Environment Board	Dated: 17 October 2024
Subject: Operational Finance Progress Report - Quarter 2 (August 2024) 2024/25 – Natural Environment Division	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	n/a
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	n/a
What is the source of Funding?	n/a
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	n/a
Report of: Chamberlain	For Information
Report author: Clem Harcourt, Chamberlain’s Department	

Summary

This report provides an update on the operational finance position for Quarter 2 for 2024/25 for the Natural Environment Division’s revenue budget to date to the end of August 2024 and projected year-end outturn position, current live capital projects and outstanding debt position. It also provides additional information on the various reserve funds held and other relevant finance information for the Natural Environment Division services and Charities which fall within the remit of your Board.

As part of the ongoing Charity Review, future training sessions will be designed for both Members and Officers on key aspects of charity finance.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the content of this report and its appendices.

Main Report

Background

1. In order to improve financial reporting to Members, a set of various financial appendices and commentary have been produced to enable greater clarity of revenue budgets and other financial information needed to allow greater scrutiny of the financial performance of the Natural Environment Division as well as to provide assurance that the Executive Director Environment remains within her local risk resources for 2024/25.
2. To ensure your Board is kept informed, an update on progress made against budgets as well as other financial matters will be reported to you on a periodic (quarterly) basis. This approach will allow Members to ask questions and have a timely input into areas of particular importance to them.

3. Members should also note that detailed information regarding the financial position of individual Natural Environment charities will be reported separately to the relevant service committees.
4. Please be advised that in the report below, expenditure and adverse variances are represented by brackets, whereas figures without brackets indicate income or favourable variances.

Revenue Operating Budget – 2024/25

5. The latest budget for the Natural Environment Division (including City Gardens) for 2024/25 amounts to (£18.735m) net expenditure. Actual net expenditure currently amounts to (£3.677m), with a current forecast outturn for 2024/25 of (£18.987m) net expenditure. This amounts to a projected net overspend for 2024/25 of (£252k), equivalent to (1.35%) of the total net expenditure budget.
6. A summary of the latest revenue budget position for 2024/25 is shown in Table 1 below, with further detailed information provided in Appendix 1, including reasons for significant budget variances. Information has also been presented in a way that distinguishes between expenditure and income budgets in line with best practice for the financial reporting of charities. Please note that the information presented below comprises the division’s operating revenue budgets (local and central risk) as well as budgets for recharges and support services and repairs and maintenance budgets managed by the City Surveyor.

Table 1 – Revenue Operating Budget Summary – 2024/25

	Latest Budget	Actual - August 2024	Forecast Outturn	Budget Variance	% Variance
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	%
Gross Expenditure	(33,355)	(9,374)	(34,259)	(904)	(2.71%)
Gross Income	14,620	5,697	15,272	652	4.46%
Net Expenditure	(18,735)	(3,677)	(18,987)	(252)	(1.35%)

7. As can be seen from the table above, the Natural Environment Division is currently forecasting an overspend of (£252k) compared with the total net expenditure budget for 2024/25. The primary reasons for the projected overspend are set out below:
 - (£149k) overspend for The Monument explained by income levels projected to be behind budget as income from admissions has not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels. Please also note that the Natural Environment Division are currently exploring future options for The Monument to address the existing budget shortfall.
 - (£113k) projected overspend at Epping Forest. This is primarily explained by additional expenditure being incurred on projects falling under the

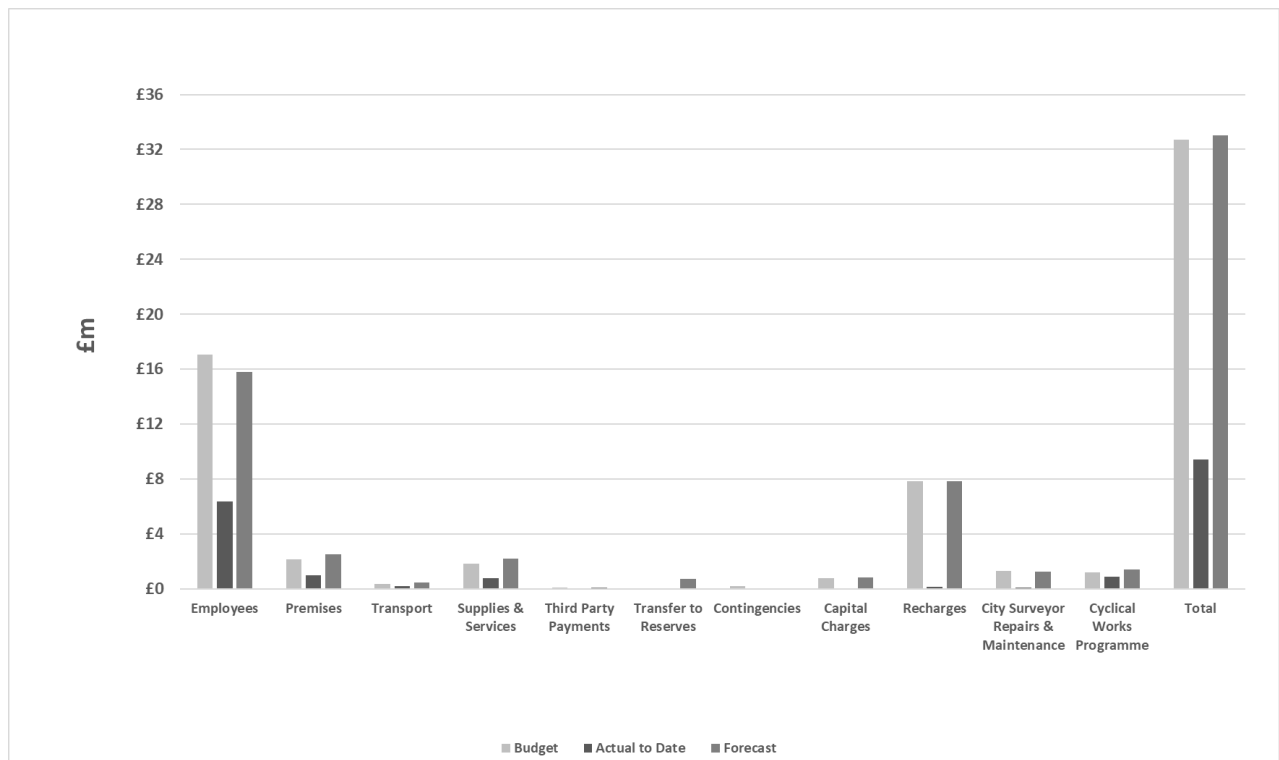
Cyclical Works Programme (CWP) managed by the City Surveyor as a result of the rephasing of CWP projects.

- (£71k) overspend currently forecast at Bunhill Fields. This is attributable to additional cyclical works expenditure incurred relating to conservation works and leaning wall repairs.

Expenditure

8. As at August 2024, total gross expenditure for the Natural Environment Division amounted to (£9.374m). This represents 28.10% of the division's total gross expenditure budget for 2024/25 of (£33.355m).
9. For 2024/25, the Natural Environment Division are currently forecasting total gross expenditure of (£34.259m), amounting to an overspend of (£904k) (2.71%) compared with the latest gross expenditure budget of (£33.355m).
10. The major variances on forecasted gross expenditure for 2024/25 compared with budget relate to Epping Forest which is forecasting an additional (£756k) in gross expenditure. This is explained by the charity forecasting additional expenditure on repairs and maintenance, energy costs and professional fees. This is in addition to the charity projecting a year-end transfer to reserves for unspent contributions from the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS) monies so that the funds are available for the charity to use in later years.
11. Graph 1 below provides a summary of the different categories of expenditure incurred by the Natural Environment Division in 2024/25 to date along with details of the current forecasts for 2024/25.

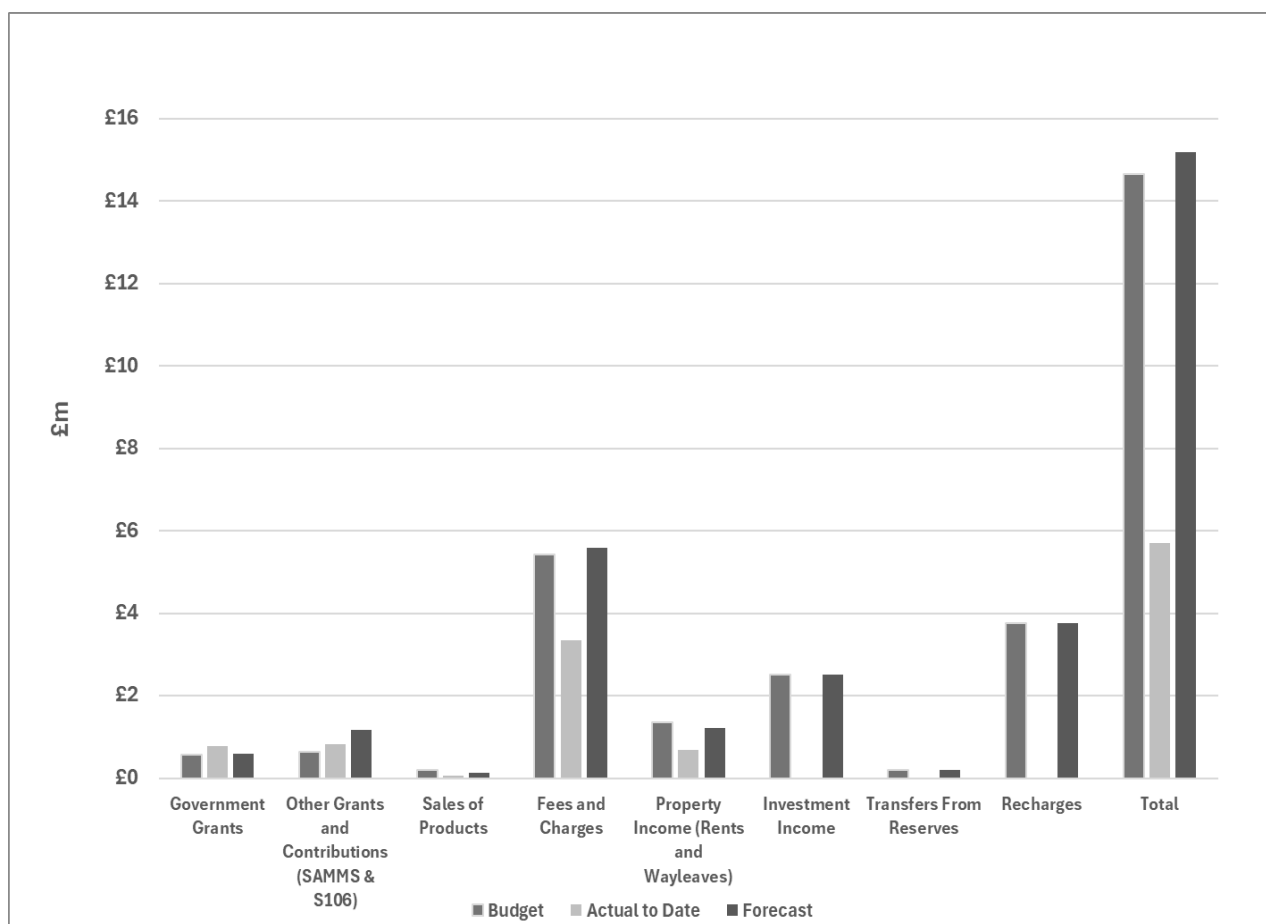
Graph 1 – Expenditure Categories – Natural Environment Division – 2024/25



Income

12. As at August 2024, total gross income for the Natural Environment Division amounted to £5.697m. This represents 38.97% of the division's total gross income budget for 2024/25 of £14.62m.
13. For 2024/25, the Natural Environment Division are currently forecasting total gross income of £15.272m, amounting to an increase in gross income of £652k (4.46%) compared with the latest gross income budget of £14.62m.
14. The major variances in relation to income include at Epping Forest where the charity is currently forecasting £643k in extra income compared to budget. This is explained by additional SAMMS monies having been received from local authorities in 2024/25 as set out above in paragraph 10. This in addition to extra income generated from filming licenses and golfing fees compared with budget.
15. In addition, there is forecast to be an additional £206k in income generated by Burnham Beeches compared with budget. This is explained by additional grant income having been received from the Rural Payments Agency as well as income received from large scale filming projects.
16. Graph 2 below provides a summary of the different categories of income received by the Natural Environment Division in 2024/25 to date along with current forecasts for 2024/25.

Graph 2 – Income Categories – Natural Environment Division – 2024/25



Capital Projects

17. Appendix 2 outlines the current list of live capital projects in progress against their currently approved budget. It should be noted that the “current approved budget” is the amount currently agreed by Committee to progress the project to either the next project gateway or until Officers request further release of capital funds to progress the scheme and may not equal the total estimated cost of the project to finalisation.
18. Out of a current approved budget of £11.164m, £7.234m has been spent or committed to date, leaving a remaining budget of £3.93m to progress the various projects to the next project gateway, release of further capital funds or completion.

Outstanding Debts

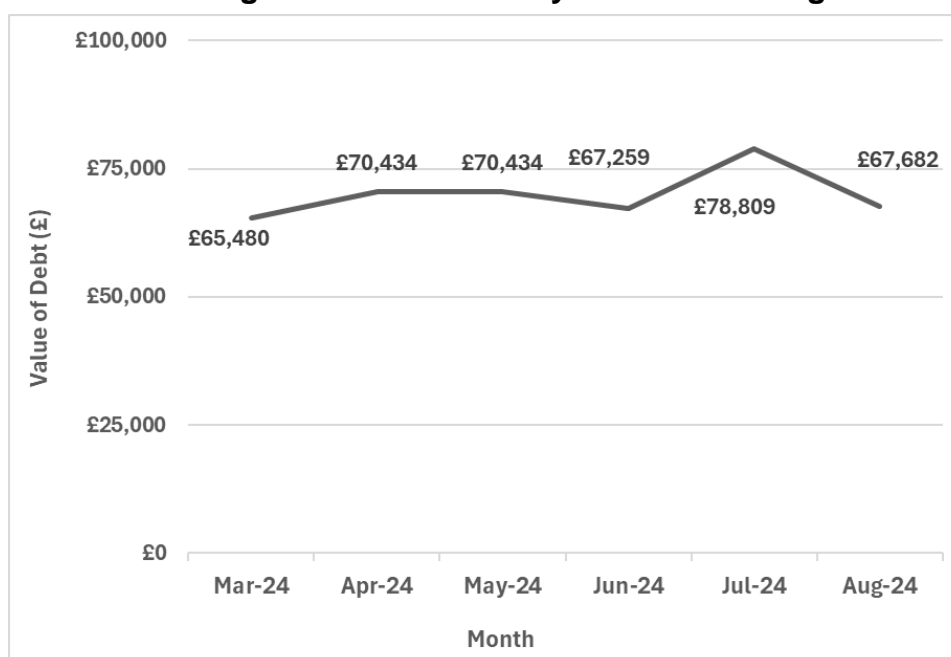
19. At the end of August 2024, total outstanding invoiced debt for the Natural Environment Division (including City Gardens) was £128,490. Table 2 below analyses the current level of outstanding debt according to the age of the debt:

**Table 2 – Analysis of Outstanding Debts for Natural Environment Division
– August 2024**

Age of Debt	Outstanding Debts	% of Total Debt Outstanding
0-30 Days	£10,009	7.79%
31-60 Days	£24,751	19.26%
61-90 Days	£15,651	12.18%
91-120 Days	£10,397	8.09%
121-365 Days	£21,011	16.35%
Over 365 Days	£46,671	36.33%
Total Outstanding Debts	£128,490	100.00%

20. As part of a previous best value review into outstanding debts, the maximum age of debt set by the Chamberlain to fully recover outstanding sums was set at 120 days. During this period automatic debt reminder letters, physical debt chasing of customers and liaison with Comptrollers & City Solicitors takes place to ensure debts are resolved within the corporately agreed debt repayment terms. Graph 3 below sets out the trend of the division’s outstanding debts over 120 days over the previous six-month period. As can be seen from the graph, debts over 120 days amounted to £67,682 in August 2024, a reduction of £11,127 (14.12%) compared with the previous month.

Graph 3 – Outstanding Debts Over 120 Days – March to August 2024



21. Table 3 below also provides a breakdown of outstanding debts over 120 days according to each section of the division.

Table 3 – Natural Environment Outstanding Debts Over 120 Days – August 2024

Section	Outstanding Debts Over 120 Days	% of Total Debt Outstanding Over 120 Days
Ashtead Common	£360	0.53%
Burnham Beeches	£9,887	14.61%
City Gardens	£120	0.18%
Epping Forest	£35,773	52.85%
Hampstead Heath	£8,957	13.23%
Highgate Wood	£4,722	6.98%
Keats House	£5,998	8.86%
Queen's Park	£0	0.00%
West Ham Park	£462	0.68%
West Wickham & Coulsdon Commons	£1,403	2.08%
Total Outstanding Debts Over 120 Days	£67,682	100.00%

22. As can be seen, the majority of the amount owed comprised £35,773 (52.85%) in balances owed by debtors at Epping Forest. This includes an amount of £21,736 owed by a single debtor in relation to the Chingford Festival with a Letter Before Action having been issued in order to pursue the debt. The remaining balance of debts over 120 days includes £13,197 in property related debts at Epping Forest primarily comprising historic wayleave debts.

23. In addition, outstanding debts over 120 days includes £9,887 (14.61%) owed by customers at Burnham Beeches. This includes £6,750 owed in rent by a single customer with this debt currently being pursued.

24. £8,957 (13.23%) is also owed by debtors at Hampstead Heath. This includes £6,985 owed in property debts primarily consisting of amounts due related to rents and wayleaves from utility providers.

25. In addition, £5,998 (8.86%) is currently owed in debts over 120 days at Keats House in relation to room hire. These debts are currently being pursued by staff at Keats House.

26. Finally, total debts over 120 days comprise £4,722 (6.98%) relating to Highgate Wood. This is explained by amounts owed in outstanding utility bills as well as an unpaid invoice for football bookings. Members should note that £3,819 of the outstanding balance was subsequently settled after 31st August 2024.

27. Members may also wish to note that a separate detailed debt report is due to be presented to your Board in December 2024 setting out details of outstanding debt arrears for the Natural Environment Division and City Gardens to the end of September 2024.

Charity Funds (Restricted, Unrestricted, Designated and Endowments)

28. Appendix 3 (Epping Forest and Commons Committee) and Appendix 4 (Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queens Park Committee; West Ham Park; and Keats House) lists the various restricted, unrestricted, designated and endowment funds held by each charity. It details the opening balance for 2024/25 and any movements in the current financial year to date. Appendix 3 and Appendix 4 also provide a definition for each type of charity reserve fund.

29. A summary of the current balances held by each Natural Environment charity for each type of reserve fund is shown below in Table 4:

Table 4 – Natural Environment Charities Reserve Funds Summary – 2024/25

	Restricted Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Designated Funds	Endowments	Total
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
Ashtead Common	£0	£0	£3	£0	£3
Burnham Beeches	£986	£2	£990	£0	£1,978
Epping Forest	£1,157	£550	£6,522	£0	£8,229
Hampstead Heath (inc. Hampstead Heath Trust)	£34	£7	£22,485	£37,755	£60,281
Highgate Wood and Queen's Park	£0	£186	£210	£0	£396
Keats House	£159	£144	£49	£0	£352
West Ham Park	£0	£0	£935	£0	£935
West Wickham and Coulsdon Commons	£3	£3	£647	£0	£653
Total	£2,339	£892	£31,841	£37,755	£72,827

30. Members should be aware that funds held by an individual charity cannot be consolidated or utilised by a separate charity. It is key that individual charity funds are not viewed as being available to be 'offset' against each other, bearing in mind the different objects held by each charity.
31. It should also be noted that the external audit of the 2023/24 accounts for individual Natural Environment charities is still taking place and the opening balances shown for each reserve fund in Appendix 3 and Appendix 4 may be subject to revision.

Contributions from City's Estate

32. The current funding model is for each charity's total net expenditure to be fully funded from City's Estate. This includes the cost of any capital expenditure incurred during the year as well any works managed by the City Surveyor under the CWP carried out over the course of the year. It should be noted that any changes to the amount of expenditure incurred or income generated over the course of the year by an individual charity will have an impact on the overall contribution required by the charity at year end. The total contribution for each charity is therefore calculated based on its **actual total net running costs for the year** in addition to any capital expenditure and CWP costs incurred.
33. Therefore, year on year there are variations in the contribution received depending upon actual total net running costs incurred for the year. However, at the start of the following year, available budget funding is reset to the levels agreed by Committee at the estimates review, so as to remain within the resource envelope set by RASC. At no stage is the budget reduced (and potentially the level of contribution required) unless agreed by the relevant Committee within this annual process managed and reported by the Chamberlain to gain approval of the annual estimates.
34. The table below details the actual level of contribution provided from City's Estate to each of the individual Natural Environment charities for the previous four financial years along with the current forecast of the amount currently projected for 2024/25.
35. Please note that funding provided by City's Estate is unique to each individual charity and cannot be used to offset the level of funding provided to a separate charity. Please also be aware that the figures shown in Table 5 for 2023/24 are currently provisional as the external audit of the individual Natural Environment charities has not yet been completed.

Table 5 – Contributions from City’s Estate – 2020/21 to 2024/25

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24 (Prov.)	2024/25 (Est.)
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
Ashted Common	511	471	524	609	543
Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common	1,036	896	1,051	972	886
Epping Forest	5,059	4,527	4,879	6,573	6,055
Hampstead Heath	6,451	5,356	4,842	8,591	3,920
Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Kilburn	1,364	1,033	1,255	1,533	1,851
Keats House	348	292	394	324	442
West Ham Park	1,279	1,250	1,933	1,234	1,313
West Wickham Common and Spring Park Wood, Coulsdon and Other Commons	1,094	1,046	1,249	1,014	1,292
Total Contribution from City's Estate	17,142	14,871	16,127	20,850	16,302

36. As can be seen from the Table 5, there was an increase in the total contribution provided from City’s Estate to the various Natural Environment charities from £16.127m in 2022/23 to £20.85m for 2023/24. This can be explained by inflationary related price rises for staffing and energy costs affecting all charities which required an increase in the total contribution from City’s Estate for 2023/24. Moreover, 2023/24 saw an increase in the level of capital expenditure incurred, primarily at Hampstead Heath and Epping Forest, which resulted in a one-off higher level of contribution being required for these charities compared with 2022/23. Members may also wish to note that the reduced contribution provided for West Ham Park in 2023/24 is largely explained by a one-off capital purchase having taken place in 2022/23.
37. Table 5 also indicates a reduction in the total forecasted contribution projected to be received by the Natural Environment charities in 2024/25 compared with 2023/24. The decrease in the total forecasted contribution is largely explained by a reduced contribution at Hampstead Heath. This can be attributed to one-off capital expenditure relating to the Parliament Hill Athletics Track Resurfacing project having been funded from City’s Estate in 2023/24. This is in addition to an increase in total gross income projected to be generated at Hampstead Heath in 2024/25 compared with 2023/24 which will result in a lower level of contribution being required overall. Meanwhile, the reduced contribution projected at Epping Forest compared with 2023/24 can be explained by an increase in facilities income including in relation to filming licenses as well as the charity forecasting lower levels of expenditure on transport and equipment purchases.
38. Members should note that alternatives to the charities current funding model are being explored by the Corporation’s Charity Review with proposed changes to the existing model due to be presented to Policy and Resources Committee and Finance Committee in December 2024.

Other Relevant Financial Issues

39. Members may wish to note that a review of the current recharges reallocation process from corporate departments has been undertaken following the Target Operating Model and the Governance Review to ensure that the recharges

appear more transparent and fairer across all services. The review was presented to Finance Committee in September 2024 providing Members with a range of options on changes to recharges for 2024/25 and future years. Further details will be provided to Members in due course.

40. Additionally, as part of the budget setting process for the new financial year 2025/26, no capital bidding exercise will be undertaken corporately for new capital projects funded by City's Estate or City Fund. There will, however, be a reduced central contingency held of £2m for City's Estate and £7.5m for City Fund for essential new capital projects.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Natural Environment Division and City Gardens Revenue Budget – 2024/25

Appendix 2 – Natural Environment Capital Projects 2024/25 – Quarter 2

Appendix 3 – Charity Funds (Restricted, Unrestricted and Designated) - Epping Forest & Commons Committee

Appendix 4 - Charity Funds (Restricted, Unrestricted, Designated and Endowments) - Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee; West Ham Park Committee; and Keats House

Contact

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Natural Environment Division and City Gardens Revenue Budget - 2024/25 - Quarter 2

APPENDIX 1

	Gross Expenditure			Gross Income			Net Expenditure				
	Latest Budget	Actual	Forecast	Latest Budget	Actual	Forecast	Latest Budget	Actual	Forecast	Projected Variance	
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	
City Fund											
City Gardens	(3,100)	(1,013)	(3,100)	842	99	842	(2,258)	(914)	(2,258)	0	
Total City Fund	(3,100)	(1,013)	(3,100)	842	99	842	(2,258)	(914)	(2,258)	0	
City's Estate											
Natural Environment Directorate	(2,691)	(494)	(2,625)	2,691	23	2,625	0	(471)	0	0	
Learning Team	(861)	(192)	(739)	861	42	739	0	(150)	0	0	
Bunhill Fields	(231)	(170)	(302)	0	0	0	(231)	(170)	(302)	(71)	1
Epping Forest	(8,693)	(2,268)	(9,449)	2,332	2,218	2,975	(6,361)	(50)	(6,474)	(113)	2
Burnham Beeches	(1,445)	(411)	(1,631)	401	329	607	(1,044)	(82)	(1,024)	20	
Stoke Common	(51)	(17)	(55)	25	2	29	(26)	(15)	(26)	0	
West Wickham and Coulsdon Commons	(1,381)	(435)	(1,385)	172	96	170	(1,209)	(339)	(1,215)	(6)	
Ashtead Common	(606)	(157)	(601)	48	246	64	(558)	89	(537)	21	
Hampstead Heath	(9,476)	(2,821)	(9,574)	5,988	2,181	6,072	(3,488)	(640)	(3,502)	(14)	
Highgate Wood	(941)	(282)	(903)	92	23	92	(849)	(259)	(811)	38	
Queen's Park	(1,183)	(327)	(1,181)	129	97	138	(1,054)	(230)	(1,043)	11	
West Ham Park	(1,574)	(458)	(1,593)	357	138	387	(1,217)	(320)	(1,206)	11	
Keats House	(570)	(159)	(570)	131	70	131	(439)	(89)	(439)	0	
The Monument	(552)	(170)	(551)	551	133	401	(1)	(37)	(150)	(149)	3
Total City's Estate	(30,255)	(8,361)	(31,159)	13,778	5,598	14,430	(16,477)	(2,763)	(16,729)	(252)	
Total Natural Environment Division and City Gardens	(33,355)	(9,374)	(34,259)	14,620	5,697	15,272	(18,735)	(3,677)	(18,987)	(252)	

Notes

1. Projected overspend at Bunhill Fields as a result of additional cyclical works expenditure managed by City Surveyors in relation to conservation works and leaning wall repairs.
2. Unfavourable variance at Epping Forest explained by expenditure on Cyclical Works Programme (CWP) projects being higher than anticipated with additional expenditure incurred on projects including at The Grotto and Deer Sanctuary. This is in addition to increased depreciation expenses following the acquisition of a number of capital related items during 2023/24. The projected overspend is partly offset by savings on the corporate contract for building repairs and maintenance managed by City Surveyor's.
3. There is currently forecast to be an overspend of £149k at The Monument. This is predominantly explained by reduced income forecast to be achieved for 2024/25 with income levels having not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels.

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Natural Environment Capital Projects - 2024/25 - Quarter 2

Capital Projects by Division of Service	Total Estimated Cost of Project £'s	Current Approved Budget £'s	Prior Year Actual Spend £'s	In Year Actual Expenditure £'s	In Year Committed Expenditure £'s	Current Approved Budget Unspent £'s
City Gardens						
Finsbury Circus Reinstatement	5,445,824	5,447,879	1,194,959	1,199,499	2,409,485	643,936
St Botolph Ball Court Improvements	130,000	130,000	85,744	0	0	44,256
St Mary At Hill Churchyard	560,625	470,622	136,023	0	0	334,599
Tower Hill Play Area Replacement Project	165,000	36,000	1,270	0	0	34,730
	6,301,449	6,084,501	1,417,997	1,199,499	2,409,485	1,057,520
Epping Forest						
Epping Forest Various Sites - BEMS Upgrade Phase 2	275,247	138,978	0	0	20,000	118,978
Wanstead Park Ponds Project	1,062,500	241,000	169,276	290	0	71,434
Baldwins & Birch Hall Park Ponds	1,748,794	502,600	298,980	1,064	1,543	201,013
Climate Action Strategy - Carbon Removals Phase 2	200,000	200,000	85,032	39,993	22,927	52,048
Great Gregories Yard - Future Proofing Building	408,747	408,744	13,063	310,764	47,820	37,097
Epping Forest Window Replacements (Cyclical Works Programme)	207,000	207,000	0	0	0	207,000
Epping Forest High Voltage Works (Cyclical Works Programme)	325,000	325,000	0	0	0	325,000
Epping Forest Roof Works (Cyclical Works Programme)	758,000	758,000	0	0	0	758,000
Great Gregories Farm - Electrical Housing Replacement (Cyclical Works Programme)	60,000	60,000	0	0	15,647	44,353
Wanstead Flats - Landscaping Jubilee Pond (Cyclical Works Programme)	145,000	145,000	0	0	0	145,000
	5,190,288	2,986,322	566,351	352,111	107,937	1,959,923
Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queens Park						
Hampstead Heath Swimming Facilities - Safety, Access & Security Impr.	1,010,564	1,010,564	806,262	113,786	24,356	66,160
Parliament Hill Lido Photovoltaic Panels (Climate Action Strategy)	269,409	293,530	0	5,940	3,520	284,070
Golders Hill Park - Bandstand Roof Replacement (Cyclical Works Programme)	66,000	66,000	0	0	0	66,000
Heathfield House Complex - Window Replacement (Cyclical Works Programme)	55,000	55,000	0	0	0	55,000
Highgate Wood Pavilion - Works to Public Toilets (Cyclical Works Programme)	84,000	84,000	0	0	0	84,000
Parliament Hill Fields Lido Buildings Complex - Mains Water Pipe Replacement (Cyclical Works Programme)	72,000	72,000	0	0	0	72,000
	1,556,973	1,581,094	806,262	119,726	27,876	627,230
West Ham Park						
West Ham Park Nursery	337,035	337,035	226,775	0	0	110,260
West Ham Park Changing Room - Boiler Replacement (Cyclical Works Programme)	60,000	60,000	0	0	0	60,000
West Ham Park Vehicle Shed - Roof Replacement (Cyclical Works Programme)	55,000	55,000	0	0	0	55,000
	452,035	452,035	226,775	0	0	225,260
Keats House						
Keats House Main House - Roof Replacement (Cyclical Works Programme)	60,000	60,000	0	0	0	60,000
	60,000	60,000	0	0	0	60,000
Natural Environment Total	13,560,745	11,163,952	3,017,385	1,671,336	2,545,298	3,929,933

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Charity Funds (Restricted, Unrestricted and Designated) - Quarter 2 2024/25

	Opening Balance 2024/25 £'s	Income £'s	Expenditure £'s	Gains, (Losses) & Transfers £'s	Current Balance 2024/25 £'s
<u>Epping Forest</u>					
Restricted Income Funds:					
Campaign Donations	935				935
Countryside Stewardship Scheme	341,798	29,191	(88,223)		282,766
Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS)	151,376	722,085			873,461
	494,109	751,276	(88,223)	0	1,157,162
Unrestricted Income Funds:					
Unrestricted Income Funds	549,782				549,782
	549,782	0	0	0	549,782
Designated (Unrestricted Income Fund):					
Tangible Fixed Assets (Land & Buildings, Infrastructure, Vehicle & Plant, and Equipment)	5,003,884				5,003,884
Heritage Assets	376,989				376,989
Epping Forest Fund Reserve (Capital Fund)	830,345				830,345
Ancient Trees Maintenance Fund	15,000				15,000
Golf Course Machinery Fund	12,717				12,717
Knighton Wood Maintenance	5,801				5,801
Future Green Infrastructure fund	3,911				3,911
Cattle Purchase Fund (Grazing Account)	168,594	7,152	(2,005)		173,741
Wanstead Park/ Flats future Projects fund	100,000				100,000
	6,517,241	7,152	(2,005)	0	6,522,388
Total Epping Forest	7,561,132	758,428	(90,228)	0	8,229,332
<u>Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common</u>					
Restricted Income Funds:					
Legacy Income - Pond Maintenance	60,014				60,014
Campaign Donations	7,232	2,040			9,272
Section 106 Contributions and Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS) Monies	956,288	10,000	(49,299)		916,989
	1,023,534	12,040	(49,299)	0	986,275
Unrestricted Income Funds:					
Unrestricted Income Funds	2,268				2,268
	2,268	0	0	0	2,268
Designated (Unrestricted Income Fund):					
Stoke Common	136,600				136,600
Tangible Fixed Assets (Land & Buildings, Infrastructure, Vehicles & Plant and Equipment)	852,906				852,906
	989,506	0	0	0	989,506
Total Burnham Beeches	2,015,308	12,040	(49,299)	0	1,978,049
<u>West Wickham Common and Spring Park Wood, Coulsdon and Other Commons</u>					
Restricted Income Funds:					
Campaign Donations	2,550				2,550
	2,550	0	0	0	2,550
Unrestricted Income Funds:					
Unrestricted Income Funds	3,272				3,272
	3,272	0	0	0	3,272
Designated (Unrestricted Income Fund):					
Tangible Fixed Assets (Land & Buildings, Infrastructure, Vehicles & Plant and Equipment)	647,263				647,263
	647,263	0	0	0	647,263
Total West Wickham Common and Spring Park Wood, Coulsdon and Other Commons	653,085	0	0	0	653,085
<u>Ashtead Common</u>					
Designated (Unrestricted Income Fund):					
Ancient Trees Reserve	2,386	500			2,886
Total Ashtead Common	2,386	500	0	0	2,886
Total Epping Forest and Commons Committee	10,231,911	770,968	(139,527)	0	10,863,352

Note:

The various sub-totals shown above should not give the impression that the individual funds held by each individual charity can be either consolidated or cross-utilised. It is key that individual charity funds are not viewed as available to be 'offset' against each other, bearing in mind the different objects held.

Please note that the external audit of the 2023/24 charity accounts has not yet been completed and the above opening balances shown for each reserve fund are subject to revision.

There are various types of funds held which have different rules as to how they can be spent and time periods held. These are categorised in the following way:

Restricted Income Fund - funds have been given to the charity for application for a specific element of the charity's objects and can only be spent in accordance with the requests of the donor or the specific campaign under which funds were raised. As these are income funds, they should be spent within a reasonable period of time.

Unrestricted Income Fund - incoming resources that become available to a charity and can be applied by the Trustee to any of the charity's objects. Unrestricted income funds should be spent within a reasonable period of time and should not be held for the long term, although the Trustee should set a policy for the minimum required level of funds which is a target minimum to be held in case of particular identified risk. In the case of the City's Estate funded charities, the current deficit funding model means that no such minimum can be identified, as at year end the difference between income and expenditure is balanced by the deficit funding grant from City's Estate.

Designated (Unrestricted Income Fund) - are those unrestricted funds which have been set aside by the Trustee for an essential spend or future purpose. Whilst there is no legal restriction on their use for general purposes, and they can be undesignated by those acting on behalf of the Trustee at any time, these funds are effectively 'ring-fenced' and no longer form part of your free reserves/general funds. Designated funds must be spent within a reasonable period of time and should not be held for the long term.

Charity Funds (Restricted, Unrestricted, Designated and Endowments) - Quarter 2 - 2024/25

	Opening Balance 2024/25	Income	Expenditure	Gains, (Losses) & Transfers	Current Balance 2024/25
	£'s	£'s	£'s	£'s	£'s
Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queens Park Committee					
Hampstead Heath					
Restricted Income Funds:					
Campaign Donations	18,617	430			19,047
Parliament Hill Outdoor Gym	2,233				2,233
Installation of Non-Turf Pitches	12,970				12,970
	33,820	430	0	0	34,250
Unrestricted Income Funds:					
General Funds	7,312				7,312
Designated (Unrestricted Income Fund):					
Tangible Fixed Assets (Buildings, Infrastructure & Equipment)	22,481,805				22,481,805
Capital Fund	3,331				3,331
	22,485,136	0	0	0	22,485,136
Total Hampstead Heath	22,526,268	430	0	0	22,526,698
Hampstead Heath Trust Fund					
Permanent Endowment	36,025,459				36,025,459
Expendable Endowment	827,434				827,434
Unrestricted Income Funds:					
General Funds	902,261				902,261
Total Hampstead Heath Trust Fund	37,755,154	0	0	0	37,755,154
Highgate Wood and Queen's Park					
Unrestricted Income Funds:					
General Funds	186,630				186,630
Designated (Unrestricted Income Fund):					
Tangible Fixed Assets (Land, Buildings and Infrastructure)	209,526				209,526
Total Highgate Wood and Queen's Park	396,156	0	0	0	396,156
Total Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queens Park Committee	60,677,578	430	0	0	60,678,008
West Ham Park Committee					
Designated (Unrestricted Income Fund):					
Tangible Fixed Assets (Equipment)	935,025				935,025
Total West Ham Park	935,025	0	0	0	935,025
Total West Ham Park Committee	935,025	0	0	0	935,025
Culture, Heritage & Libraries Committee (Keats House)					
Restricted Income Funds:					
Heritage Assets - Keats Love Letter & Watercolour	101,423				101,423
Grant Funding	15,474	48,849	(6,400)		57,923
	116,897	48,849	(6,400)	0	159,346
Unrestricted Income Funds:					
General Funds	143,924				143,924
Designated (Unrestricted Income Fund):					
Tangible Fixed Assets (Plant & Equipment)	48,616				48,616
Total Keats House	309,437	48,849	(6,400)	0	351,886
Total Culture, Heritage & Libraries Committee (Keats House)	309,437	48,849	(6,400)	0	351,886

Note:

The various sub-totals shown within Appendix 4 should not give the impression that the individual funds held by each individual charity can be either consolidated or cross-utilised. It is key that individual charity funds are not viewed as available to be 'offset' against each other, bearing in mind the different objects held.

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Designated (Unrestricted Income Fund) - are those unrestricted funds which have been set aside by the Trustee for an essential spend or future purpose. Whilst there is no legal restriction on their use for general purposes, and they can be undesignated by those acting on behalf of the Trustee at any time, these funds are effectively 'ring-fenced' and no longer form part of your free reserves/general funds. Designated funds must be spent within a reasonable period of time and should not be held for the long term.

Endowment - these are funds of the charity that must be invested and are intended to be held for the long term. There are two classes of endowment:

Permanent Endowment - must be invested and held in perpetuity. These funds can either be invested to provide income to support the charity's purposes. The other class of permanent endowment is a functional permanent endowment where assets must be retained and used for the charity's purposes.

Expendable Endowment - an expendable endowment fund is a fund that must be invested to produce income, but the Trustee has the power to convert all or part of it into an income fund which can then be spent.

Agenda Item 12

Committee:	Date:
Natural Environment Board	17 October 2024
Subject: City Gardens Update	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1)Diverse Engaged Communities 2)Leading Sustainable Environment 3)Providing Excellent services 5)Vibrant Thriving Destination 6)Flourishing Public Spaces
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N/A
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Katie Stewart, Executive Director of Environment	For Information
Report author: Jake Tibbetts, City Gardens Manager	

Summary

This report provides an update to Members of the Natural Environment Boards on current management and operational activities across the City Gardens section.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report

Main Report

Personnel

1. City Gardens have recruited three new gardeners, one of which is a Volunteer Facilitator and a Keeper, currently recruitment is underway for further Gardener Positions.

Procurement

2. The Contract for the design and build of Tower Hill Playground is being awarded and the public consultation will commence soon.
3. The two new electric tipper transits have been delivered and are operational.

Operational Activities

4. **Friends of City Gardens:** The FoCG are progressing well with delivering the rewilding works at Bunhill Fields, and will be delivering a morning of walks and talks on the morning of Sunday the 13th October.
5. **Tree Removal – Bunhill Fields:** An application to remove two of the London Plane trees in the Bunhill Fields has been made to Islington Council. Bunhill Fields has a continuous high tree canopy in the southern enclosed areas, which is predominantly made up of mature London Plane. Through the rewilding works there is an aim to diversify the ground flora and increase pollinator friendly plants, we would also like to establish a secondary tree canopy to again increase the biodiversity value of the site. This work is going on across the site and is part of a rewilding project that is being funded by the GLA and is being delivered by the Friends City Gardens Volunteers and the City of London. The removal of these two plane trees would increase light to the ground allowing us to diversify through planting the flora and also establish some small native trees to provide some sub canopy. These two plane trees are growing in close proximity and are suppressed by a larger Plane. The removal of these two trees give this tree the ability to develop its crown further and become a heritage value tree.
6. **Bunhill Fields:** The north western wall has now finally been repaired. The new Keeper will be starting at the end of September. Since the last report there have been 46 recorded incidents of dogs off of lead.
7. The Chair and Vice Chair of NEB and the City Gardens Manager met with representatives of the Blake Society to discuss the possibility of introducing some kind of a memorial for Katherine Blake into Bunhill Fields to mark where she is buried and to work to improve the information provided on site for both William and Katherine Blake. A site visit with the Vice Chair, the City Gardens Manager and representatives from the society has been diarised.
8. **Business Improvement Districts:** The summer programme of sporting and cultural events has come to a close. Throughout August, Aldgate Connect held 9 live music events on Tuesdays and Thursdays in Aldgate square which were well attended.
9. The EC event in Seething Lane showing sporting events and films on large screens was considered a success and discussions are already underway for a similar event next year. Attendance at the sporting events fluctuated and

overall the summer's changeable weather did reduce numbers but the two family film events at weekends was successful with a total attendance achieved of 130.

10. City Gardens are continuing to work with all of the BIDs to deliver a programme of cultural and fitness events across the City next summer.
11. City Gardens are in advanced contractual discussions with the EC Bid to fund an additional Gardener for the EC area, this gardener will focus on raising the quality of key sites.

Project Updates

12. Current projects City Gardens are working on with Policy and Projects
 - Jubilee Gardens - a climate resilient scheme that will feature a relatively high volume of new trees for the size of the site. This scheme is on site and it is intended that planting will take place in October
 - Moorgate London Wall – a redesign of the area around the oldest Oak tree in the Square Mile, will be delivered this winter
 - Nicolas Cole Abbey - the two planters on Queen Victoria street are being rebuilt and a new tree planted.
13. Current City Gardens Projects
 - St Anne St Agnes – City Gardens are working with the developer of Alderscastle to develop a master plan for this site. Initially the first phase will be an improvement scheme that will be implemented to the area in front of the entrance to Alderscastle to improve the aesthetics of the site for when the building works are completed in March 2025
 - St Olaves Silver Street – This scheme which includes the removal and replacement of two trees and improved planting will be delivered before March 2025.
 - St Mary Staining – Improvements to planting will be delivered before January 2025, with the possibility of a small pond being installed being discussed with the church and dioceses. . This would be delivered later in 2025.
 - Riverside – rear of St Magnus the Martyr Church, a climate resilient scheme similar to the one outside of the boys' school will be delivered before March 2025.
14. St Brides - City Gardens are working with the church to make improvements to the churchyard. These include:
 - Pruning works to the trees have been specified. We are waiting to obtain the required permissions from the dioceses before progressing.
 - Planting – A planting schedule has been drafted and is being finalised through discussions with the church.

- Planter – an estimate has been received for the price of a lead effect planter for which we are looking at funding options.
- MACE are providing volunteer support and have fixed the water tap in the churchyard which was faulty.

15. **Finsbury Circus:** Maylim, the main contractor, took occupation of the site 20th November 2023. Expected Completion Feb 2024

1) Project update:

- Main Contractor has agreed a Schedule of plants with Client design team from alternative supplier (Robbin Thackie)
- Client Team Visit completed to Nursery on 19th Sept with second Nursery visit to be scheduled mid Oct before any deliveries to Site.

2) Physical works completed since last update:

- Sewer connection completed
- Park office frame constructed
- Install Planters - Ongoing (11 & 12 Completed)
- Hard surfacing Outer Perimeter Installation - Ongoing (75% of Existing Scoutmoor installed & 65% of New Scoutmoor Installed)

3) Works planned for coming month:

- Install Planters 36 - 40
- Install irrigation system
- Install Park Office Windows & Doors

16. City Gardens are developing the Finsbury Circus Events Policy, this will be completed by the time the gardens open, the first draft will be presented to committee at a December NEB.

Events

17. The members tour of some City sites and Finsbury Circus took place on the 11th September. Members were given a presentation by Maylim and shown around the Garden viewing progress made so far.

18. The Chair along with the Lord Mayor will be attending a rededication event at St Aldermanbury garden event in October. The event is organized by Westminster College in the US and will be attended by a number of Churchillians. The college has contributed towards the recent works that have taken place within the Garden.

Jake Tibbetts
City Gardens Manager

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