



Natural Environment Board

Date: THURSDAY, 6 FEBRUARY 2025
Time: 11.00 am
Venue: COMMITTEE ROOMS - 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	Verderer Paul Morris (Observer)

Enquiries: Callum Southern
Callum.Southern@cityoflondon.gov.uk

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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.

Whilst we endeavour to livestream all of our public meetings, this is not always possible due to technical difficulties. In these instances, if possible, a recording will be uploaded following the end of the meeting.

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 public minutes and non-public summary of the previous meeting held on 10 December 2024.

For Decision
(Pages 5 - 12)

Open Spaces

4. **NUFFIELD SCHOLAR PRESENTATION**

The Committee to receive a presentation from a Nuffield Scholar.

For Information

5. **YOUTH NATURAL ENVIRONMENT BOARD - VERBAL UPDATE**

The Committee to receive a verbal update on the Youth Natural Environment Board from Simon Lightman.

For Information

6. **CARBON ACTION STRATEGY PRESENTATION**

The Committee to receive a presentation from Officers from the Innovation & Growth Department.

For Information
(Pages 13 - 42)

7. **RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE REPORT**

Report of the Executive Director, Environment.

For Information
(Pages 43 - 54)

8. **FIRST CONSIDERATION: ENHANCED BIODIVERSITY DUTIES OF PUBLIC AUTHORITIES**

Report of the Executive Director, Environment.

For Information
(Pages 55 - 70)

9. **ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT HIGH-LEVEL BUSINESS PLAN 2025-30**

Report of the Executive Director, Environment.

For Decision
(Pages 71 - 92)

10. **REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGETS 2025/26**

Joint Report of the Chamberlain and the Executive Director, Environment.

For Decision
(Pages 93 - 106)

11. **OPERATIONAL FINANCE PROGRESS REPORT - QUARTER 3 (DECEMBER 2024) 2024/25 - NATURAL ENVIRONMENT DIVISION**

Report of the Chamberlain.

For Information
(Pages 107 - 126)

City Gardens

12. **CITY GARDENS UPDATE**

Report of the Executive Director, Environment.

For Information
(Pages 127 - 130)

13. **TOWER HILL PLAY PROJECT**

Report of the Executive Director, Environment.

For Decision
(Pages 131 - 168)

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

For Decision

Part 2 - Non-Public Agenda

17. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

To agree the non-public minutes of the previous meeting held on 10 December 2024.

For Decision
(Pages 169 - 170)

18. **TRANSFORMATION FOR THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT CHARITIES -
OUTCOMES OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT CHARITIES REVIEW**

Joint Report of the Executive Director, Environment, the Interim Managing Director of City Bridge Foundation, and the Chamberlain.

For Information
(Pages 171 - 216)

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 Tuesday, 10 December 2024

Minutes of the meeting of the Natural Environment Board held at Committee Room -
2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Tuesday, 10 December 2024 at 11.00 am

Present

Members:

Caroline Haines (Chair)
Eamonn Mullally (Deputy Chairman)
Anne Corbett
Wendy Mead OBE
Benjamin Murphy
Deputy Alpa Raja
James St John Davis
Heather Barrett-Mold
Tony Leach
Catherine Bickmore (Observer)

In Attendance:

William Upton KC

Externals:

Niall McEvoy (Viritopia)

Officers:

Anna Cowperthwaite	- Comptroller and City Solicitor's
Emily Brennan	- Environment Department
Melanie Charalambous	- Environment Department
Simon Glynn	- Environment Department
Ian Hughes	- Environment Department
Joe Kingston	- Environment Department
Jake Tibbetts	- Environment Department
Joseph Smith	- Town Clerk's Department
Callum Southern	- Town Clerk's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Andrew McMurtrie JP and Verderer Paul Morris.

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

No declarations were received under the Code of Conduct in respect of items on the agenda.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED – That, the public minutes and non-public summary of the last meeting held on 17 October 2024 be agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

4. **ANNUAL REVIEW OF TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Committee received a report which included the Terms of Reference for the Committee's consideration before submission to the Policy and Resources Committee.

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- Approved the terms of reference of the Natural Environment Board, subject to any comments, for submission to the Court of Common Council in April, and that any further changes required in the lead up to the Court's appointment of Committees be delegated to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman.

5. **BIOPHILIC EVIDENCE BASED DESIGN AND INTEGRATING NATURE FOR LONGEVITY - PRESENTATION**

The Committee received a presentation from Niall McEvoy of Viritopia.

During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- a) A Member queried what the downsides of applying moss to the side of buildings was. Mr. McEvoy indicated moss found inside was preserved moss and would be good for the acoustics of a room and provide a biophilic effect. However, it did not provide an effect and was not urban greening.
- b) The Chair raised the issue of living walls and solutions to ensure they could be successful in urban environments. Mr. McEvoy indicated there needed to be an introduction of more Mediterranean species of plant to ensure resilience and noted that there was a significant variance between the temperature on the façade of a building and that behind a living wall.
- c) Another Member raised the issue of maintenance and cost and indicated there was value for the Board in coordinating a City-wide response. The Member also enquired how life could be sustained in the City if there was a shortage of water. Mr. McEvoy told the Committee maintenance could not be avoided.

6. **YOUTH NATURAL ENVIRONMENT BOARD - VERBAL UPDATE**

The Committee received a verbal update from the Chair on the Natural Environment Board.

During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- a) The Chair noted that the Lord Mayor's speech, at the High Commissioner's Banquet at Mansion House, was focus on the role of the Youth Natural Environment Board and the work being done with the Royal Commonwealth Society.
- b) The Chair stated that the Memorandum of Understanding with the University of Surrey was in progress and hoped it would be signed by February 2025.
- c) The Chair also told the Committee that the Youth Natural Environment Board would take a national lead in the global relay to clean up rivers.
- d) The Chair added that YNEB was preparing a sustainability survey to be taken to the City of London family of schools.

7. ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF CHARITY DEVELOPMENT - VERBAL UPDATE

The Committee received a verbal update from the Assistant Director of Charity Development.

During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- a) A Member queried that there was a hope a handbook would be produced from the Natural Environment Charities Review which would assist with the business and management plans of the charities.
- b) The Member also asked whether the Field Studies Council could be considered. Officers explained that the work they had outlined already was for lodges and domestic properties only as they came under the charity's EPC requirements and the Field Studies Council centre had more to do with the lease involved and the division of responsibilities.

8. ASSISTANT DIRECTOR CULTURE AND PROJECT'S UPDATE REPORT Q2: JULY-SEPTEMBER 2024

The Committee received a report which provided an update against workstreams, outcomes and key performance indicators from the Natural Environment Division Business Plan and objectives from the Natural Environment Strategies that were applicable to staff in the Culture and Projects Section covering July-September 2025 (Q2).

During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- a) A Member considered why income had fallen at Monument. Officers explained they had been discussing how to transfer services into a new culture service area and had been developing a transition plan. Officers added they were working closely with City Bridge Foundation to transition Monument into a permanent place in the cultural service area.

- b) The Member asked whether there was a plan to reduce losses should the transition not occur. Officers told the Committee they were reviewing opportunities to decrease the overspend, particularly looking at whether it was open on the days it should be, as well as a local business partnership to seek income generation opportunities.
- c) Officers added they had discussions with the Chamberlains to consider moving the Monument out of the Environment Department's local risk into central risk.

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- Noted the report.

9. ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT HIGH-LEVEL BUSINESS PLAN 2024/25 – PROGRESS REPORT (MID- YEAR)

The Committee provided an update on progress made by the Natural Environment Division and City Gardens Team towards delivery of the Environment Department's high-level Business Plan 2024/25 and summarised the progress that had been made against major workstreams and performance measures during the first two quarters of 2024/25.

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- Noted the content of the report and its appendices.

10. CITY GARDENS UPDATE

The Committee provided an update to Members of the Natural Environment Board on current management and operational activities across the City Gardens section.

During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- a) A Member suggested making nearby pubs and cafes aware of the London Gardens Weekend as a lot of people would flow through Finsbury Circus. Another Member stated it needed to be done throughout the City as there was a significant programme that weekend.
- b) Another Member advised Officers reaching out to colleagues at The Commons who had spent a lot of time working on policy around dogs in open spaces and suggested keeping the branding from The Commons.
- c) The Member raised the issue of blue barriers around the City as it had become more of an issue. Officers indicated they were aware and there was intermittent blitzes on collecting abandoned street furniture and the respective utilities or contractors could be dealt with if they were not maintaining them. Officers added that Members should document where they could be found.

- d) Caution was advised by a Member on creating a division between dog owners and non-dog owners and queried whether there was any data relating to incidents involving dogs. Officers indicated they did record data on incidents involving dogs being off leads, dog fouling, and noted that the gardeners had access to a mobile reporting application to report incidents. Officers added that the funding for the keeper post had been achieved by demonstrating the issues through data collected.
- e) A Member indicated there was an increase in the number of dog friendly hotels in the City and raised the issue of creating infrastructure to accommodate that trend.

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- Noted the report.

11. CITY GARDENS EVENT POLICY AND FEES AND CHARGES FOR 25/26

The Committee received a report which outlined updates to the City Gardens Events Policy and related fees and charges in preparation for the reopening of Finsbury Circus Gardens in 2025.

Officers informed the Committee they suggested a late change to the recommendations to read:

- To agree in principle and authorise the Assistant Director Gardens and Cleaning, in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chair, to finalise the text of the City Gardens Events Policy.
- Approve the new Fees and Charges as set out in Appendix 2 in this report.

Officers informed the Committee the suggested change was due to late comments which had been received following the deadline which did not impact substantively on the policy, but did make sense to include. Officers added that legal had added for language to be tightened up with regard to closing times and that the main changes to the policy related to Finsbury Circus which was a much larger site and facilitated the need for a policy change.

During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- a) A Member sought clarification that Finsbury Circus was funded by the City Fund. Officers confirmed that was correct.
- b) A Member suggested a level of delegated authority would be needed to flex rates, in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chair. The Chair suggested that could be taken forward to the February meeting as it would provide an added flexibility. Officers indicated they would also bring a Fees and Charges report back that would highlight any events that had a discount applied to them.

- c) Officers added they would need the added flexibility as there was uncertainty about what events would be presented and needed to gauge the events offer.
- d) Another Member raised the issue of the cost on wear and tear of the Open Spaces and drew attention to Martin's Law which was likely to present an added cost. Officers explained that £750 for wear-and-tear was taken aside and returned to the contractor of the event if there was none.
- e) A Member queried whether filming events were included in the fees and charges. Officers confirmed it was not, but would revert filming queries to the filming team should they be made.

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- Agreed in principle and authorised the Assistant Director Gardens and Cleaning, in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chair, to finalise the text of the City Gardens Events Policy.
- Approved the new Fees and Charges as set out in Appendix 2 in this report.

12. KING GEORGE'S FIELD - CITY OF LONDON TRUSTEE'S ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The Committee received the Trustee's Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024 for King George's Field – City of London (charity registration number 1085967) which were presented for information in the format required by the Charity Commission.

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- Noted the Trustee's Annual Report and Financial Statements for the 2023/24 Financial Year for King George's Field – City of London.

13. CLIMATE ACTION STRATEGY, COOL STREETS AND GREENING PROGRAMME – PHASE 3 CITY GREENING AND BIODIVERSITY (FANN STREET AND ST PETER WESTCHEAP)

The Committee received a Gateway 4: Detailed Sign report which sought approval of the detailed designs for the relandscaping of Fann Street (west) and St Peter Westcheap churchyard to be progressed to Gateway 5.

RESOLVED – That, Members noted the report.

14. UPCOMING DATES OF INTEREST TO THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT BOARD

The Committee noted dates of interest to the Natural Environment Board.

The Chair informed the Committee that Tuesday 7 April was the opening of the Big Curry Lunch Garden and a joint reception with the Worshipful Company of Gardeners.

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

There were no questions on matters relating to the work of the Committee.

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

The Deputy Chairman informed the Committee that Friday 6 December 2024 would be the date of the inaugural meeting of the Income Generation Working Group whose tasks was to examine opportunities for income generation and ensure charities were compliant with regulations in regard to income generation. He also added that the City was recruiting a specialist who would act as an advisor of the Working Group. Officers added that representatives from the Chamberlain's transformation team had been invited to the Working Group meetings.

17. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

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

18. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

18.1 Non-Public Minutes of the 17 October Meeting of Natural Environment Board

RESOLVED – That, the non-public minutes of the last meeting held on 17 October 2024 be agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

18.2 Informal Non-Public Notes of the 17 October 2024 Meeting of Natural Environment Board

RESOLVED – That, Members noted the informal non-public notes.

19. DEBT ARREARS - NATURAL ENVIRONMENT DIVISION - 30/09/2024

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Environment.

20. REPORT OF ACTION TAKEN

The Committee received a report of the Town Clerk.

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

There were no questions on matters relating to the work of the Committee raised in non-public session.

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

The Chair raised two items of any other business that she considered urgent and which the Committee agreed should be considered whilst the public were excluded.

The meeting ended at 12.27 pm

Chairman

**Contact Officer: Callum Southern
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Climate Action Strategy

2020-2040

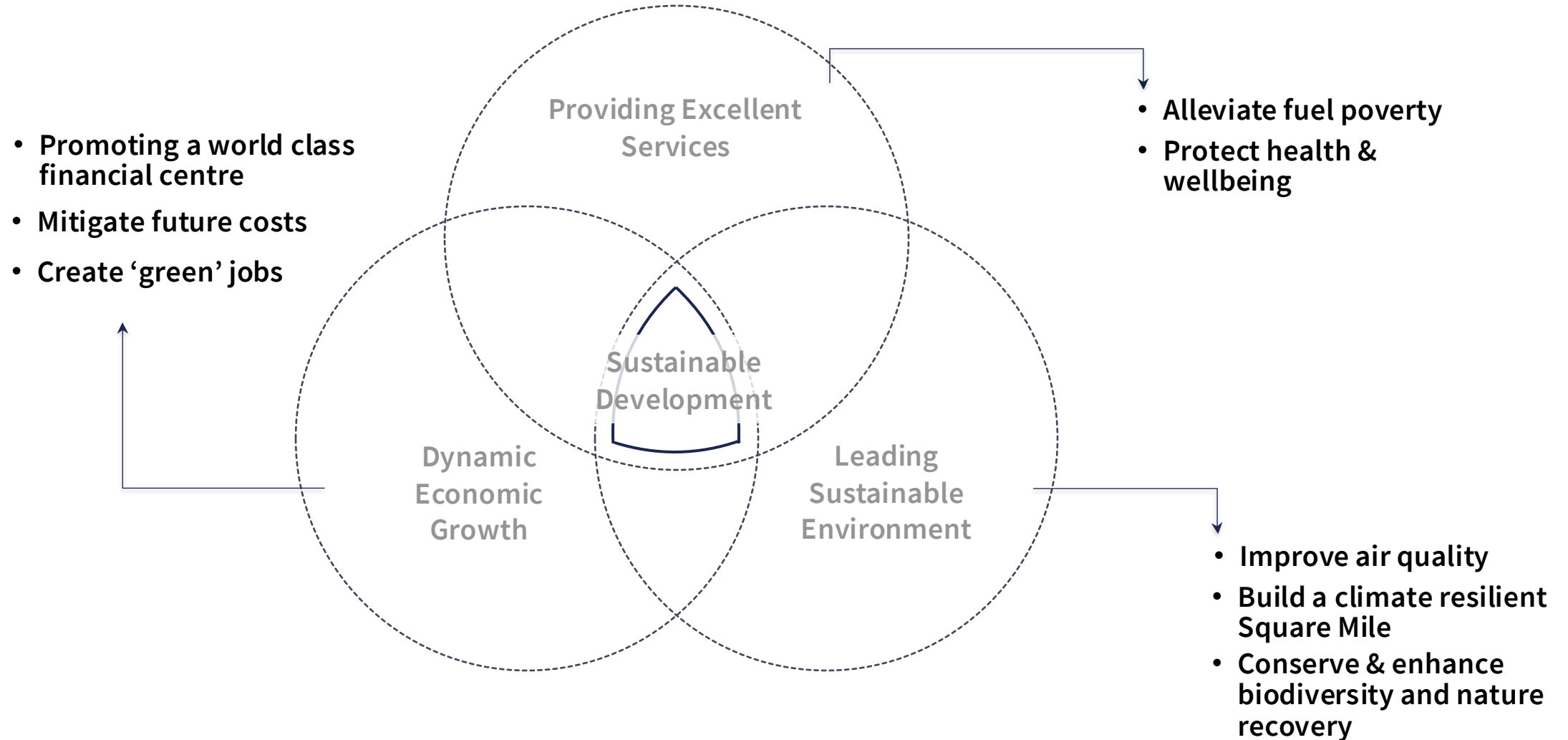
Natural Environment Board

February 2025

Agenda

- 1 A brief introduction to our Climate Action Strategy
- 2 Our approach
- 3 Projects under this Committee
- 4 Our progress
- 5 Q&A

Climate Action contributes to the City Corporation's aims



The City Corporation has committed to achieving...

Four objectives

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Net zero by 2027

in the City Corporation's operations



Net zero by 2040

across the City Corporation's full value chain



Net zero by 2040

in the Square Mile



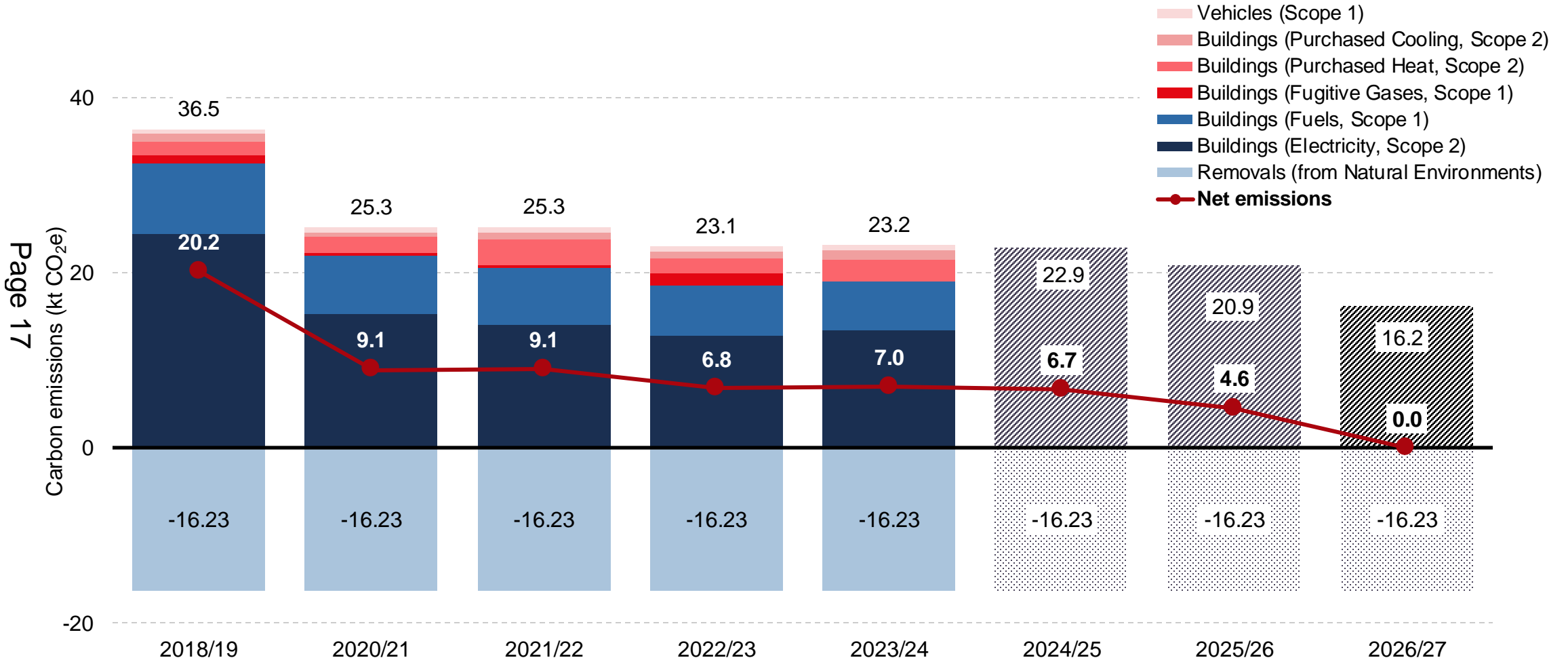
Climate Resilience

Climate resilience in our buildings, public spaces and infrastructure

Net zero in our own operations by 2027

Our operational estate and vehicle fleet emissions (Scopes 1 & 2) is in progress to meet net zero by 2027

Status:
In progress




CAS Projects

13 projects delivered by local teams, managed as a central Programme

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Net zero by 2027

 Operational Property & Housing (landlord areas)

 Carbon Removals

Net zero by 2040 (CoLC)

 Capital Projects (Design Standards)


 Investment Property

 Purchased Goods & Services

 Financial Investments

Net zero by 2040 (Square Mile)

 Square Mile


 Heart of the City (SME Engagement)

 Transport

Climate Resilience

 Building Resilience

 Cool Streets & Greening

 Mainstreaming Resilience



Strategic Implementation Support

Carbon Removals

City Corporation green spaces sequester **16,230 tCO₂e/year**. The Carbon Removals project aims to:

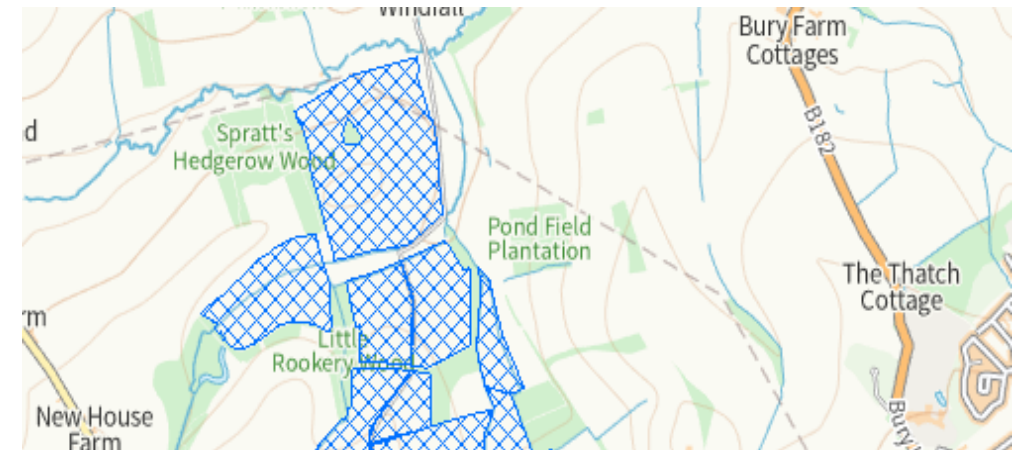
- **protect** existing sequestration from climate change,
- create 210 tCO₂e **additional sequestration** before 2027
- increase biodiversity

Key achievements so far

- Complex baseline assessed multiple times
- First 'spade in the ground' for CAS, creating Patmore's wildflower meadow
- Project rescope to account for effects of climate change
- Resourcing, upskilling and capacity building
- Copped Hall meadow planting (110 tCO₂e/year)
- Deer management, fire protection measures

What's next?

- Continue protection: deer management, drought and flood management, fire protection, squirrel surveys
- Continue Additionality: Copped Hall, Hampstead Heath, Wanstead Park, Queen's Park
- Measurement & monitoring



Cool Streets & Greening

The City is forecast to experience hotter, drier summers and warmer, wetter winters. CSG aims to reduce the impact of this climate change through:

Developing, trialling and assessing **resilience measures**

Introducing **sustainable drainage**

Creating new **green public space**

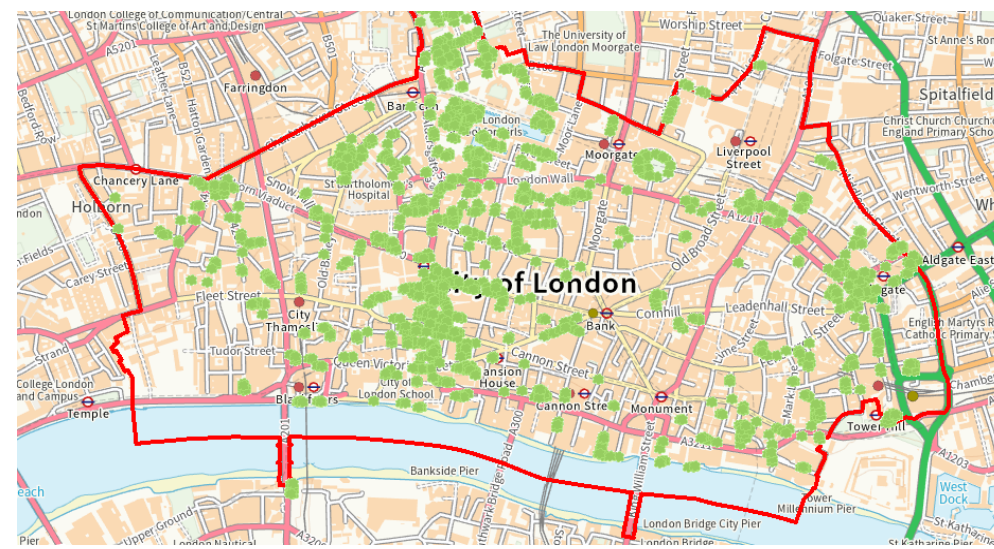
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Key achievements so far

- Cubic Mile project to map and plan for underground space in the City
- Over 30 resilience measures tested
- Greening implemented at 25 locations in the City
- Coordinated delivery across multiple teams for effective delivery at pace
- On street temperatures up to 6°C cooler under trees, compared to no trees

What's next?

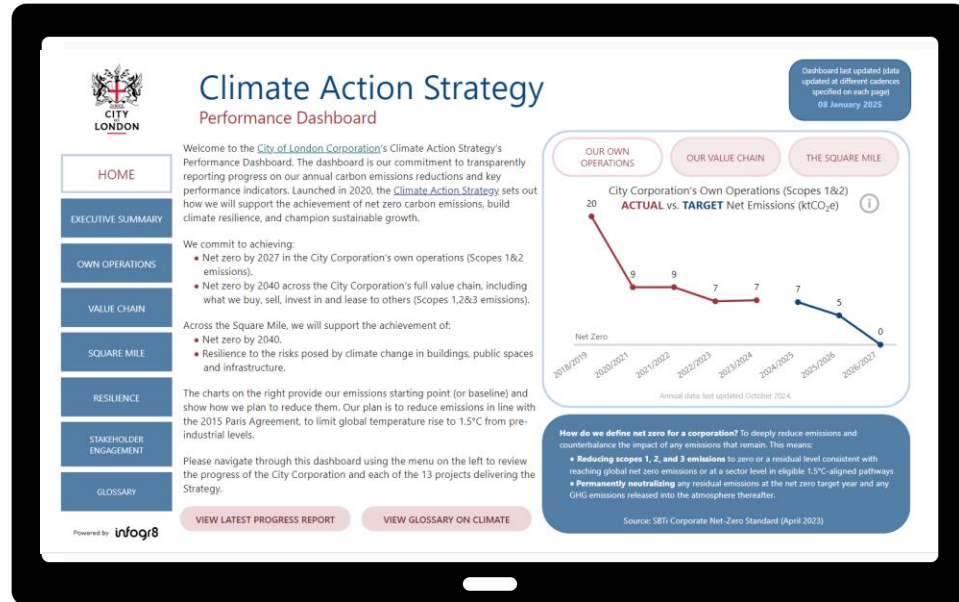
- At least 30 new street trees
- Completion of additional greening sites, including Finsbury Circus, Fann Street & St Peter Westcheap and Lloyds Avenue



Progress reporting & transparency

We committed to regular progress reporting and performance tracking

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Click here to open

Our Climate Action Performance Dashboard



Click here to open

Our Annual Progress Report (published Nov '24)

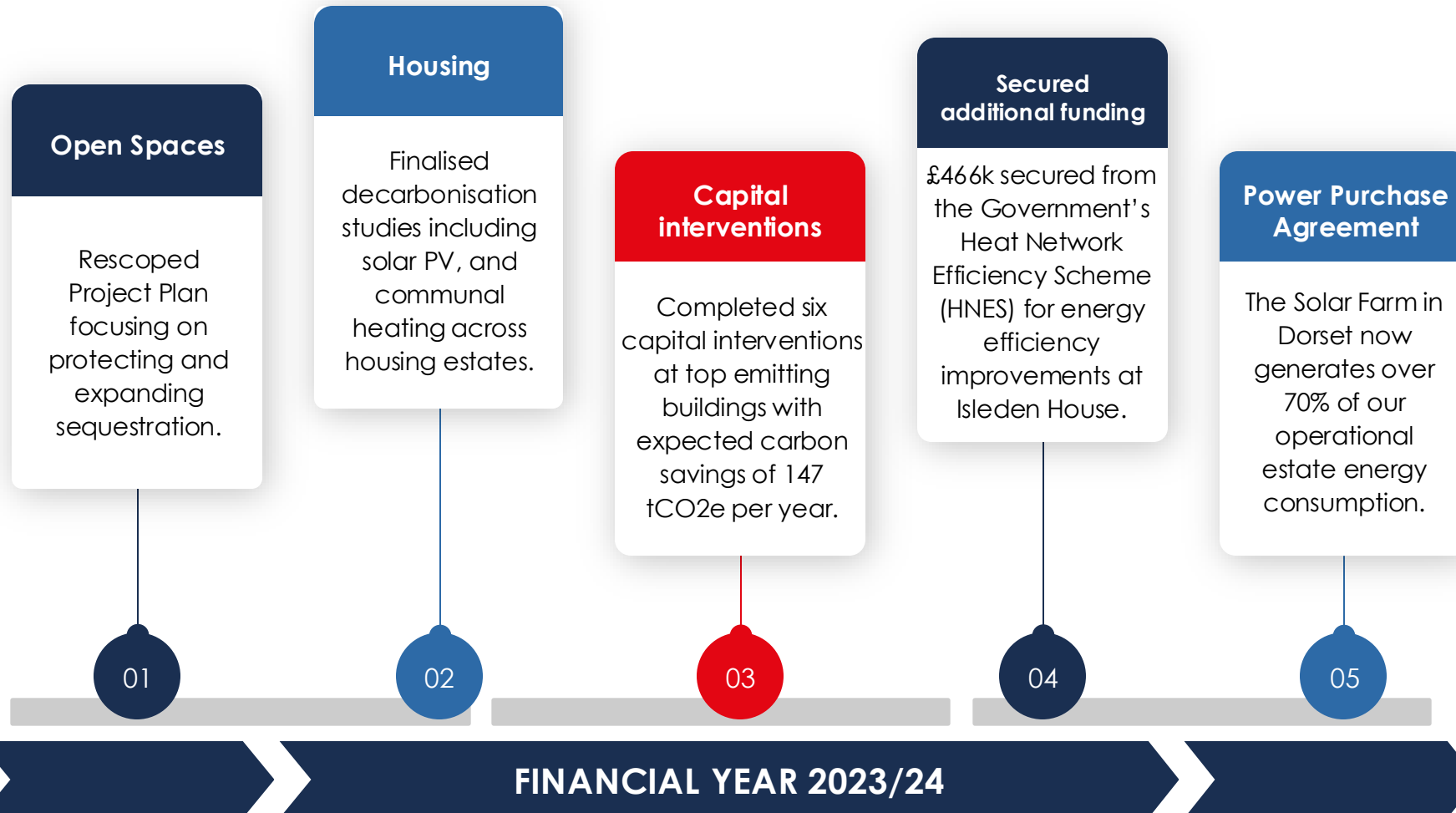
Questions?

References

Net zero in our own operations by 2027

Operational Buildings & Housing (Landlord Areas), Carbon Removals

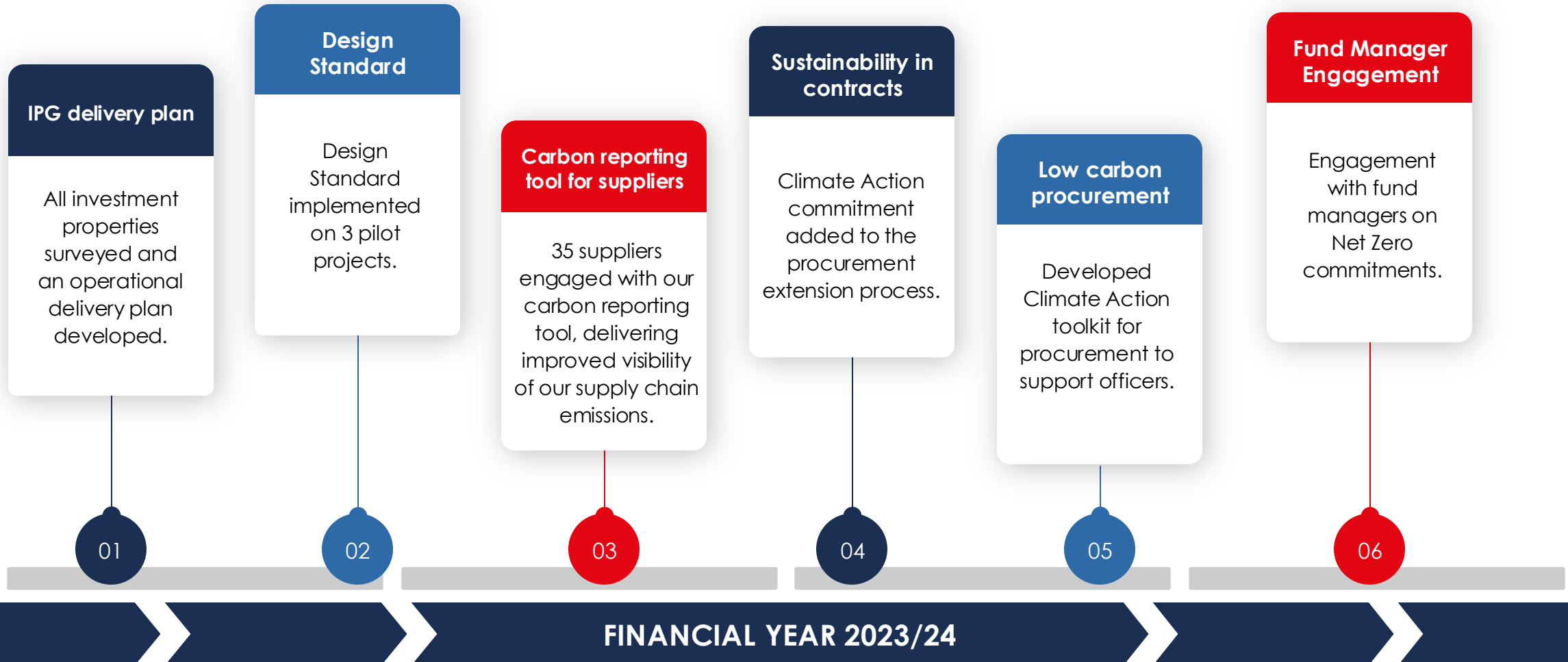
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Net zero in our value chain by 2040

Financial Investments, Investment Properties, Purchased Goods and Services, Design Standards

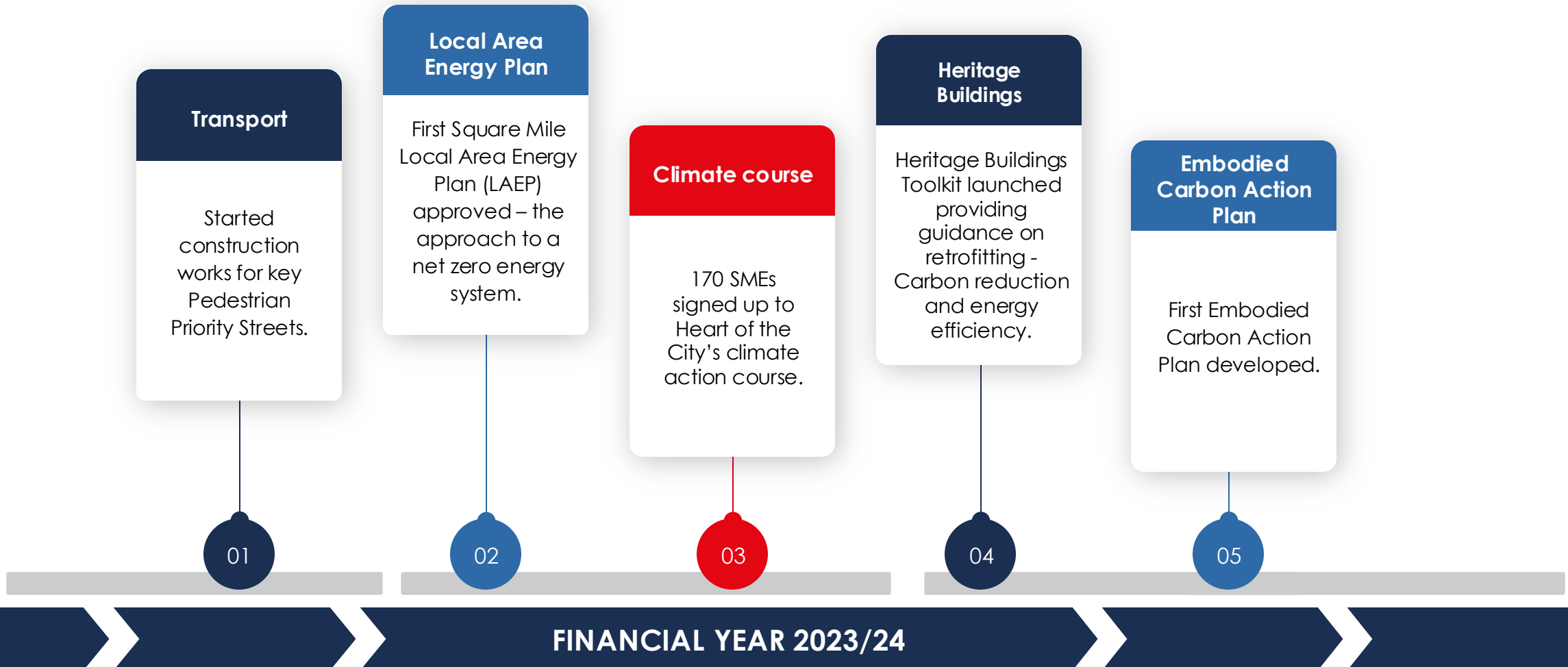
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Net zero in the Square Mile by 2040

Transport, Square Mile, Heart of the City

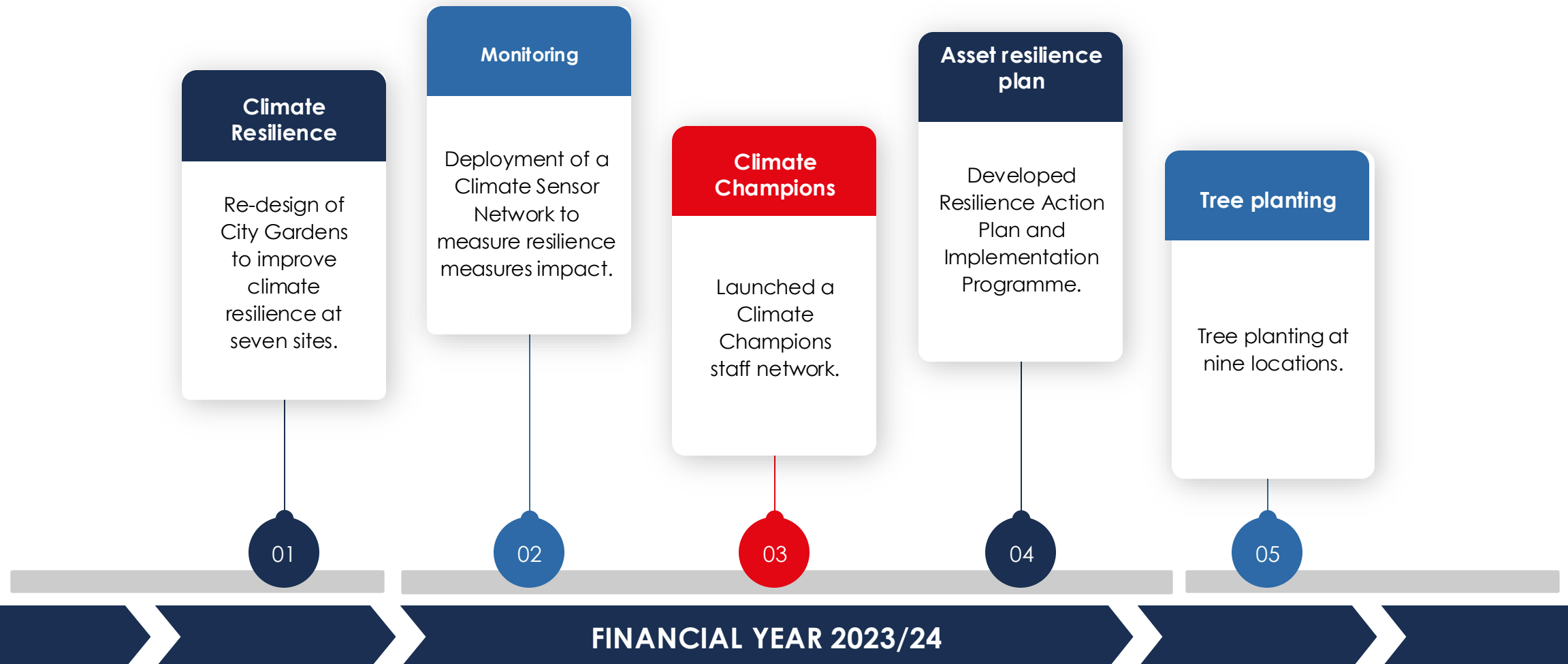
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A more resilient Square Mile

Cool Streets & Greening, Mainstreaming Climate Resilience, Resilient Buildings

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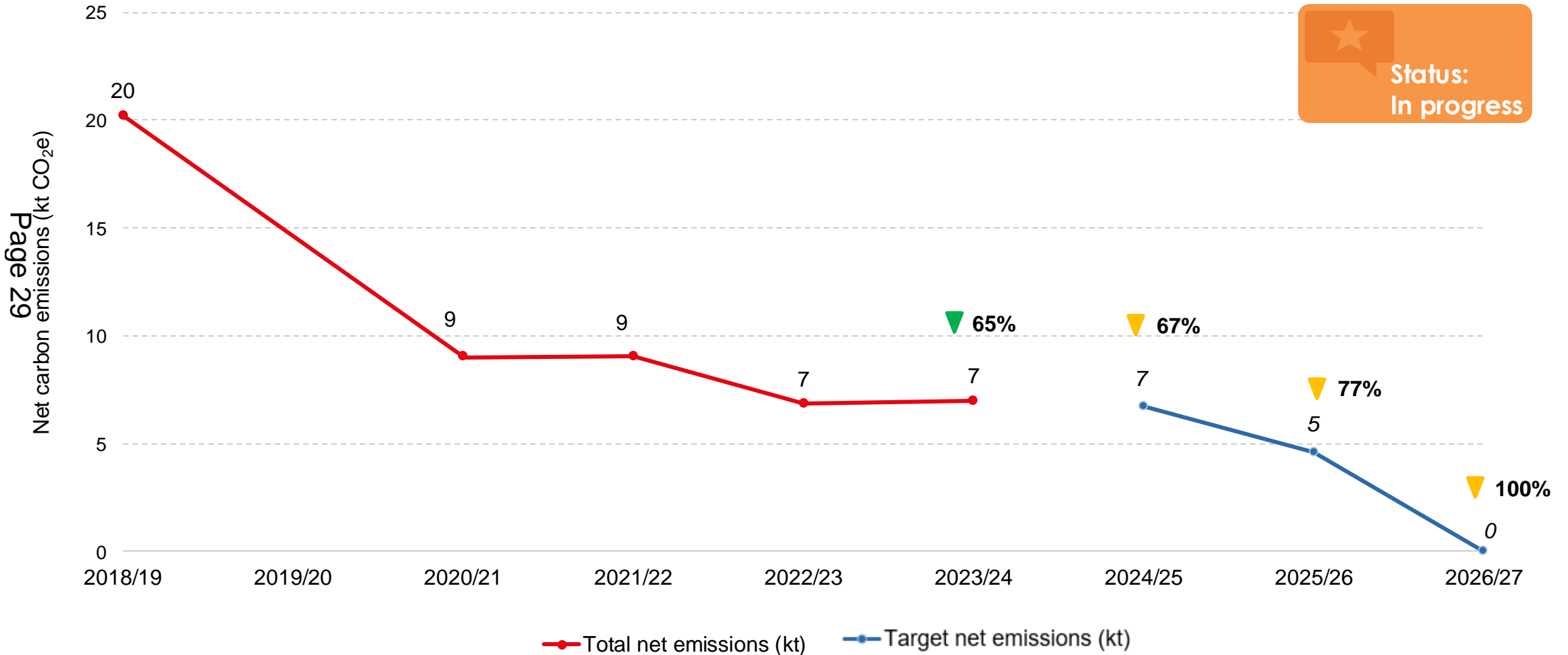


Performance

How we're tracking against our
targets

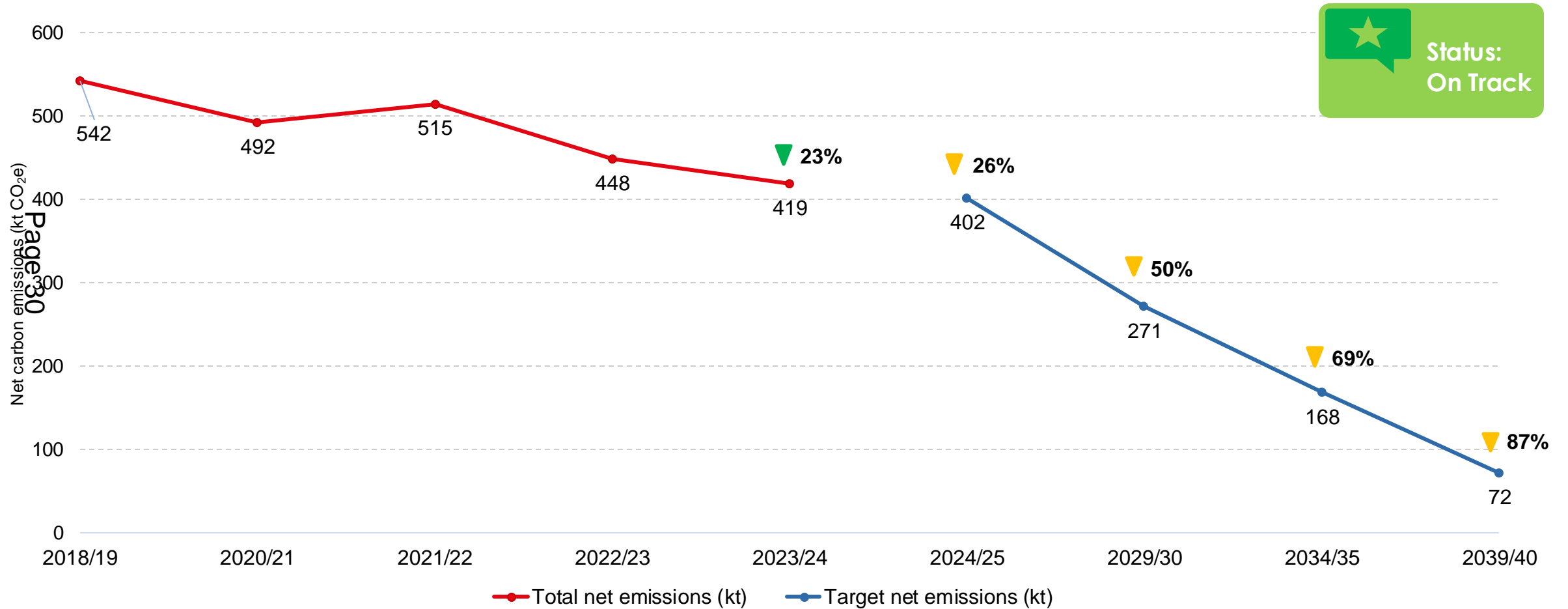
Net zero in our own operations by 2027

Our operational estate and vehicle fleet emissions (Scopes 1 & 2) is in progress to meet net zero by 2027



Net zero across the CoLC's value chain by 2040

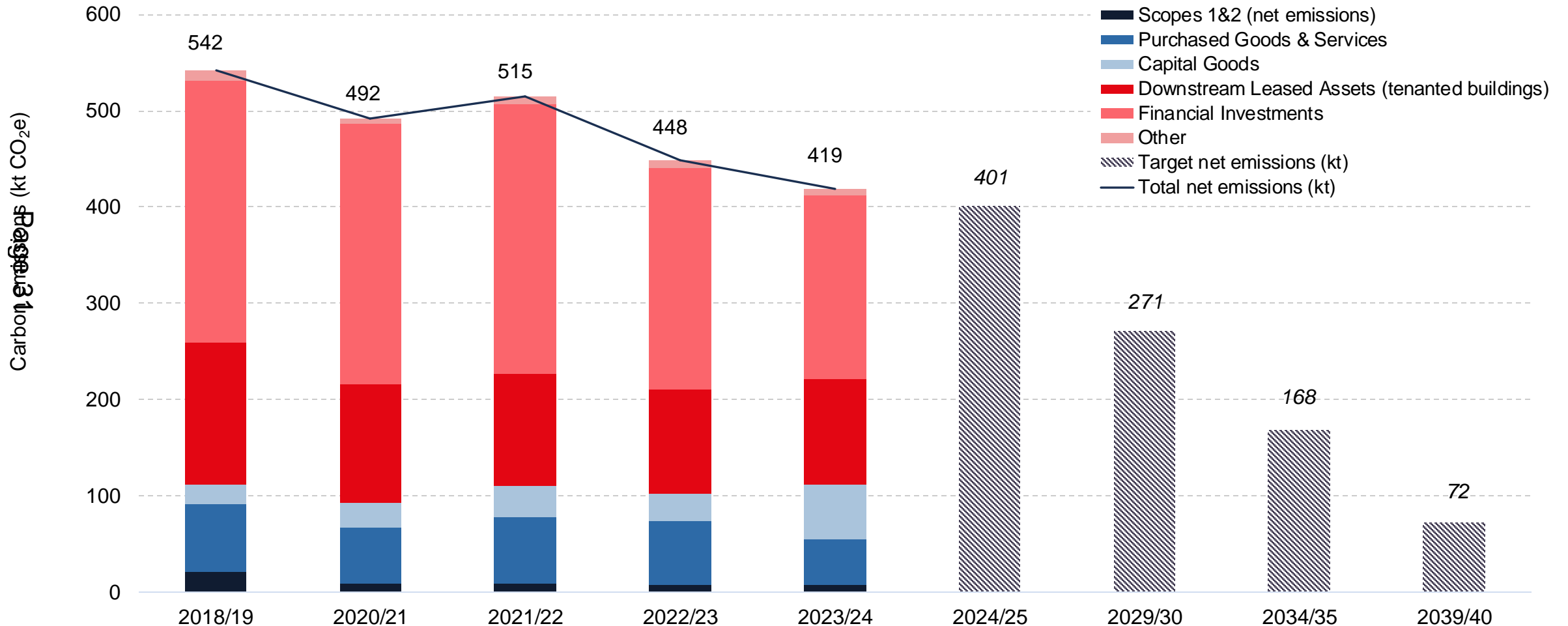
Our value chain emissions, all we buy, sell and invest in (Scopes 1, 2 and 3) is on track to meet net zero by 2040



Net zero across the CoLC's value chain by 2040

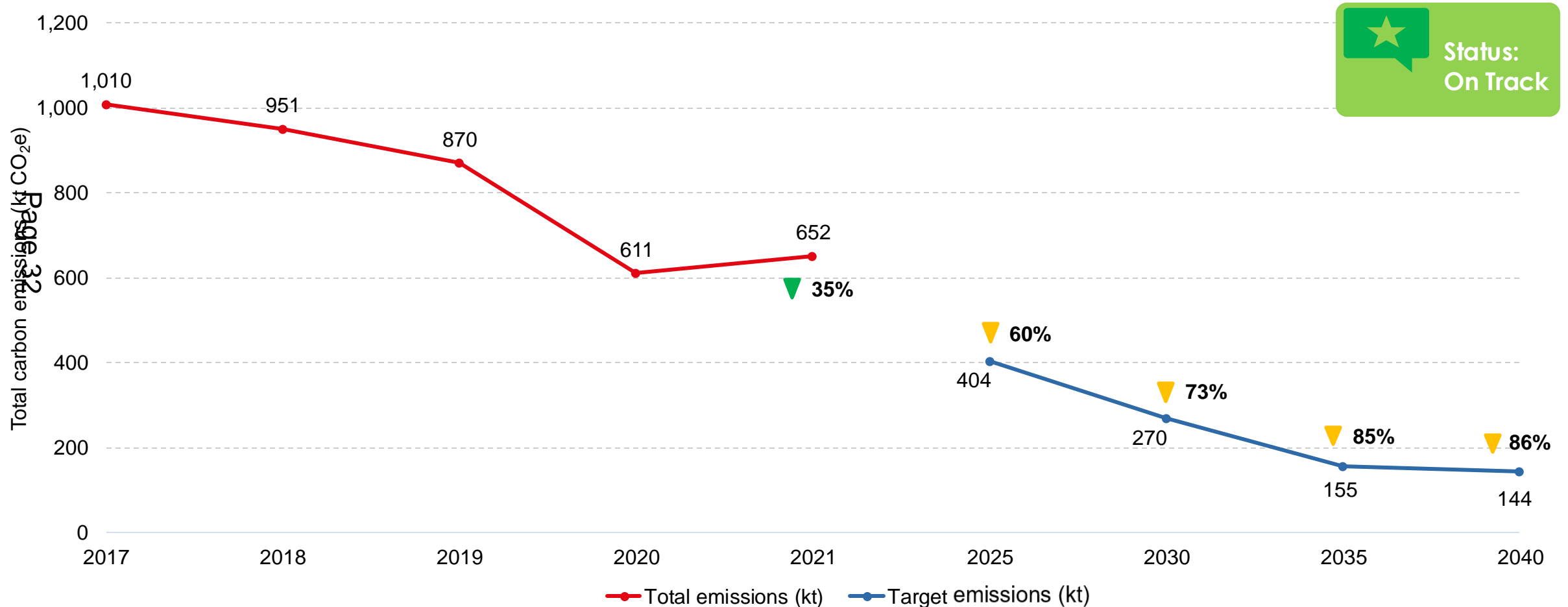


Our value chain emissions, all we buy, sell and invest in (Scopes 1, 2 and 3) is on track to meet net zero by 2040



Support net zero across the Square Mile by 2040

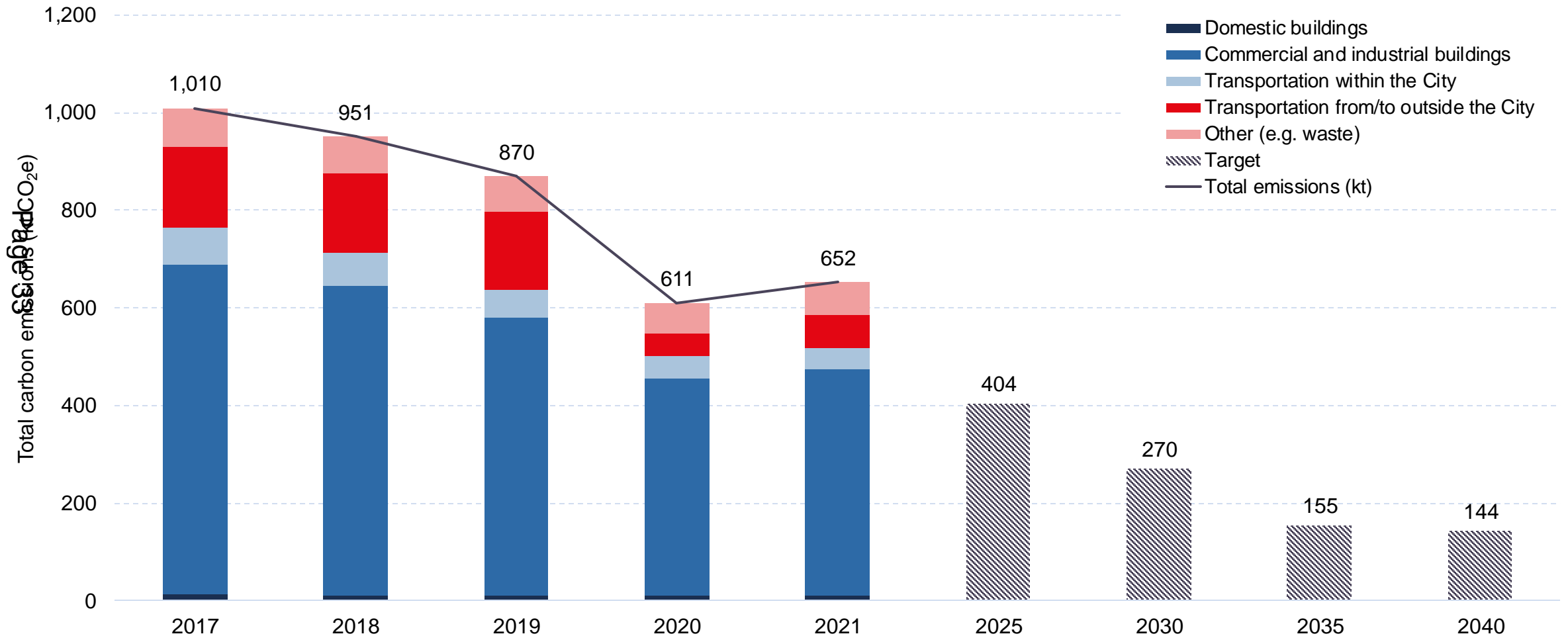
The Square Mile is on track to reach net zero by 2040



Support net zero across the Square Mile by 2040



The Square Mile is on track to reach net zero by 2040





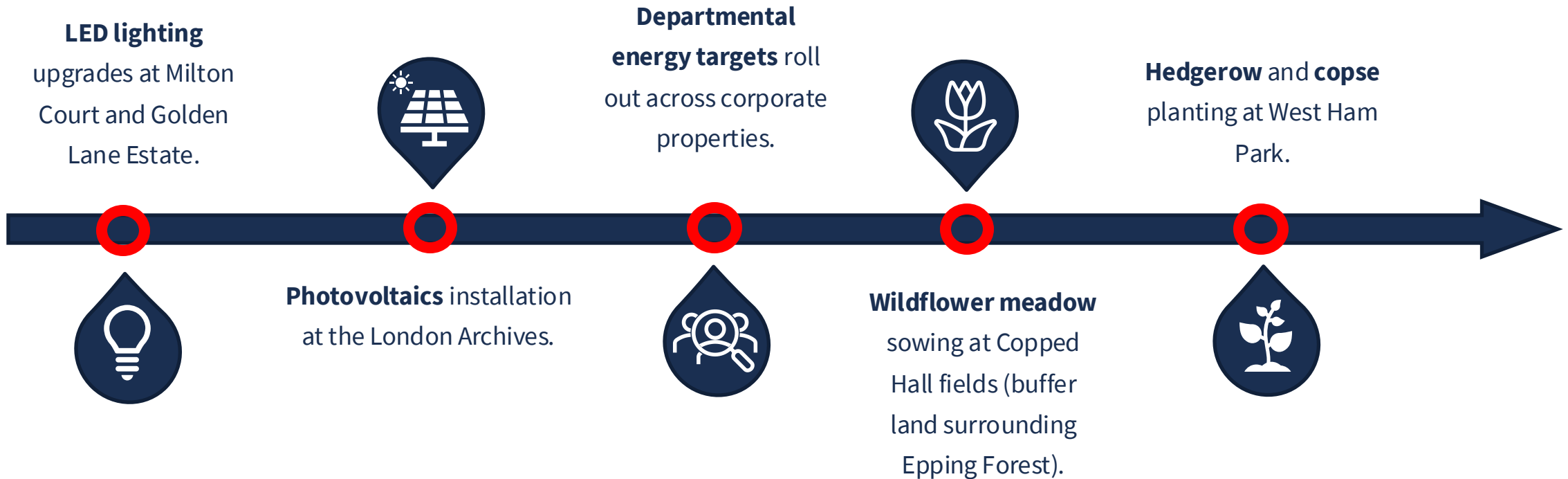
Next steps

Where we go from here

Net zero in our own operations by 2027

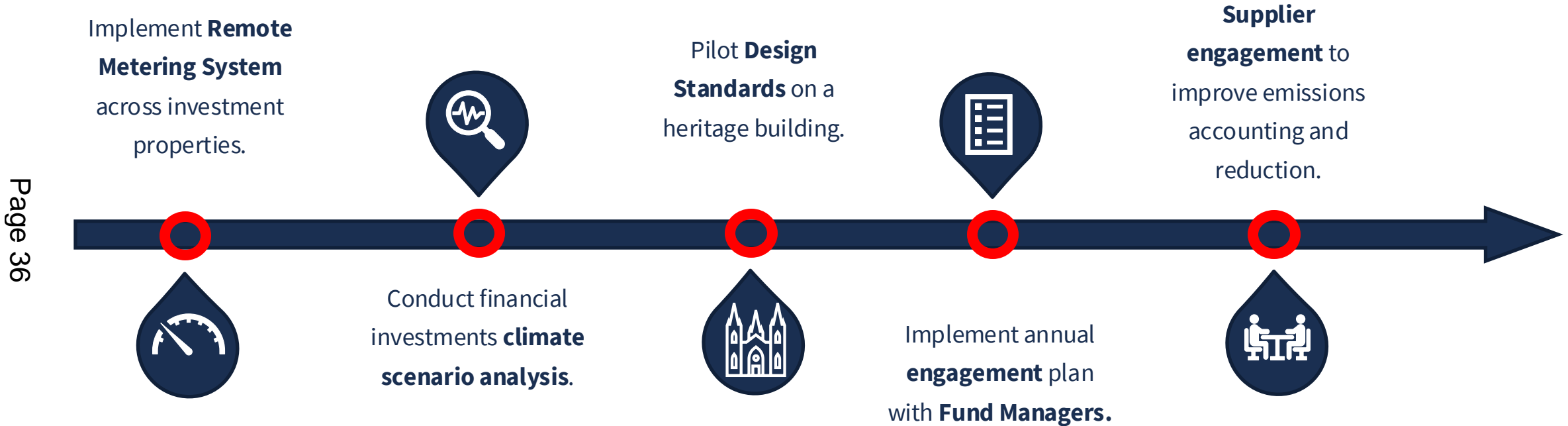
Year 4 delivery: Operational Buildings and Housing (Landlord Areas), Carbon Removals

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Net zero in our value chain by 2040

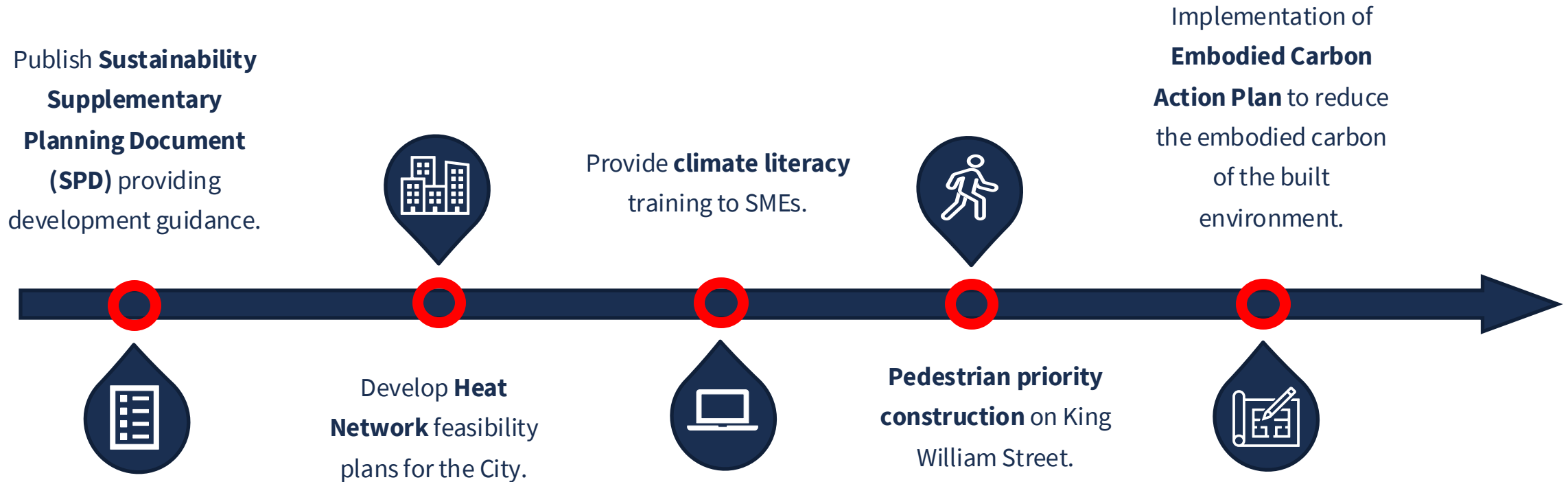
Year 4 delivery: Financial Investments, Investment Properties, Purchased Goods and Services, Design Standards



Net zero in the Square Mile by 2040

Year 4 delivery: Transport, Square Mile, Heart of the City

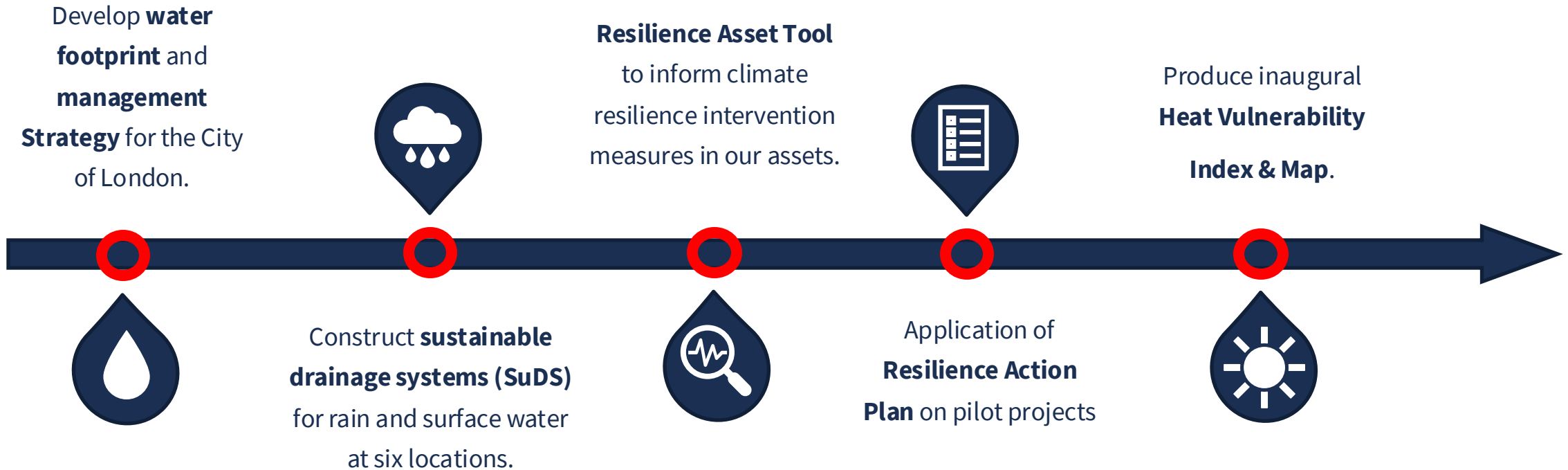
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A more resilient Square Mile

Year 4 delivery: Cool Streets & Greening, Mainstreaming Climate Resilience, Resilient Buildings

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What can you do?

In support of the Climate Action Strategy



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Promote our Climate Action Dashboard and Progress Report



Scrutinise reports and decisions in committee to consider climate action



Promote our Heritage Building Retrofit Toolkit in your ward



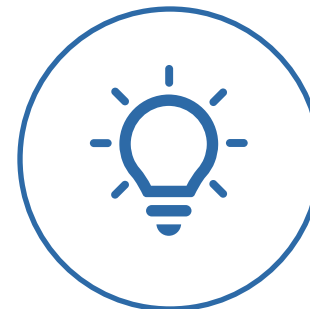
Encourage businesses to develop net zero plans



Promote Heart of the City's Climate Action Toolkit for SMEs



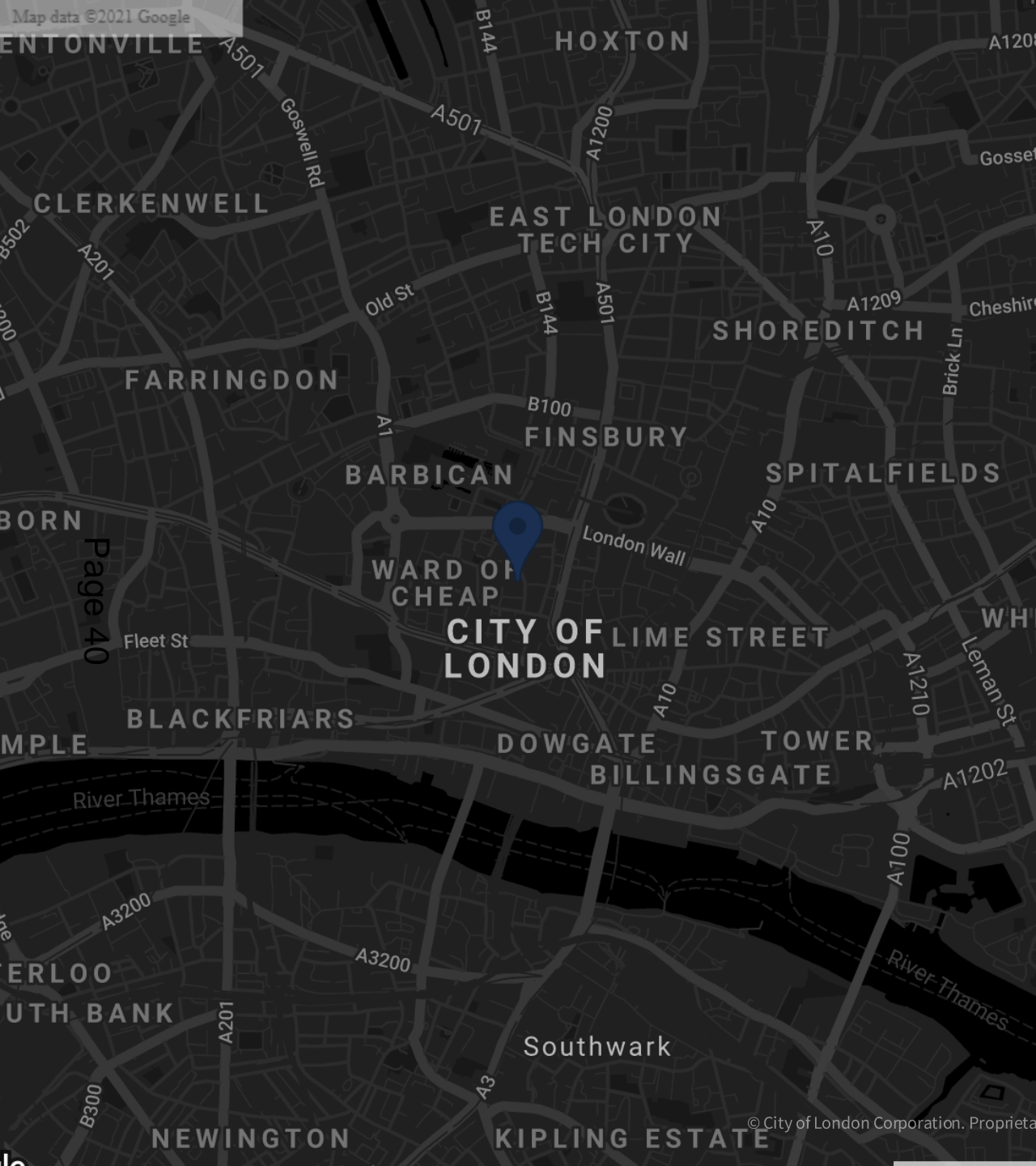
Invite businesses to sign up to Clean City Award Scheme



Refer residents to our SHINE service for energy support






Get involved in your ward's climate action initiatives



Resources

Links and Resources

-  Our intranet pages contain useful signposting to learning materials, technical guidance and updates: <https://corpoflondon.sharepoint.com/sites/Intranet/SitePages/New-Climate-Action-Strategy.aspx>
-  Our website: <https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/services/environmental-health/climate-action>
-  Climate Action Dashboard:



Glossary

Scopes 1 & 2 Emissions

<i>Emissions Category</i>	<i>Definition</i>
S1 Buildings Fuel Consumption	Combustion of fuel
S1 Vehicles	Combustion of fuel
S1 Fugitive emissions	Emissions from refrigeration and air conditioning leakages over operational life and disposal
S1 Process emissions	Industrial processes that chemically or physically transform materials
S2 Purchased electricity	Grid supplied energy
S2 Purchased heat	Grid supplied energy
S2 Purchased cooling	Grid supplied energy
S2 Purchased steam	Grid supplied energy

Scope 3 Emissions

<i>Emissions Category</i>	<i>Definition</i>
1b. Purchased goods and services	Extraction, production and transportation of goods and services purchased or acquired
2. Capital goods	Extraction, production, and transportation of capital goods purchased or acquired
3. Fuel and energy related activities	Extraction, production, and transportation of fuels and energy purchased or acquired (not accounted in Scope 1 or 2)
5a. Waste generated in operations	Disposal and treatment of waste generated by the reporting company but not owned or controlled by the company
5b. Water	Disposal and treatment of wastewater generated by the reporting company but not owned or controlled by the company
6. Business travel	Transportation of employees for business-related activities
7. Employee commuting	Transportation of employees between their homes and their worksites
13. Downstream leased assets	Operation of assets owned and leased
15. Investments	Operation of investments (including equity and debt investments and project finance)

Glossary

BASIC+ Emissions Categories

<i>Emissions Category</i>	<i>Definition</i>
S1 Stationary Domestic	Combustion of fuel
S1 Stationary Commercial and industrial	Combustion of fuel
S1 Transportation On-road	Combustion of fuel
S1 Transportation Railways	Combustion of fuel
S1 Transportation Aviation and shipping	Combustion of fuel
S1 Transportation Off-road machinery	Combustion of fuel
S2 Stationary Domestic	Grid supplied energy
S2 Stationary Commercial and industrial	Grid supplied energy
S2 Transportation On-road (electric)	Grid supplied energy
S2 Transportation Railways (electric)	Grid supplied energy
S3 Transportation	Transportation of employees for business-related activities/Transportation of employees between their homes and their worksites
S3 Energy	Electricity transmission and distribution losses
S3 Waste	Disposal and treatment of waste generated by the reporting company but not owned or controlled by the company
S3 Wastewater	Disposal and treatment of wastewater generated by the reporting company but not owned or controlled by the company

Agenda Item 7

Committee(s): Natural Environment Board	Dated: 06/02/2025
Subject: Risk Management Update Report	Public report: For Information
This proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes • provides business enabling functions 	Corporate Plan Outcomes: Diverse engaged communities; Vibrant thriving destination; Providing excellent services; Flourishing public spaces; Leading sustainable environment Business enabling functions: Risk Management
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 Environment
Report author:	Joanne Hill, Environment Department

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 the operations.

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 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 at Appendix 2.

Recommendations

- A. **Natural Environment Division Risks:** Members are asked to consider and note the Natural Environment Cross-Divisional Risk Register (at Appendix 1) which summarises the key top-level risks to the charities, and the systems in place to identify and manage risks across the charities.
- B. **City Gardens Risks:** Members are asked to note the content of this report and the City Gardens Summary Risk Register (Appendix 2).

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. Detailed risk registers are presented to Committees every six months. The two interim quarterly reports present summary risk registers, with individual risks being reported in detail by exception. This reporting 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 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 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 at Appendix 1, contains twelve risks (five RED, six AMBER, one GREEN).
11. Since the last report to the Board, all risks have been reviewed and updated. None of the risk scores have changed.
12. The highest risk on the Cross-Divisional register remains 'Decline in condition of assets' which is currently scored at Red 32 (likely to occur, with an extreme impact). The cause of this risk is the backlog of repair and maintenance works required to be undertaken on the charities' built assets. Additional funding to address the backlog of maintenance works across the Corporation has recently been approved. Officers are working closely with colleagues in the City Surveyor's Department to formally assess, allocate and prioritise the funding allocated to the Environment Department to areas of most need. The completion of priority works, along with any alternative funding options identified through the Natural Environment Charity Review should help to reduce the risk.
13. 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 of 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 011: Recruitment of suitable staff** (*AMBER, 12*)
 - **ENV-NE 014: Lack of asset register** (*AMBER, 12*)
 - **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

14. City Gardens is part of the City Operations Division of the Environment Department, alongside Cleansing Services. The City Gardens Risk Register, summarised below and at Appendix 2, contains six risks (one RED, four AMBER, one GREEN) which are owned and managed by the City Gardens Manager and his Management Team.
15. Since the date of the last report to the Natural Environment Board, all risks have been reviewed and updated in the risk management information system. None of the risk scores have changed.
16. 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. A new 'Keeper' has recently recruited who has enforcement duties. The impact of this new role will be monitored over the coming months, and the risk score reassessed in due course.
17. The risk around electric vehicles (lack of suitable electric vehicles to replace existing fleet) has now been closed as the final vehicle awaited as part of the new lease hire arrangement has been received. This brings the City Gardens into compliance with the corporate requirement to operate an electric fleet. One non-electric vehicle remains in use as an electric equivalent is not available.
18. 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 012: Climate and weather** (*GREEN, 3*)

Risk Management Process

19. Across the Environment Department, risk management is a standing agenda item at the regular meetings of local, divisional and departmental management teams.
20. 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.
21. Regular risk management update reports are provided to the Natural Environment Board in accordance with the City's Risk Management Framework and the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

Identification of New Risks

22. New and emerging risks are identified through several channels, including:
- Directly by senior management 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, accidents, severe weather events.

Corporate and Strategic Implications

23. 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.
24. The risk management processes in place in the Environment Department support the delivery of the Corporate Plan, our Departmental high-level Business Plan, local business plans, the Natural Environment Division's core strategies and relevant Corporate Strategies including, but not limited to, the Climate Action; Cultural; Sport and Physical Activity; and Volunteering Strategies.
25. 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

26. 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 the Charities Act 2011.

Appendices

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

Contact




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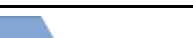








Natural Environment Division Cross-divisional Risk Register (summary)

Generated on: 10 January 2025



















Risk score indicator key.		
		
RED	AMBER	GREEN

Rows are sorted by Risk score

Risk code	Risk title	Current risk score	Current risk score indicator	Target risk score	Target risk score indicator	Direction of travel (since last assessment)	Flight path (last 10 assessments)
ENV-NE 003	Decline in condition of assets	32		24			
ENV-NE 004	Negative impacts from pests and diseases	16		12			
ENV-NE 010	Budget pressures and uncertainty over future funding model	16		12			
ENV-NE 015	Impacts of anti-social behaviour on staff and sites	16		12			
ENV-NE 016	Tree Maintenance	16		12			
ENV-NE 001	Risks to health and safety	12		8			
ENV-NE 002	Adverse impacts of extreme weather and climate change	12		8			
ENV-NE 005	Negative impacts of development and encroachment	12		12			




Appendix 1

Risk code	Risk title	Current risk score	Current risk score indicator	Target risk score	Target risk score indicator	Direction of travel (since last assessment)	Flight path (last 10 assessments)
ENV-NE 011	Recruitment of suitable staff	8		4			
ENV-NE 014	Lack of asset register	12		4			
ENV-NE 013	Negative impacts of visitor pressure	8		6			
ENV-NE 012	Negative impacts of carrying out wildlife management	4		2			

























City Gardens Risk Register (Summary)

Generated on: 10 January 2025



Risk score indicator key.		
		
RED	AMBER	GREEN

Rows are sorted by Risk score

Risk code	Risk title	Current risk score	Current risk score indicator	Target risk score	Target risk score indicator	Direction of travel (since last assessment)	Flight path (last 10 assessments)
ENV-CO-GC 018	Negative impacts of public behaviour	16		6			
ENV-CO-GC 011	Tree and plant diseases and other pests	12		12			
ENV-CO-GC 016	Staff resources	12		8			
ENV-CO-GC 017	Decline in condition of assets	12		8			
ENV-CO-GC 009	Risk to health and safety	8		8			
ENV-CO-GC 012	Climate and weather	3		3			

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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)

(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

		Impact			
		Minor (1)	Serious (2)	Major (4)	Extreme (8)
Likelihood	X				
	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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City of London Corporation Committee Report

<p>Committee(s):</p> <p>Planning and Transportation Committee – For Decision</p> <p>Natural Environment Board – For Information</p> <p>Port Health and Environmental Services – For Information</p>	<p>Dated:</p> <p>21/01/2025</p> <p>06/02/2025</p> <p>20/05/2025</p>
<p>Subject:</p> <p>First Consideration: Enhanced Biodiversity Duties of Public Authorities</p>	<p>Public Report:</p> <p>For Information</p>
<p>This proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes • Provides statutory duties 	<p>Corporate Plan outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading sustainable environment • Flourishing public spaces • Vibrant and thriving destination <p>Statutory duties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced Biodiversity Duty • Biodiversity Net Gain
<p>Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Report of:</p> <p>Executive Director of Environment, Katie Stewart</p>	
<p>Report authors:</p> <p>Gudrun Andrews, Head of Planning Policy</p> <p>Ben Bishop, Environmental Resilience Officer</p> <p>John Harte, Planning Policy Officer</p> <p>Joanna Leyden, Waste Strategy and Biodiversity Group Manager</p>	
<h1>PUBLIC</h1>	

Summary

Under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (“the 2006 Act”) (as amended by the Environment Act 2021 (“the 2021 Act”)), Public Authorities who operate in England are required from time to time to consider what action the authority can take in the exercise of its functions to conserve and enhance biodiversity in England (“the Biodiversity Duty”). The 2021 Act introduced a strengthened Biodiversity Duty, requiring Public Authorities to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity and the first step in this process is to carry out a ‘First Consideration’ of the actions it can take to further the above biodiversity objective through the exercise of their relevant functions. Then, following completion of that consideration to determine policies and specific objectives and take action in light of those considered appropriate to further the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity.

In summary, Public Authorities must:

1. Consider what can be done to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
2. Determine such policies and specific objectives as it considers appropriate for taking action to further the general biodiversity objective, based on the consideration.
3. Act to deliver those policies and objectives.

This First Consideration report is intended to discharge the duty on the City Corporation by setting out what it can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity, outlining actions and objectives relevant to the authority that are to be considered and taken forward for future implementation and reporting.

This report contains the outcome of a review of the current and future actions and objectives of the City Corporation that are being delivered and considered as part of the Biodiversity Duty. It provides the background and context to these requirements.

As part of the ‘First Consideration’ this report reviews actions and objectives for the following services and activities:

- Corporate outcomes
- Planning policy
- Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)
- Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)
- Other relevant current and future activities

This report also outlines the wider consultation processes relevant to the City Corporation in respect of the 2021 Act, primarily the Local Nature Recovery Strategies (“LNRS”) for England.

Finally, the report notes and reviews the on-going management activities of the open spaces that are relevant to the City Corporation’s function as a public authority. These activities have already been progressed and agreed through the adoption of the BAP and other relevant plans.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- Note the statutory requirements and provisions placed on Public Authorities in relation to the Biodiversity Duty, as per the 2006 Act as amended by the 2021 Act.
- Note the reporting requirements of the Biodiversity Duty as set out in paragraphs 11 and 12 of this report.
- Approve this report as a record as part of the City Corporation's statutory First Consideration of the Biodiversity Duty.
- Approve the actions identified in paragraph 19 of this report that are considered appropriate to further the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity.
- Note the Environment Department's Biodiversity and Nature Recovery officer group as the cross departmental working group supporting the actions and objectives of the Biodiversity Duty.

Main Report

Background

1. The 2021 Act strengthened the existing Biodiversity Duty placed on Public Authorities under the 2006 Act. The Biodiversity Duty will contribute to Government targets for the significant improvement of the natural environment laid out in the Environmental Improvement Plan (2023).
2. By 2030 the Government has committed to:
 - Halt the decline in species abundance
 - Protect 30% of UK land.
3. By 2042 the Government has committed to:
 - Increase species abundance by at least 10% from 2030, surpassing 2022 levels
 - Restore or create at least 500,000 ha of a range of wildlife rich habitats
 - Reduce the risk of species extinction
 - Restore 75% of our one million hectares of terrestrial and freshwater protected sites to favourable condition, securing their wildlife value for the long term.
4. Under the Biodiversity Duty, Public Authorities, including the City Corporation in the exercise of its functions as a local authority and local planning authority, have a statutory obligation to 'consider' what they can do to further both the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity. This report is an initial formal step in that consideration.
5. The City Corporation is well positioned to meet these requirements. Biodiversity protection already informs many aspects of the City Corporation's work and is of

strategic importance to the achievement of corporate, planning and wider strategic and operational objectives. Biodiversity, nature conservation and restoration are key priorities of the City Corporation as the governing body for the Square Mile.

6. It is widely recognised that the delivery of biodiversity initiatives creates benefits, not only for nature, but also for residents and businesses by contributing to the City's green infrastructure network and 'ecosystem service' provision, such as cooling, shading, surface water attenuation and wellbeing.
7. Meeting the Biodiversity Duty is a responsibility that is relevant to departments, actions, and decision making that concerns the City Corporation in the exercise of its local authority and local planning authority functions. This report sets out how cross-departmental working arrangements will be utilised to meet the Biodiversity Duty, as well as to ensure effective, synergistic collaboration with non-local authority functions within the City Corporation's broader remit that already make valuable contributions to the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity (such as the City Corporation's separate role as trustee of eight open space charities).

Requirements of the Biodiversity Duty

8. The Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs (Defra) have published guidance on complying with the strengthened Biodiversity Duty. The guidance states that all Public Authorities, which includes local authorities and local planning authorities, operating in England must:
 - Consider what to do to conserve and enhance biodiversity
 - Agree policies and specific objectives based on this consideration
 - Act to deliver these policies and achieve these objectives
 - Report on its Biodiversity Duty actions and outcomes.
9. The first step in this process is completion of the 'First Consideration' of what action the City Corporation can take to further the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity. The duty requires Public Authorities to consider what actions can be taken for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity within their boundaries and requires a 'first consideration' to be made by 1 January 2024. The DEFRA guidance does not mandate a specific format for the First Consideration. While this requirement has not to date been formally demonstrated through a published report, the actions and efforts already undertaken by the City Corporation are believed to satisfy the biodiversity duty requirements. This report documents the results of the review conducted by officers and is being presented now to illustrate how the City Corporation meets and shall meet its ongoing and future biodiversity duty obligations and commitments.
10. This report references ongoing work and actions that can be taken to conserve and enhance biodiversity based on this First Consideration. It sets out how a review of existing policies and objectives have identified how existing work programmes meet the Biodiversity Duty, and which additional actions are

required to be undertaken to achieve these duties but also sets out a framework for reporting actions in future Biodiversity Reports.

11. Public Authorities are also required to produce and publish a 'Biodiversity Report' which must include by law;

- A summary of the action taken, to comply with the Biodiversity Duty;
 - How it plans to comply with the Biodiversity Duty in the next reporting period; and
 - any other information considered appropriate.
- Reports from local planning authorities must also include:
- actions carried out to meet BNG obligations;
 - details of BNGs resulting, or expected to result, from biodiversity gain plans approved;
 - how BNG obligations will be met in the next reporting period; and
 - other information considered appropriate, for example, quantitative data.

12. A Public Authority's first reporting period should be no later than 1 January 2026, that being 24 months from 1 January 2024 based on the First Consideration and including outcome of mandatory BNG. The report must be published within 12 weeks of the reporting period end date. For subsequent Biodiversity Reports they must be produced within 5 years of the end date of the previous reporting period. Each report must be published within 12 weeks of the reporting end date.

13. Agreed policies and objectives must take account of the relevant LNRS. For the City Corporation this is the London LNRS, which is being produced by the Greater London Authority (GLA) for 2025, which is described in the First Consideration.

14. The Biodiversity Report may additionally include optional information that the City Corporation considers it appropriate to include, such as:

- Information about the authority
- Top achievements
- How policies and actions have helped
- Steps taken to raise awareness and community education
- Monitoring and evaluation actions
- Biodiversity highlights and challenges

15. After reviewing the current policies and strategies, it has been determined that the City Corporation's existing policies and objectives are adequate to meet the enhanced Biodiversity Duties. However, a Biodiversity Report must be produced to formally address and report on these requirements.

First Consideration

16. This section outlines the relevant outcomes, policies and objectives that have been reviewed as part of the First Consideration. The First Consideration has no specific structure mandated by Government guidance. It provides an opportunity to highlight the City Corporation's commitment to biodiversity enhancement and summarise the existing policies and objectives that achieve the Biodiversity Duty.
17. The First Consideration takes into account the Corporate Plan outcomes, existing and emerging planning policies, the BNG obligation, Local Nature Recovery Strategy consultation, existing operational plans including the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP), other relevant strategies, internal working groups and monitoring requirements.
18. It is the conclusion of the First Consideration that the City Corporation has or will have in place the appropriate actions, objectives and policies that achieve the Biodiversity Duty, which will be reviewed when required to ensure that these are still applicable and relevant to the City Corporation's public functions.

Actions

19. This report sets the following actions to be agreed by members:
 - Undertake a regular review of relevant actions, policies and guidance to ensure they achieve the Biodiversity Duty.
 - Implement relevant plans and strategies that align with emerging strategies and frameworks including the London Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
 - Deliver the Biodiversity Report for January 2026 with 12 weeks of the reporting end date.

Primary objective

20. The City Corporation has several key policies and commitments which achieve the objective to 'conserve and enhance' biodiversity for nature and people.
21. The primary objective of the First Consideration is for a Public Authority to consider how it can further the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in the exercise of their functions. Consideration should be had to ensure that all relevant services and functions achieve the enhanced Biodiversity Duty, aligning with wider corporate objectives. This report outlines these objectives and aligns them in response to the Biodiversity Duty, to set a direction for statutory responsibilities and the wider biodiversity objectives of the City Corporation.
22. The most significant strategies and plans are the Corporate Plan 2024-29, the adopted Local Plan 2015, emerging City Plan 2040, and the BAP 2021-26.

Corporate Objectives

23. The Corporate Plan 2024–29 sets out six key outcomes, three are directly applicable to the Biodiversity Duty of Public Authorities and wider objectives for biodiversity and nature conservation.
24. **Leading Sustainable Environment;** the plan sets out the objective to act as a leader on environmental sustainability and enhance it in all aspects of the City Corporation. Relevant actions include the requirement for increases in biodiversity from development.
25. **Flourishing Public Spaces;** the plan commits to major capital investment into the civic infrastructure of the City Corporation to secure flourishing public spaces. Relevant actions include ensuring that opens spaces are thriving, accessible and enrich people's lives.
26. **Vibrant and Thriving Destination;** the outcome focuses on attracting business and people to a dynamic location, offering a world-leading culture and leisure offering thriving destination where everyone prospers. Relevant actions include adopting the City Plan 2040 for sustainable growth and development direction and provide more space for walking and provide more space for walking and making the City's streets more accessible.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

27. BNG is a component of the 2021 Act and meeting the Biodiversity Duty. Under BNG regulations all qualifying developments (with some exemptions) must deliver at least a 10% increase in biodiversity value relative to the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat.
28. From 12 February 2024 BNG became a statutory requirement, however many developments sites within the Square Mile currently have baselines of zero and therefore would be exempt from national requirements in line with the de minimis exemption. This exemption only applies to development if the following two conditions are met:
 - a. the development must not impact on any onsite priority habitat; and
 - b. if there is an impact on other onsite habitat, that impact must be on less than 25 square metres (e.g. less than a 5m by 5m square) of onsite habitat with a biodiversity value greater than zero and on less than 5 metres of onsite linear habitat (such as a hedgerow).
29. This would include all existing developments lower than 25sq.m of habitat or 5m of on-site linear habitats (such as hedgerows).
30. The Development Management Team in the Environment Department are responsible for ensuring that BNG is secured through the development process (in its role as the local planning authority) in accordance with the statutory requirements. This will be through the use of planning conditions or through the

S106 (planning obligations (Town and Country Planning Act 1990)) process. Through its monitoring processes the Planning Policy Team will check that developers meet reporting requirements upon them with a view that the habitats secured through the planning process are maintained throughout the minimum 30-year lifetime of the requirement.

31. The BNG section of the first Biodiversity Report will include:

- A summary of the actions carried out to meet BNG obligations
- Details of biodiversity gains resulting, or expected to result, from BNG
- A summary of plans to meet BNG obligations in the next reporting period
- Any other information required to be included or deemed useful for inclusion.

Planning Policy

32. The adopted Local Plan includes high-level objectives to promote biodiversity while protecting and providing for new open space. In the current adopted Local Plan (2015) the encouragement and promotion of green infrastructure is set out in various policies including Policy DM10.2 (Design of green roofs and walls) and Policy DM19.2 (Biodiversity and urban greening).

33. One of the overarching Environmental Objectives of the emerging Local Plan (City Plan 2040) is to deliver urban greening and greater biodiversity across the Square Mile. The proposed policy approach sets out city-specific requirements which go beyond the statutory requirements and will be subject to an independent examination in 2025. Several policies guide future decisions on planning applications in regard to urban greening and biodiversity.

34. To inform the development of the City Plan 2040 BNG policies, external consultants were commissioned to prepare evidence-based reports and provide advice on the most appropriate mechanisms to use when reviewing BNG proposals. A BNG Study was published in November 2023 and a further report on implementation is underway.

35. A high proportion of sites in the City have little to no biodiversity, as such the mandatory minimum 10% BNG (as described above) is not considered an appropriate mechanism for delivering meaningful biodiversity improvements in the Square Mile. Therefore, the approach of emerging City Plan Policy OS4 seeks to deliver enhanced BNG from major developments (using a rate of 3 biodiversity units per hectare, as opposed to 10%) and includes major proposals which would not have been captured under the statutory BNG processes. It is envisaged the Local Plan will be adopted by 2026.

36. The emerging Planning for Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document will include additional planning guidance on the approach to urban greening and biodiversity within developments. This includes detail on the application of the statutory requirements and the relevant policies in the adopted Local Plan 2015 emerging City Plan 2040 plan.

London Local Nature Recovery Strategy

37. The London Local Nature Recovery Strategy (London LNRS) is being delivered by the Greater London Authority (GLA) as one of the 48 'Responsible Authorities' across England.
38. The objective of the strategies is to agree priorities for nature recovery and propose actions to achieve them. This will include a local habitat map and a written statement of biodiversity priorities.
39. Responsible Authorities are required to carry out consultation with local planning authorities, in London this includes the 32 boroughs and the City Corporation in its capacity as local planning authority.
40. Responsible Authorities should also engage relevant stakeholders such as landowners and managers, government organisations, environmental charities, businesses and other community groups. To date the City Corporation has been represented in this consultation in its capacity as a local planning authority through the London Borough's Biodiversity Forum, and through stakeholder workshops.

Biodiversity Action Plan

41. The current BAP for 2021 – 2026 aims to provide 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.
42. The actions are grouped into four key areas:
 - Open Spaces and Habitat Management
 - The Built Environment
 - Education and Community Engagement
 - Data Collection, Surveys and Monitoring
43. The BAP has a dedicated partnership group made up both internal and external stakeholders who are involved in various aspects of biodiversity and whose responsibility it is to progress the actions of the BAP. This group is also responsible for the review of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) within the Square Mile and the generation of SINC management plans is a key action of the BAP.
44. At the half-way point between commencement of the BAP and the planned end date, good progress has been made across the various actions with the overall completion level of the action plan sitting at 47%. There are two items which have been successfully completed, 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 including elements which are outside the control of the BAP action owners such as policy documents being adopted, and London wide legislation being created.

SINC Management Plans

45. SINC are non-statutory designated sites which are afforded protection within local planning. The objective of designating SINC is to protect and enhance the best sites for nature within a local context to ensure that sites are appropriately selected and managed within the context of local and regional planning.
46. SINC of borough or local significance are adopted through the local planning process and submitted to relevant bodies for advice on selecting and confirming SINC (save in the case of sites which are of Metropolitan Importance which are designated by the Mayor of London). In London guidance and advice on selecting and confirming a SINC is provided by the London Wildlife Sites Board.
47. The Square Mile has 10 adopted SINC. Within the BAP 2021 – 26, an action includes implementing management plans to prioritise conservation as a key management objective for SINC.
48. Currently three sites have adopted management plans. The aim is to ensure all adopted and proposed SINC have active management plans which are reviewed on a regular basis. The current action applies only to sites managed by the City Corporation. However, it aims encourage existing third party management plans to demonstrate that sites are in positive conservation management.

Open spaces outside of the Square Mile

49. **Bunhill Fields and Burial Ground** is approximately 1.6 ha and is a SINC of Borough Importance in the London Borough of Islington. It is designated Grade I on the Historic England National Register of Historic Parks and Gardens.
50. The site is managed and maintained by the City Gardens team. The site is of both heritage and nature conservation importance and has adopted a 'Conservation Management Plan' which aims to conserve and enhance both the historic and ecological value of the site.
51. **City of London Cemetery and Crematorium** is approximately 81 ha and is a SINC of Borough Importance in the London Borough of Newham. It is designated Grade I on the Historic England National Register of Historic Parks and Gardens.
52. The site is managed by the Port Health and Public Protection division's Cemetery and Crematorium Team.
53. Policies and objectives for the management of these sites are attributed to the City Corporation's local authority responsibilities and are therefore subject to the Biodiversity Duty. In the Biodiversity Report specific actions taken will be reported on.

Local Nature Recovery Plan 2026 – 2031 (proposed)

54. Local Nature Recovery Plans (LNRP) are emerging plans that incorporate actions for biodiversity to restore nature. The objective of the plan is to set out 'nature recovery areas' identifying opportunities and aligning with local strategic objectives.
55. With the conclusion of the BAP 2021 – 2026, the City Corporation may seek to adopt a new plan for biodiversity within the Square Mile. Following the adoption of the London LNRS, options to develop and adopt a LNRP for the Square Mile should be reviewed.
56. The LNRP will replace the action-based approach of the BAP and focus on a strategic spatial framework supported by key actions for the Square Mile. The development of a LNRP will take into consideration the existing hierarchy of policies and strategies and requirements from regional policy such as The London Plan 2021 which requires boroughs to prepare green infrastructure strategies.
57. Work to progress this option is yet to be agreed and this is at this time a suggested activity beyond the conclusion of the City Corporation's first Biodiversity Report.

Climate Action Strategy

58. The City Corporation invested in its Climate Action Strategy in 2020, setting out four targets including 'building climate resilience'. As a result, the City Corporation invested £6.8 million in the 'Cool Streets and Greening Programme', which aims to incorporate resilience measures and greening into the Square Mile's streets and public spaces.
59. Phase 3 of the programme 'City Greening and Biodiversity' includes projects to enhance biodiversity within the Square Mile through identifying projects to establish green corridors, create new open spaces and accelerate tree planting.

Other strategies and plans

60. Other operational strategies and plans may have impacts or implications for biodiversity, such public realm, transport and lighting. These should consider and review all opportunities to enhance biodiversity within their scope and take necessary steps to implement possible actions.

Biodiversity and Nature Recovery Group

61. To coordinate duties and wider biodiversity objectives a cross-departmental officer working group has been established and formally recognised by the Town Clerk's SLT. The group is chaired by senior officers from relevant divisions and takes place quarterly.
62. The primary function of the group is to progress actions, review objectives and steer relevant work prior to formal governance and approval. The group enables

and streamlines external communication and engagement, such as the on-going consultations with Responsible Authorities delivering LNRS.

63. The group is comprised primarily of officers from the Environment Department including representation from Planning & Development, City Operations, Natural Environment and Port Health and Public Protection. Other services are also engaged and relevant officers are invited to support wider Corporate objectives for biodiversity.
64. The group provides wider benefits of collaboration across different teams to support developmental opportunities and knowledge dissemination.

City of London Corporation Natural Environment Open Spaces

65. The City Corporation holds and manages 4400 ha of open space in its capacity as charity trustee of eight charities. These responsibilities are separate to the City Corporation's public authority functions and so are not included within the First Consideration.
66. As a landowner and manager the City Corporation has been consulted on relevant LNRS including London, Essex, Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes and Surrey. These are all delivered separately by the relevant Responsible Authorities.
67. Through the Biodiversity and Nature Recovery Group, officers have coordinated communications through the City's Consultation on relevant biodiversity strategies for London and the Southeast including the LNRSs.

Monitoring

68. As set out above, the reporting of quantitative data is an optional component of the Biodiversity Report, but should be included where considered appropriate. To address the Biodiversity Duty, and accurately review progress on agreed policies and actions, biodiversity metrics associated with BNG and other objectives will be tracked and monitored in accordance with national guidance. The City Corporation will robustly monitor planning applications which fall under the statutory BNG requirements. When applicable, it will also monitor the outcomes and requirements of the emerging City Plan policy. To do so most effectively it is also exploring appropriate software on how best to do this moving forward.
69. The BAP is creating a structured approach to monitoring biodiversity within the Square Mile. This approach will be supported by the work of the BAP Partnership Group, volunteer groups, university led research and innovative technologies in order to capture a range of information. This will enable a better gauge of the biodiversity within the City and highlight areas that need greater attention.

70. The adoption of management plans for SINC's and improvements will be monitored and those which include monitoring as part of the management objectives will be incorporated into the emerging monitoring framework.
71. Actions and objectives implemented as a result of the Biodiversity Duty and first consideration will be tracked to monitor the progress of the City Corporation's Biodiversity Duty. This will be included in the Biodiversity Report and help inform future action for biodiversity within the Square Mile.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Strategic implications

72. There are no expected strategic implications. Meeting the Biodiversity Duty as an organisation should support the Corporate Plan outcomes, specifically: Leading Sustainable Environment; Flourishing Public Spaces and Vibrant Thriving Destination.

Resource implications

73. At present there are no additional resource implications, the following paragraph's outline the current and expected resourcing as a result of the relevant activities.
74. In its capacity as a local planning authority, the City Corporation engages constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis on strategic matters in plan-making, including sustainable development, land use and strategic infrastructure. Officers from the Environment Department regularly attend for example seminars and workshops on biodiversity matters including those delivered by the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) and the London Borough's Biodiversity Forum (LBBF).
75. The LBBF brings together local authority ecologists and planners from across London Boroughs, and includes representation from the Greater London Authority (GLA) and GiGL – the capital's environmental records centre.
76. Current officer resource within the City's local authority services includes:
- Head of Planning Policy responsible for the team delivering relevant policies;
 - A Planning Policy Officer responsible for City Plan policies on urban greening and biodiversity;
 - Waste Strategy and Biodiversity Group Manager responsible for the Square Mile BAP its actions and progression
 - An Environmental Resilience Officer with a background in ecology and greening whose role is to promote biodiversity measures in relation to environmental resilience.
77. The City Corporation's senior leadership has endorsed the adoption of an officer working group focusing on Biodiversity and Nature Recovery at a meeting of Town Clerk's SLT on 15 October 2024. The group is a cross-departmental

working group which aims to support wider biodiversity objectives and actions, including the enhanced Biodiversity Duty.

78. The City Corporation should continue to review the resource implications relevant to the Biodiversity Duty and wider biodiversity objectives. BNG and wider strategic objectives for biodiversity may in future require additional resource, to ensure that the duties outlined in the 2006 Act are met. Other activities may include coordinating and ensuring a wider organisational approach is taken to address biodiversity impacts under other functions of the City Corporation.

Policy Implications

79. Policy implications are addressed and listed in the **Planning Policy** section of this report. Policies have taken into account the revisions to relevant legislation as a result of the Act 2021 Act.

Financial implications

80. There are currently no expected financial implications. As the local planning authority for the square mile the City Corporation currently receives an annual figure of c.£26,000 from Defra to cover expenditure incurred in delivering BNG.

Legal implications

81. The 2021 Act introduces mandatory BNG and provides for a strengthened Biodiversity Duty for Public Authorities. The legal implications of the Biodiversity Duty and the mandatory minimum 10% BNG (where applicable) are set out in this report. The requirement for the BNG uplift will be secured by a condition which is automatically applied to a planning permission by virtue of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This condition and any supplementary conditions and planning obligations, secured in connection with the uplift, can be enforced by the local planning authority through the planning regime.

82. Once adopted the City Plan 2040 will form the starting point for decisions taken on planning applications within the City of London, as decisions must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Sustainability SPD in particular (and other policy documents referred to herein) will be material considerations in the decision making process.

Risk implications

83. Not applicable.

Equalities implications

84. Due regard has been given to potential equality implications which includes taking into consideration any impact on groups with protected characteristics. After consideration it has been concluded there will be no detrimental impact to any group or protected characteristic as outlined in the Equalities Act 2010 or the Public Sector Equality Duty

(PSED) and all duties (including that of section 149 Equalities Act 2010-PSED) in this regard have been appropriately executed with no further action required at this time.

Climate implications

85. Climate change and ecological collapse are interlinked. The strengthened Biodiversity Duty, BNG and the wider efforts to restore nature across London and the Southeast will deliver multiple co-benefits of climate adaptation and resilience and support nature recovery.

Security implications

86. Not applicable.

Conclusion

87. This report outlines the duty on and the current position of the City Corporation in relation to the expectations of Public Authorities under the 2006 Act and the 2021 Act and related activities.

88. The requirement for the 'First Consideration' requires the City Corporation to consider what action it can properly take, consistent with the proper exercise of its functions, to further the general Biodiversity Objective. In line with this duty this report sets out the relevant policies and objectives that City Corporation has in place (and those which are being progressed/updated) and considers appropriate for taking action to further the general biodiversity objective, and the actions the City Corporation are taking in light of those policies and objectives, to further that objective. The City Corporation are required to report on these activities by January 2026. Activities included in this report are already being progressed and are resourced, including the development of the City Plan 2040 policies, the progression of the Biodiversity Action Plan and other relevant projects.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – 'None'

Background Papers

Planning and Transportation Committee For information, Report entitled 'Biodiversity and Ecology' dated 18 July 2023.

Biodiversity Net Gain Study published in November 2023 (Greengage Environmental – commissioned by the City of London).

Biodiversity Action Plan 2021-2026 Progress Review Sept 2024 (NEB for information Oct 2024)

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Committee(s): Natural Environment Board	Dated: 06/02/2025
Subject: Environment Department high-level Business Plan 2025-30	Public report: For Decision
This proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes • provides business enabling functions 	Corporate Plan Outcomes: Diverse engaged communities; Vibrant thriving destination; Providing excellent services; Flourishing public spaces; Leading sustainable environment Business enabling functions: Business Planning; Resource allocation and management; Risk Management; Health and Safety; EEDI.
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 Environment
Report author:	Joanne Hill, Environment Department

Summary

This report presents for approval the high-level Business Plan for the Environment Department for 2025-30. Due to the size and scope of the department, the priority workstreams, performance measures and financial information has been divided into three sections, one for each of our three key Committee ‘clusters’. The front and back pages of the Plan contain information which relates to the whole of the Environment Department and these pages are being presented to all Committees along with the relevant Committee-specific workstream section.

The plan presented in this report (Appendix A) contains Section C which provides a top-level strategic overview of activity of the service areas which fall within the remit of the Natural Environment Board. Once approved, the Plan will be adopted from April 2025.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- i. Note the factors taken into consideration in compiling the Environment Department's high-level Business Plan 2025-30; and
- ii. Approve, subject to the incorporation of any changes sought by the Board, Section C of the Environment Department's high-level Business Plan 2025-30 (presented at Appendix A), which covers the service areas for which the Natural Environment Board is responsible.

Main Report

Background

1. In recent years, every department has produced a standardised single-year high-level Business Plan, in alignment with the corporate business planning process. However, the organisation is now intending to transition to five-year high-level Business Plans, aligned with the Corporate Plan 2024-29 and associated strategies. The Environment Department is one of two pathfinder departments which have developed five-year high-level Business Plans commencing in 2025/26, with others due to follow from 2026/27.
2. The Environment Department's high-level Business Plan 2025-30 sets out the priority workstreams for the department for the next five years and the detailed actions for 2025/26. The Plan will be reviewed and refreshed annually to include details of the following year's deliverables and actions.
2. The high-level Business Plan 2025-30 aligns to our Corporate Plan 2024-2029 and demonstrates how the department's work supports delivery of the Corporate Plan outcomes. It also indicates the estimated funding and people resources associated with each priority workstream. As a high-level plan, this document does not capture the granularity of departmental work but gives an overall picture of departmental activity, trends where applicable and direction of travel.
3. Detailed five-year business plans for each of the Natural Environment charities have developed alongside the high-level Business Plan; these will be received by the relevant charity management committees for approval and subsequent performance reporting.

Environment Department high-level Business Plan for 2025-30

3. This report presents, at Appendix A, the draft high-level Business Plan for 2025-30 for the services of the Environment Department which fall within the remit of the Natural Environment Board, ie:
 - The Natural Environment Division
 - City Gardens.

4. As a pathfinder for a wider organisational transition from 2026/27, the Environment Department has moved to a five-year high-level Business Plan. The Plan sets out the priority workstreams for 2025-30 and the actions that will be undertaken in 2025/26 to deliver them. The Plan will be reviewed and refreshed annually to detail the actions for the following year.

Prioritisation and alignment to Corporate Plan 2024-29

5. The priority workstreams for 2025-30 were identified by the Environment Department's Senior Leaders and their management teams, in consultation with other members of staff. The establishment of these core workstreams enables management teams to set appropriate objectives and action plans to achieve the overarching goals during the years ahead.
6. The workstreams were selected to reflect key strategic links. They demonstrate how the department supports delivery of the Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes and other cross-cutting strategies, programmes and priority projects, such as Destination City and the Climate Action Strategy. The Natural Environment Division's priority workstreams reflect the Division's core strategies.
7. Please note, that due to the high-level nature of the Plan, the workstreams do not include all elements of the teams' work; there is a significant amount of 'business as usual' activity that continues alongside the priority workstreams.

Resources utilised

8. As part of a pilot prioritisation exercise which began in 2024/25, every City Corporation department has again been required to include an estimation of the budget and people resource associated with each workstream. These figures are expressed as percentages of the overall revenue budget and Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) staff.
9. It has not been possible to determine accurate allocation of financial or people resources for each workstream; very few are discrete projects with specific budgets, and very few members of staff spend specific proportions of their time on one workstream. Therefore, the figures shown in the Business Plan are very much estimates. Should this exercise be repeated in future years, accurate methodology will need to be designed and applied to ensure consistency across and within departments.

Performance measurement

10. Progress made against priority workstreams is measured by monitoring key performance indicators and achievement of milestones. Performance is reviewed regularly by Directors and their Management Teams and is reported to your Board every six months to enable Member scrutiny. The Town Clerk's Executive Leadership Board also regularly reviews the progress of every department's Business Plan workstreams and performance measures.

11. The priority workstreams identified in this high-level Business Plan are part of the 'golden thread' that flows through the charity business plans, local team management plans, and the individual performance plans of members of staff, all of which provide further methods of assessing progress. This also enables individual officers to fully understand how their work feeds into charity, divisional, departmental and corporate objectives and outcomes.

Synergies and combatting silos

12. Workstreams have been linked to corporate priorities wherever possible. Other Corporate strategies, programmes and projects are referenced throughout.

13. The front and back pages of the Plan contain information which relates to the whole of the Environment Department and these pages are being presented to all Committees along with the relevant Committee-specific workstream section.

14. Colleagues across the department are working collaboratively to identify synergies and break down siloed working practices. As a key enabling function, the Department's Business Services Division works to align common processes and procedures to achieve consistency. This Division leads cross-departmentally on areas including business planning; risk management; health and safety; workforce planning; Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion; communications and engagement; information and data management; and GIS mapping.

Departmental Operational Property Assets Utilisation Assessment

15. The Environment Department's staff are based across 25 sites throughout London and the south-east. The Department holds approximately 340 physical assets, almost 270 of which are at its Natural Environment sites.

16. As part of the Corporation's Operational Property Review Programme, the Department has undertaken a detailed utilisation assessment of all allocated operational property assets beyond Guildhall. A separate detailed utilisation of accommodation allocated to the Environment Department within the Guildhall complex was undertaken over a four-week period in November/December 2024. The results of both exercises have been returned to the City Surveyor's Department.

17. Over the coming year, a departmental Asset Plan will be produced to enable effective management and development of these assets to ensure they add value to the organisation and the natural environment charities while being fit for purpose, well maintained, and safe for our staff and service users.

Corporate and strategic implications

Strategic implications - The Environment Department's high-level Business Plan is aligned to Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes. There are common themes woven throughout the Department's high-level Business Plan which highlight our contribution and commitment to the delivery of the Corporate Plan, Destination City, the Climate Action

Strategy, the People Strategy and other key cross-cutting programmes and projects. Any new strategies will be reviewed as they are approved, and consideration given as to how the services can and will support their delivery.

Security implications - None

Financial implications - The high-level Business Plan has been produced in liaison with Chamberlain's Department and takes into consideration opportunities to reduce expenditure and increase income in order to make necessary savings.

Equalities implications - The Department has an established Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EEDI) Working Group. The Group has developed a Departmental EEDI Plan which aligns with the Corporate EDI Plan. Members of the group lead on a range of EEDI actions, including those set out in the Business Plan, to ensure compliance with the PSED across the department.

Resourcing implications - Any changes to resources will be brought to the relevant Committee(s).

Risk Implications – 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. Risks to achieving the objectives set out in the Business Plan are identified and managed in accordance with the City of London Risk Management Framework and the requirements of the Charity Commission where relevant.

Climate Implications - The work of the Natural Environment Division and City Gardens team supports the delivery of the Corporate Climate Action Strategy through delivery of relevant workstreams; updates on progress are reported to this Committee.

Conclusion

This report presents, for approval, the high-level Business Plan for 2025-30 for the services of the Environment Department which fall within the remit of the Natural Environment Board. Once approved, the Plan will be updated in line with any changes requested by the Board and will be adopted in April 2025.

Appendices

- Appendix A – Environment Department high-level Business Plan 2025-30

Joanne Hill

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ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT HIGH-LEVEL BUSINESS PLAN 2025-2030

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Environment Department enablers



Executive Director's introduction

The Environment Department is the largest and most complex department in the Corporation with over 800 staff working in 25 locations, providing key front-line services to the City and beyond. The work of the department is overseen by more than eight Committees.

Over the next five years, the Department will deliver **world-class places and infrastructure** across the Square Mile – where it plays a **key role in supporting growth and investment** – as well as the many assets it manages beyond the City's boundaries.

In doing so, the Department – still relatively new in being a single Department, at three years on – will continue to build its approach to **stronger, more robust management of its services**, with the aim of providing a **model for delivering excellent services sustainably and in a way that is more open and engaging** with its service users, partners and stakeholders.

The Department will become an **increasingly proactive and constructive corporate partner**, developing a reputation for working across siloes and contributing as positively to the direction of the Corporation as to its own aims.

Katie Stewart, Executive Director Environment



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About us: Our purpose, aims and impacts

The Environment Department *Shaping future environments and protecting current ones.*

Our aims:

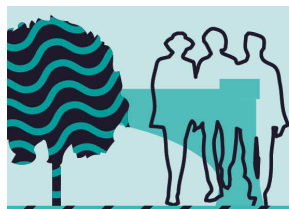
- Deliver transformative, high profile, and strategic infrastructure and public realm schemes, that will result in major economic, social and cultural benefits.
- Encourage the construction of high quality, safe and inclusive buildings.
- Provide spaces for businesses to grow, improve transport and maintain our unique historic environment.
- Create an inclusive, accessible and healthy Square Mile with clean streets and air.
- Support and advise businesses, including SMEs and licensed premises, to enable them to thrive and to protect consumers.
- Protect and promote public, animal and environmental health, including at the borders.
- Protect and enhance the Corporation's green and open spaces and celebrate local heritage.
- Address long term issues such as climate resilience to deliver sustainable built and natural environments.

Our achievements, impacts and outcomes in 2024/25

During 2024/25 our teams continued to work in partnership with internal and external partners to fulfil their statutory duties and deliver excellent services, adapting to the requirements of new and changing legislation and government demands. Progress against key workstreams and performance measures remained on track with targets consistently achieved or exceeded.

We developed and delivered strategies, policies, and actions which will have positive impacts on the environment, the public, consumers and businesses, including:

- Progressed the City Plan 2040 through the next stages of development.
- Published the SME Delivery Strategy and Circular Economy Framework.
- Gained approval for a new Air Quality Strategy and a revised Transport Strategy.
- The Licensing Team refreshed and published several policies which will support businesses, including SMEs, to thrive in the City.
- Played a key role in delivery of Destination City, the Climate Action Strategy and other key Corporate strategies and programmes.
- Began to implement the Natural Environment Division strategies to protect and improve our natural habitats, and ensure they are more accessible, sustainable, and preserved for public benefit.



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Our key objectives and priority workstreams and major projects

Priority workstreams 2025/30

Although each of our workstreams is specific to relevant Committees, there are common themes woven throughout that highlight our contribution and commitment to the delivery of the Corporate Plan, Destination City, the Climate Action Strategy and other key strategies and programmes.

City development and economic growth: We will seek to facilitate growth through our planning policies which aim for office development of the highest quality, ensuring that offices are designed to provide sustainable, flexible floorspace that meets the varied needs of occupiers.

Excellent local authority services: We will continue to provide excellent statutory and regulatory services to ensure a safe and clean built environment and public realm, and protect and promote public, animal and environmental health and consumer protection.

Climate and environment: We will provide a climate resilient and environmentally enhanced city through the protection and enhancement of the biodiversity of our open spaces; delivery of Climate Action Strategy programmes and our Air Quality Strategy; consideration of sustainability, carbon emissions and biodiversity as part of planning decisions; and the promotion of Circular Economy principles.

Business support: The implementation of the SME Strategy will aid start-up businesses and SMEs to scale and grow, helping to maintain London's position as the leading global financial and professional services centre. We will support licensed premises to thrive, while balancing their needs with those of residents and visitors, helping to deliver the Destination City vision.

Healthy and inclusive environment: The facilities and services at our open spaces will be further developed to offer welcoming places that visitors from all backgrounds and abilities are comfortable to explore. City streets will be well maintained with increased accessibility delivered through streets and spaces projects. New planning advice and guidance will be published to improve inclusivity and accessibility, and the City of London's Access Team will be reformed and expanded to increase engagement with disabled people based on lived experience.



Operational capability and interdepartmental collaboration

As we continue to develop the Department over the next five years, we will take the opportunity to exploit the advantages of our size and extensive remit: we deliver a vast range of services and have the largest workforce of all city departments, but this also means we have a vast range of skills, knowledge and expertise among our staff. We will look for synergies and opportunities to work together; we will focus on our similarities as well as celebrating our differences.

Our people: We will support delivery of the People Strategy and build 'Brilliant Basics'. Health and safety will be embedded in all our decisions, processes and actions, and we will ensure compliance with the Corporate Health and Safety Framework. Our staff survey action plan, People Plan, EEDI activities and focus on learning and development will help us to understand and meet the needs of our staff and enable our talent to grow. We will promote a departmental culture that ensures staff feel valued, supported through change, and respected by their managers and colleagues. By helping individuals to understand how their work contributes to that of the wider department, and Corporation, we aim to enhance job satisfaction and staff retention.

Our corporate partners: Officers will continue to work collaboratively with colleagues across other corporate departments, as intelligent clients, to break down silos and realise efficiencies. We liaise closely with the City Surveyor's Department to review, assess and progress essential repairs and maintenance to the approximately 340 physical assets we hold. Through production of a departmental Asset Plan, we will manage and develop these assets to ensure they add value to the charities and organisation while being fit for purpose, well maintained, and safe for our staff and service users.

Our external stakeholders: We will continue to communicate with our stakeholders appropriately and take their feedback into consideration when shaping our services. This will include formal consultation on new policies and strategies; planning applications; proposed changes to the public realm; and regular communication of news to local groups and customers.

Our finances: By developing financially sustainable business models, we will ensure we consistently deliver high quality services. We will achieve this through proactive budget management, prioritisation and seeking value for money and opportunities for income generation. Across the department, we will seek ways to improve what we do and how we do it; embracing change, enhancing our use of data and adopting new ways of working and technologies that will make us more efficient and cost effective.



SECTION C: Natural Environment Board

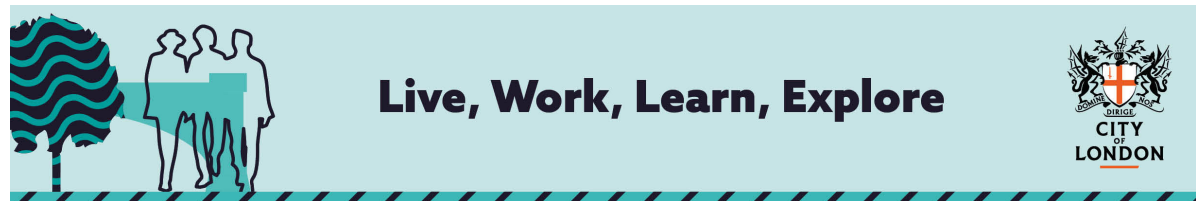
This section covers the service areas which fall within the remit of the Natural Environment Board:

- Natural Environment Division
- City Gardens

Priority workstream and key 2025/26 deliverables	Funding allocation approx.%*	People resource approx.%*	Corporate Plan 2024-2029 Outcomes	Outcome focused Performance measures	Outcomes / Impacts
a) Nature conservation and resilience (incl. climate mitigation and adaptation).					
1. Develop CSS and Woodland Management Schemes across our sites. Ongoing 2. Ensure effective engagement with the planning system to influence the protection of our open spaces in the most relevant way. Ongoing 3. Deliver the Climate Action Strategy's Carbon Removals Project to protect and enhance carbon sequestration level. 2027	29%	40%	Leading Sustainable Environment Flourishing Public Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to 100% of Local Authority planning consultations. • Increase carbon sequestration by 0.21kt per annum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect and enhance the biodiversity of our open spaces. • Greater resilience of our open spaces within a wider interconnected natural landscape. • The Corporation will meet its target of being Carbon neutral by 2027.

N.B. The first four Natural Environment Division workstreams reflect the suite of core Natural Environment Strategies. The performance measures are taken from the strategies and will be developed and incorporated as appropriate in the detailed Business Plan of each charity.

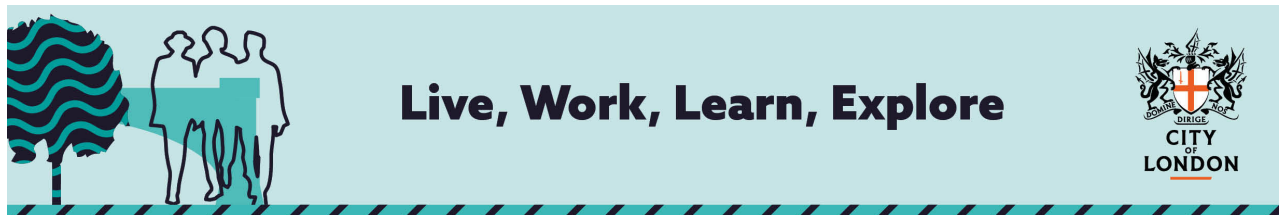
* Funding allocation and people resource %s are estimates. Funding is shown as a percentage of the total Natural Environment Division and City Gardens 2025/26 revenue budget. People resource is shown as a percentage of the total number of FTE in the Natural Environment Division and City Gardens.



Priority workstream and key 2025/26 deliverables	Funding allocation approx. %	People resource approx. %	Corporate Plan 2024-2029 Outcomes	Outcome focused Performance measures	Outcomes / Impacts
<p>b) Community engagement</p> <p>1. Build and sustain meaningful and lasting partnerships with the communities we serve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop volunteering programmes across our sites. Ongoing <p>2. Continue to develop the quality and range of our communications to ensure they reach, and are understood by, our communities and service users.</p>	<p>20%</p>	<p>19%</p>	<p>Diverse Engaged Communities</p> <p>Leading Sustainable Environment</p> <p>Providing Excellent Services</p> <p>Flourishing Public Spaces</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased number of volunteer work hours. Greater number of visitors to the open spaces' pages on the CoL website. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased advocacy and volunteering to support the CoL and its green spaces. Easy access to information about the Corporation, its open spaces, and our management practices.

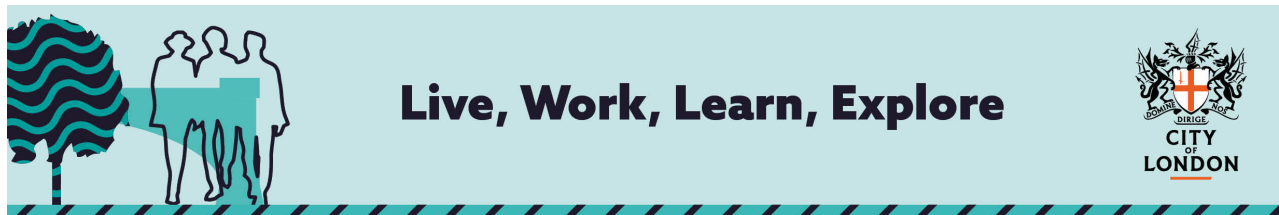
Priority workstream and key 2025/26 deliverables	Funding allocation approx. %	People resource approx. %	Corporate Plan 2024-2029 Outcomes	Outcome focused Performance measures	Outcomes / Impacts
<p>c) Access and recreation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Upgrade and install new on-site signage to enhance wayfinding and access to information. 2. Provide easily accessible and clear pre-visit information through digital platforms. 3. Build understanding and knowledge about the open spaces through engagement and instruction. 	<p>20%</p>	<p>17%</p>	<p>Flourishing public spaces</p> <p>Leading Sustainable Environment</p> <p>Diverse Engaged Communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater % of public facilities with accessibility information available on our website. • Seasonal engagement sessions provided on site (minimum four per site each year). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We provide the best possible visitor journey. All visitors are equally welcomed. • Our spaces are welcoming places that visitors from all backgrounds and abilities are comfortable to explore. • Catalyse improved behaviours in our spaces where needed.

Priority workstream and key 2025/26 deliverables	Funding allocation approx. %	People resource approx.%	Corporate Plan 2024-2029 Outcomes	Outcome focused Performance measures	Outcomes / Impacts
d) Culture, heritage and learning					
<p>1. Develop our communities of interest.</p> <p>2. Provide more opportunities for children to engage in outdoor play.</p> <p>3. Protect and enhance our built heritage, landscape heritage and archaeological assets and promote them as part of our visitor and learning offers.</p>	7%	8%	<p>Diverse engaged communities.</p> <p>Vibrant thriving destination.</p> <p>Flourishing public spaces.</p> <p>Providing excellent services.</p> <p>Leading sustainable environment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased number of visitors to Keats House and The Monument per annum. Increased number of learning and play participants per annum. Reduction in the number of heritage assets on the Heritage at Risk Register. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We have strong relationships with our communities of interest resulting in their effective support for our open spaces. Our learning participants express increased confidence, well-being and connection to nature. Our heritage assets are well protected for future generations and are visited by diverse audiences.

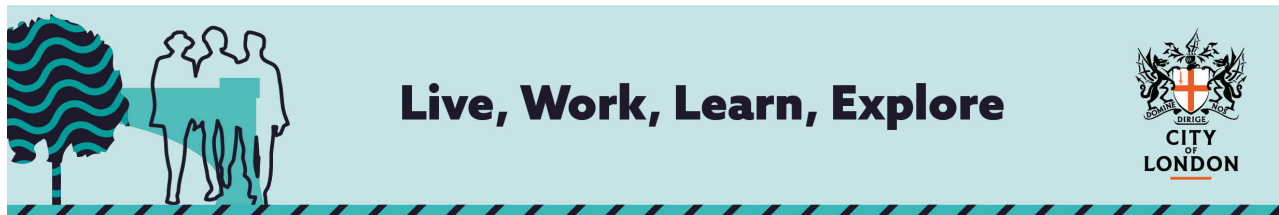


Priority workstream and key 2025/26 deliverables	Funding allocation approx. %	People resource approx. %	Corporate Plan 2024-2029 Outcomes	Outcome focused Performance measures	Outcomes / Impacts
e) Develop a sustainable business model					
<p>1. Begin to implement the recommendations of Natural Environment Charity Review.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update Charity Financial models to allow for improved asset management and to improve financial security for the charities. 2025-2030 <p>2. New agreement and changed ways of working/governance regarding management and condition of assets.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with CSD to ensure improved condition and environmental performance of built assets. Q4 2025/26. <p>3. Seek opportunities to increase income generation. Ongoing</p>	6%	2%	<p>Flourishing Public Spaces</p> <p>Vibrant Thriving Destination</p> <p>Dynamic Economic Growth</p> <p>Providing Excellent Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher percentage of surveyed properties with an EPC rating of D or above. Achievement of charities' increased income targets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compliance with Charity law. Improved income generation, supporting charity objectives. Updated governance for the charities. Clarity of asset ownership and responsibility will enable more effective and efficient management.

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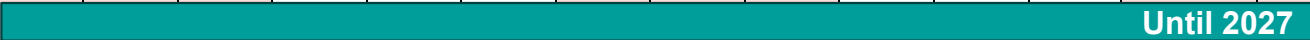














Priority workstream and key 2025/26 deliverables	Funding allocation approx. %	People resource approx. %	Corporate Plan 2024-2029 Outcomes	Outcome focused Performance measures	Outcomes / Impacts
f) City Gardens: Effectively manage the green spaces within the Square Mile					
1. Provide well maintained and accessible spaces. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out an audit of green spaces within the Square Mile for accessibility standards to establish a baseline which can be monitored in future years. Q4 2025/26 2. Progress Biodiversity Action Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to progress Biodiversity Action Plan. Q4 2025/26 	11%	14%	Flourishing Public Spaces Vibrant Thriving Destination Providing Excellent Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater number of trees planted. The area of climate resilient public realm and open space enhanced (sqm). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More accessible public spaces. Everyone benefits from having access to an enhanced City environment.

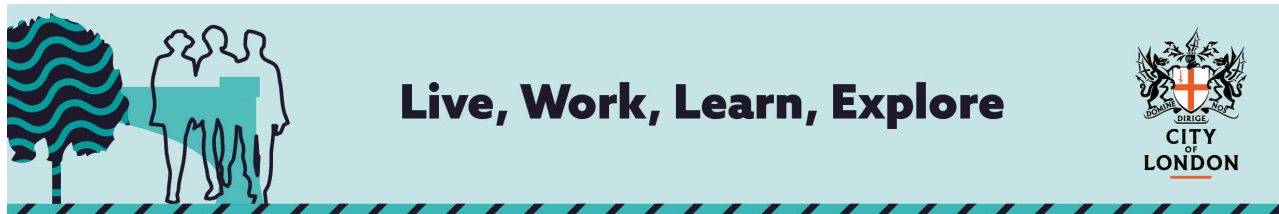


SECTION C: Natural Environment Board

Our timeline planner of priority workstream activities and milestones

Key	
	Duration of activity
	Milestone

	2025/2026												Beyond 2025/26	
	Quarter 1			Quarter 2			Quarter 3			Quarter 4			2026/2027	2027/2028
	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar		
Engagement with local planning authorities.													Ongoing	
Carbon Removals Project.													Until 2027	
Develop volunteering programmes.													Ongoing	
Enhance digital communications.													Ongoing	
Improve provision of accessibility information.													By end of 2025/26 	
Deliver seasonal engagement sessions.													By end of 2025/26 	
Provide outdoor learning and play programmes.													Ongoing	
Reduce number of heritage assets at risk.													By end of Q4 2025/26 	
Update charity financial models.													By 2030	
Accessibility audit of Square Mile green spaces.													By end of Q4 2025/26 	
Progress Biodiversity Action Plan.													By end of Q4 2025/26 	



SECTION C: Natural Environment Board

Finance 2025/26

Natural Environment Division and City Gardens Estimated budget 2025/26 (£000)	
Local risk net expenditure	(13,971)
Central risk	264
City Surveyor's local risk	(7,737)
Recharges	(5,162)
Total net expenditure	(26,606)

Unfunded Medium Term Plans

	2026/27	2027/28
Website development (initial planning) for Natural Environment charities.	✓	
West Ham Park: secure Planning consent for redevelopment of nursery site.	✓	
Epping Forest: pond condition improvements to comply with Natural England requirements.	✓	✓
West Wickham and Coulsdon Commons: tree safety management.	✓	✓
Hampstead Heath: Hill Garden Pergola renovation.	✓	
North London Open Spaces: lodge inspections and repairs.	✓ <i>(inspections)</i>	✓ <i>(repairs)</i>
North London Open Spaces: staff training to ensure compliance.	✓	

Our key risks*

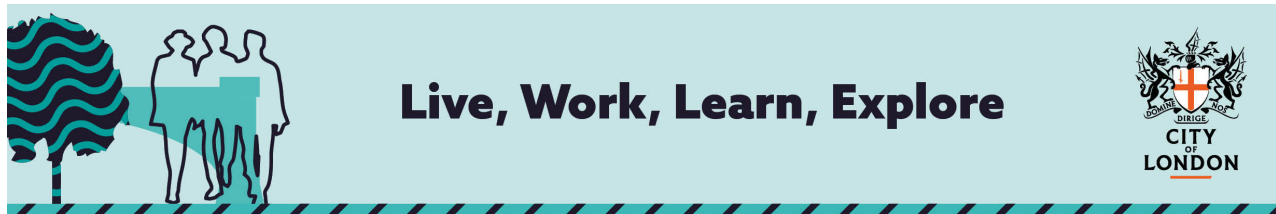
Our business risks are managed in accordance with the Corporate Risk Management Framework and, where applicable, the Charities Act 2011. Risks are regularly reviewed and updated by management teams in consultation with risk owners. Committees receive regular updates on the risks held by the charities/ services within their remit to provide them with necessary assurance that risks are being managed and mitigated effectively, and to enable Members to fulfil their oversight and scrutiny role.

Each of the Natural Environment charities holds its own risk register. The Natural Environment Cross-Divisional Risk Register includes risks which are managed by the Natural Environment Director at a strategic, level. City Gardens is part of the City Operations Division, and its risks are held in a separate, non-charity, risk register.

Our highest risks fall within the subject areas listed below.

Decline in condition of assets	Negative impacts from pests and diseases
Budget pressures and uncertainty over future funding model (charities)	Impacts of anti-social behaviour on staff and sites
Risks to health and safety	Negative impacts of extreme climate and weather

***Risk details were correct at January 2025 but are subject to continual review and change.**



ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT ENABLERS

N.B. the information on this page relates to the Department as a whole.

Business Services Division

The Business Services Division, led by the Chief of Staff, enables the Department as whole to deliver its aims and objectives, by ensuring a consistent, compliant and joined-up approach. Across this large and diverse department, the teams provide a central hub of expertise, advice and guidance on themes, duties and responsibilities which are common to all, and act as a conduit between divisions and the corporate centre.

Working with management teams across the Department, and with key links throughout the organisation, the Business Services Division leads cross-departmentally on areas including business planning; risk management; health and safety; workforce planning and talent management; work environment; Equity, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion; communications and staff engagement; information and data management; and Geographical Information System (GIS) mapping.

Vital to its success is the development of strong, reciprocal working relationships between officers within the Division and their colleagues across the Department and wider Corporation. Officers work collaboratively to build a cohesive department with a unified identity, and which recognises and celebrates the achievements of individuals and teams.

Corporate Risks and Red Departmental Risks

Due to the size and wide remit of the Environment Department, the majority of its operational risks are specific to individual divisions and reported regularly to their respective Service Committees. Those risks are managed at Service-level and the key ones are reported in the relevant Committee’s section of this Business Plan.

The Environment Department currently holds NO Corporate Risks.

The Department’s Senior Leadership Team manages four Departmental-level risks, of which one is scored ‘Red’ (as below).

Risk Title	Score
ENV-SLT 001 Maintenance and renewal of physical assets	16

Operational Property

To fulfil the requirements of Standing Order 56, the Environment Department has undertaken a detailed utilisation assessment of all allocated operational property assets beyond the Guildhall.

A separate detailed utilisation assessment of accommodation allocated to the Environment Department within the Guildhall complex was undertaken over a four-week period in November/December 2024.

The results of both exercises have been returned to the City Surveyor’s Department.



People

The Environment Department has 771 members of staff (737 FTE) as of 31 October 2024

Average length of service: 10 years (*corporation-wide average: 8 years*)

Average age: 45 years (*corporation wide average: 44 years*)

Equity, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EEDI)

- The Environment Department is committed to creating an environment of collaboration and equality of opportunity where everyone recognises the positive contribution a diverse workforce and community can make.
- The Department is committed to EEDI in our service provision and for all our employees. Creating a workplace aligned to these values is a strategic business priority that fosters fair and equal access, innovation and connection to the communities and stakeholders we serve.
- The Department has an EEDI Working Group which consists of representatives (Champions) from across the department and is chaired by a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). Working with the SLT, the group is responsible for developing and implementing the Departmental EEDI Action Plan.
- Our Departmental EEDI Action Plan 2024/25 was launched in May 2024 and aligns with the CoL's Corporate Equality Objectives. Progress will be monitored and the Action Plan refreshed for 2025/26.

The top three priorities of our Departmental EEDI Action Plan 2024-25 are to ensure that:

1. Our staff have a clear understanding of the Equality Act 2010, particularly the PSED, and how it applies to them both in terms of service provision and working with colleagues. We will achieve this by having EEDI as a standard agenda item on our departmental and divisional meetings; all employees having equality objectives with effect from the 2024-25 appraisal year; and ensuring staff complete mandatory training and other relevant training, including EQIAs and briefing workshops.
2. Our services are accessible for all. We will achieve this by undertaking a review of our functions, services and facilities in terms of accessibility; undertaking EQIAs with results taken into consideration when making decisions on service delivery; and hosting quarterly accessibility workshops for employees to develop their knowledge and understanding on how to produce information and communications in accessible formats.
3. There is improved support for our public facing employees and contractors facing EEDI challenges and issues. We will provide clear protocols for reporting and dealing with incidents; produce dashboards for analysis of data; and escalate issues into respective Divisional Management Teams (DMTs) and SLTs for monitoring and implementing appropriate actions.



Staff survey 2024

Engagement score: 62%

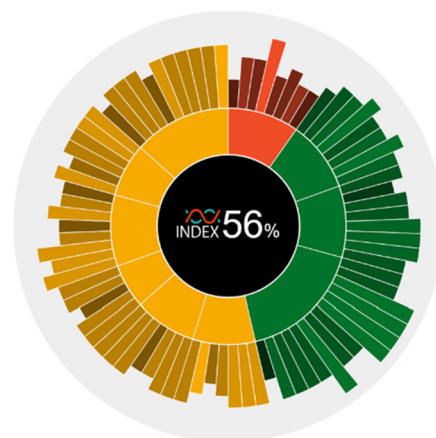
Survey Action Plan

Groups of staff from across the department have worked together to review the survey results and propose a list of actions which were subsequently approved by the Senior Leadership Team. We will:

- Undertake staff ‘stress audits’ to recognise and identify stress levels to improve stress levels and reduce stress-related sickness absence.
- Increase visibility of the EEDI Working Group and associated Action Plan. All recruiting managers will understand EEDI policies and processes to enable them to make reasonable adjustments to support staff.
- Collaborate with the Deputy Town Clerk on Officer/Member Charter review to enable staff to feel more supported with Officer/Member relationships.
- Review departmental internal communications to improve their effectiveness.

Health and Safety

Recent Safe 365 audits in each of our divisions to assess health and safety maturity, have provided a departmental score of 56%. The exercise has identified key areas for enhancement and the results have informed our 2025/26 Health and Safety Action Plan. We will continue to support the corporate Health and Safety Team as we implement these actions and aim to increase our maturity score to achieve, or exceed, the Executive Leadership Board’s target of 62%.



Our top three health and safety priorities for 2025/26 are:

- Front line worker safety.
- Embed new corporate Health and Safety Framework.
- Risk Assessments and Method Statements (RAMs) centralisation and audit.



Committee(s)	Dated:
Natural Environment Board	06/02/2025
Subject: Revenue and Capital Budgets 2025/26	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 the funding source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: The Chamberlain Executive Director Environment	For Decision
Report Author: Clem Harcourt, Chamberlain's Department	

Summary

This report presents for approval the revenue and capital budgets for the Natural Environment Board for 2025/26, for subsequent submission to Finance Committee. The Natural Environment Board is the strategic overarching committee for all of the Open Spaces and whilst this report details the 2025/26 budgets for the Natural Environment Directorate, Learning Team, City Gardens and Bunhill Fields, summary estimates for all of the other open spaces (excluding Keats House and The Monument which are reported to the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee) are also provided in Appendix 3.

Overall, the proposed revenue budget for 2025/26 totals (£2.476m) net expenditure, a decrease in net expenditure of £11k compared to the 2024/25 original budget of (£2.487m) net expenditure.

The proposed budget for 2025/26 has been prepared within the resource envelope allocated to each Director by Resource Allocation Sub-Committee, including an inflation increase of 2%.

The resource envelope must be adhered to, as failure to do so will impact Finance Committee's ability to set Council Tax rates for the year ahead and the requirement in law for the City to set a balanced budget.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- i) note the latest revenue budget for your Board for 2024/25;
- ii) review and approve the proposed revenue budget for 2025/26 for your Board for submission for approval by the Finance Committee;
- iii) review and approve the City Gardens capital and supplementary revenue budgets for 2025/26 for submission for approval by the Finance Committee;

- iv) agree that amendments for 2024/25 and 2025/26 budgets arising from changes to recharges or for any further implications arising from corporate contracts, energy price increases, changes to the Cyclical Works Programme (CWP) and capital charges during budget setting be delegated to the Chamberlain in consultation with the Executive Director Environment; and
- v) note the provisional 2025/26 revenue budget estimates for the services overseen by the other Natural Environment Committees (Appendix 3).

Main Report

Introduction

1. The City of London Corporation owns and manages almost 11,000 acres of historic and natural Open Spaces for public recreation and enjoyment. This includes City Gardens which is funded from City Fund as part of the City's local authority functions. Bunhill Fields, the Learning Team and the Natural Environment Directorate, which co-ordinates the management of the Natural Environment Division and works in co-operation with other departments on cross service projects and corporate initiatives are funded through City's Estate.
2. This report sets out the latest budget for 2024/25 and the proposed revenue and capital budgets for 2025/26 for these areas and under the control of the Executive Director Environment, analysed between:
 - **Local Risk Budgets** - these are budgets deemed to be largely within the Chief Officer's control;
 - **Central Risk Budgets** – these are budgets comprising specific items where a Chief Officer manages the underlying service, but where the eventual financial outturn can be strongly influenced by external factors outside of his/her control or are budgets of a corporate nature (e.g. interest on balances and rent incomes from investment properties); and
 - **Recharges & Support Services and Capital Charges** - these cover budgets for services provided by one activity to another. The control of these costs is exercised at the point where the expenditure or income first arises as local or central risk.
3. As the strategic lead board for Natural Environment, the proposed budgets for Epping Forest, The Commons, West Ham Park, Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queens Park are summarised in Appendix 3 for information so that this Board has an overview of the full financial position of the Natural Environment Division within the Environment Department.
4. In the various tables, income, increases in income, and reductions in expenditure are shown as positive balances, whereas brackets will be used to denote expenditure, increases in expenditure, or shortfalls in income. Only significant variances (generally those greater than £30k) have been commented on and are referenced in the relevant table in Appendix 1.
5. The latest budget for 2024/25 and provisional original budget for 2025/26 for your Board, is summarised in Table 1 below and further analysed by risk and Chief Officer in Appendix 1.

6. The overall 2025/26 proposed budget for your Board which includes the Executive Director Environment's relevant operating budgets (local risk and central risk) and recharges & support services budgets, plus the City Surveyor's CWP and building repairs & maintenance budget is (£2.476m) net expenditure, this is a net reduction of £11k when compared with the 2024/25 original budget of (£2.487m) net expenditure agreed previously by your Board.

Table 1 - Natural Environment Board	Original Budget	Latest Budget	Original Budget	Movement
	2024/25 £000	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2024/25 OR to 2025/26 OR £000
Local Risk	(3,447)	(3,412)	(3,476)	(29)
City Surveyor Repairs & Mte	(44)	(44)	(45)	(1)
Cyclical Works Programme (CWP)	(262)	(506)	(122)	140
Central Risk	(20)	(22)	(20)	0
Recharges & Support Services	1,286	1,298	1,187	(99)
Total Net Expenditure	(2,487)	(2,686)	(2,476)	11

Latest Revenue Budget for 2024/25

7. Overall, the 2024/25 latest budget for your Board is net expenditure of (£2,686m), an increase of (£199k) compared to the 2024/25 original budget of (£2.487m) net expenditure agreed previously by your Board. The reasons for this budget increase are:

- (£244k) changes to the newly agreed CWP managed by the City Surveyor comprising (£148k) at City Gardens and (£96k) at Bunhill Fields;
- (£2k) central risk carry forward funding for unspent Transformation Fund monies relating to the IT Transformation project at City Gardens;
- £35k funding provided from the Natural Environment Directorate to help fund the 150th anniversary events at West Ham Park; and
- £12k addition in net income from recharges and support services largely explained by a reduction in gross expenditure incurred by City Gardens in relation to recharges from the Cleansing section. This has resulted in an increase in the overall level of net income generated from recharges and support services relating to your Board

Proposed Revenue Budget for 2025/26

8. The proposed 2025/26 budget is net expenditure of (£2.476m), a reduction of £11k compared to the 2024/25 original budget. Detail of the movement between the 2024/25 original budget and the 2025/26 original budget is set out in Appendix 2.
9. For 2025/26, budgets include:
 - a 2% uplift for inflation as a cash limit to Chief Officers' budgets;
 - a clear distinction between local risk, central risk, and recharge budgets; and
 - responsibility for budgetary control placed on departmental Chief Officers.
10. The resulting resource envelope must be adhered to, as failure to do so will impact Finance Committee's ability to set Council Tax rates for the year ahead and the requirement in law for the City to set a balanced budget.
11. The budget has been prepared within the resource envelope allocated to the Executive Director Environment, with the following assumptions:
 - Support Services budgets reflect the attribution and cost of central departments. All support services are based on time spent or use of services and were reviewed during 2023/24 with the method of apportionment updated to reflect the latest up to date corporate information. However, the full budgets for these departments have not yet been finalised, so further changes to these budgets may be required. Members are asked to agree that the decision as to the changes required to these budgets are delegated to the Chamberlain in consultation with the Executive Director Environment; and
 - The budget envelope for your Board also incorporates one-off funding of £40k being provided in 2025/26 from the Natural Environment Directorate to fund additional grounds maintenance costs at West Wickham & Coulsdon Commons.
12. Appendix 1 provides details on budget movements between the 2024/25 original budget and the 2025/26 proposed budget. Overall, there is a net decrease in net expenditure of £11k. The main reasons for this net expenditure decrease are:

Budget Decreases:

- £240k transfers from reserves relating to funding from the On Street Parking Reserve (OSPR) to fund ongoing maintenance costs at City Gardens including establishment maintenance costs at Aldgate Square;
- £140k rephasing of projects falling under the CWP managed by the City Surveyor comprising £110k at City Gardens and £30k at Bunhill Fields; and
- £112k reduced contingency budget managed by the Natural Environment Directorate to fund cost increases including an additional post in the business services section of the Natural Environment Division as well as extra grounds maintenance costs at West Wickham and Coulsdon Commons.

Budget Increases:

- (£193k) reduced income from grants and contributions attributable to a decrease in income generated from self-funded posts in the Natural Environment Division following implementation of a recent staffing restructure;
- (£144k) increased employment costs as a result of cost of living and incremental pay rises to staff as well as additional staffing posts having been budgeted at City Gardens which are being funded from an annual contribution from the OSPR (see above);
- (£99k) net reduction in recharges and support services net income. This is explained by (£192k) additional gross expenditure on recharges from the Environment Department Directorate and Cleansing sections following an increase in costs as well as additional Full Time Equivalent (FTE) posts budgeted at City Gardens which has resulted in a reduction in the overall level of net income generated from recharges. This is partly offset by £70k reduced expenditure on recharges from corporate departments and capital charges following a review of recharges in 2023/24. This is on top of £23k additional income in recharges from the Natural Environment Directorate to other sections of the Natural Environment Division; and
- (£30k) unidentified savings from 2024/25 achieved from reduced electricity costs managed by the Highways Division at City Gardens.

Staffing Statement

13. Analysis of the movement in staff related costs are shown in table 2 below:

Table 2 Staffing Statement	Original Budget 2024/25		Latest Budget 2024/25		Original Budget 2025/26	
	Staffing Full-time equivalent	Estimated cost £000	Staffing Full-time equivalent	Estimated cost £000	Staffing Full-time equivalent	Estimated cost £000
Directorate/ Learning	28.40	(1,739)	28.40	(1,739)	28.80	(1,654)
City Gardens/ Bunhill Fields	34.00	(1,743)	43.00	(1,932)	43.00	(1,972)
TOTAL	62.40	(3,482)	71.40	(3,671)	71.80	(3,626)

14. Please note that the increase in FTE posts in the proposed 2025/26 original budget for City Gardens shown in the table above is explained by additional posts which are being funded from a contribution from the OSPR as well as apprenticeship positions which are being centrally funded.

Cyclical Works Programme

15. Table 3 below details the budgets held and proposed for the City Surveyor's CWP and building repairs & maintenance:

Table 3 - CWP & City Surveyor Local Risk			
Repairs and Maintenance	Original Budget 2024/25 £'000	Latest Budget 2024/25 £'000	Original Budget 2025/26 £'000
Cyclical Works Programme			
Bunhill Fields	(45)	(141)	(15)
City Gardens	(217)	(365)	(107)
	(262)	(506)	(122)
Planned & Reactive Works (Breakdown & Servicing)			
City Gardens	(44)	(44)	(45)
	(44)	(44)	(45)
Total CWP & City Surveyor	(306)	(550)	(167)

Draft Capital and Supplementary Revenue Budgets

16. The latest estimated costs for your Board's current approved capital and supplementary revenue projects are summarised in Table 4 below:

Table 4							
Service	Project	Exp. Pre 01/04/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	Later Years	Total
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
City Gardens	Finsbury Circus Reinstatement	790	4,586	407			5,783
City Gardens	St Botolph Ball Court Improvements	86	29	15			130
City Gardens	St Mary At Hill Churchyard	136	101	234			471
City Gardens	Tower Hill Play Area Replacement Project	1	35		-		36
TOTAL City Gardens		1,013	4,751	656	0	0	6,420

17. The latest Capital and Supplementary Revenue Project expenditure on approved schemes will be presented to the Court of Common Council for formal approval in March 2025.

Total Estimates Summary for Natural Environment Division and City Gardens

18. The table shown in Appendix 3 gives a summary overview of all the Natural Environment Division's budgets which will be reported to their respective committees excluding Keats House and The Monument which are reported to the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee. As can be seen from Appendix 3, the proposed 2025/26 original budget for the Natural Environment Division and City Gardens amounts to (£26.234m) net expenditure, an increase of (£8.105m) net expenditure compared with the 2024/25 original budget of (£18.129m) net expenditure.

Conclusion

19. This report presents the proposed Revenue and Capital budgets for 2025/26 for your Board for Members to consider and approve.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Board Summary Budget – by Risk and Chief Officer
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Appendix 1

Board Summary Budget – by Risk and Chief Officer

Analysis of Service Expenditure	Local or Central Risk	Actual 2023/24 £'000	Original Budget (OR) 2024/25 £'000	Latest Budget 2024/25 £'000	Original Budget (OR) 2025/26 £'000	Movement 24/25 OR to 25/26 OR £'000	Notes
EXPENDITURE							
Employees	L	(2,736)	(3,432)	(3,621)	(3,596)	(164)	1
Employees	C	(23)	(50)	(50)	(30)	20	
Premises Related Expenses	L	(297)	(287)	(257)	(268)	19	
City Surveyor - All Services	L	(259)	(306)	(550)	(167)	139	2
Transport Related Expenses	L	(63)	(69)	(69)	(54)	15	
Supplies & Services	L	(417)	(339)	(400)	(353)	(14)	
Supplies & Services	C	(97)	(20)	(22)	(20)	0	
Third Party Payments	L	(35)	(43)	(43)	(43)	0	
Contingencies	L	0	(245)	(160)	(133)	112	3
Unidentified Savings	L	0	30	0	0	(30)	4
Transfers to Reserves (Grant Income)	L	(16)	0	0	0	0	
Transfers to Reserves (Grant Income)	C	(68)	0	0	0	0	
Total Expenditure		(4,011)	(4,761)	(5,172)	(4,664)	97	
INCOME							
Government Grants	C	100	50	50	30	(20)	
Other Grants, Reimbursements & Cont. Customer, Client Receipts	L	272	417	417	224	(193)	5
Transfer from Reserves (OSPR)	L	578	521	521	507	(14)	
Transfer from Reserves (OSPR)	L	40	0	200	240	240	6
Total Income		990	988	1,188	1,001	13	
TOTAL NET INC/(EXP) BEFORE SUPPORT SERVICES & RECHARGES		(3,021)	(3,773)	(3,984)	(3,663)	110	
SUPPORT SERVICES & RECHARGES							
Central Support and Capital Charges		(616)	(772)	(772)	(702)	70	7
Recharges Within Fund		2,143	2,896	2,927	2,855	(41)	8
Recharges Across Funds		(844)	(838)	(857)	(966)	(128)	9
Total Support Services		683	1,286	1,298	1,187	(99)	
TOTAL NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		(2,338)	(2,487)	(2,686)	(2,476)	11	

Notes:

1. (£164k) increase in employment costs explained by cost of living and incremental pay progression increases as well as additional staffing posts at City Gardens funded from the On Street Parking Reserve (OSPR).
2. £140k reduced expenditure on Cyclical Works Programme (CWP) projects managed by the City Surveyor as a result of a rephasing of projects at both City Gardens and Bunhill Fields. This is partly offset by a (£1k) increase in the corporate building repairs and maintenance contract at City Gardens.
3. £112k reduction in the Natural Environment Directorate's contingency budget to fund an additional business services post as well as grounds maintenance costs at West Wickham and Coulsdon Commons.
4. (£30k) unidentified savings from 2024/25 achieved by reductions in energy costs managed by the Highways Division at City Gardens.
5. (£193k) reduction in income from grants and contributions due to self-funded posts no longer being budgeted for following implementation of a staffing restructure within the Natural Environment Division.
6. £240k transfers from reserves comprises £200k annual contribution from the OSPR to fund maintenance costs at City Gardens as well as £40k from the OSPR to cover establishment maintenance costs at Aldgate Square.
7. £70k projected saving in recharges from corporate departments to reflect the attribution and cost of central departments following a review of recharges during 2023/24. This resulted in the method of apportionment being updated to reflect the latest up to date corporate information.
8. (£41k) net reduction in net income explained by (£49k) additional gross expenditure incurred on recharges from the Environment Department Directorate following an increase in the number of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) posts at City Gardens. This is in addition to (£15k) extra expenditure relating to recharges from the

Cleansing section following an increase in central recharges as well as a one-off transfer from reserves taking place in 2024/25. The net income reduction is partly offset by £23k additional income generated relating to recharges from the Directorate and Learning Team to other sections of the Natural Environment Division.

9. (£128k) increased recharges from the Environment Department Directorate to the Natural Environment Division following increased staffing and inflationary cost increases.

Appendix 2

Movement between 2024/25 Original Budget and 2025/26 Original Budget

Natural Environment Board	£000
Original Budget 2024/25	(2,487)
Original Net Local Risk Budget (Executive Director Environment & City Surveyor) 2024/25	(3,753)
Executive Director Environment	
2% uplift for inflation	(69)
Funding from Natural Environment Directorate for grounds maintenance costs at West Wickham & Coulsdon Commons	40
City Surveyor	
Re-phasing of projects under Cyclical Works Programme – City Gardens	110
Re-phasing of projects under Cyclical Works Programme – Bunhill Fields	30
Planned & Reactive Works	(1)
Original Net Local Risk Budget (Executive Director Environment & City Surveyor) 2025/26	(3,643)
Central Risk (Executive Director Environment)	
Original Net Central Risk Budget 2024/25	(20)
Original Net Central Risk Budget 2025/26	(20)
Recharges	
Original Recharges Budget 2024/25	1,286
Recharges from corporate departments	51
Recharges from Natural Environment Directorate and Learning Team to other sections of Natural Environment Division	23
Capital charges at City Gardens	19
Recharges from Environment Department Directorate	(177)
Recharges from Cleansing section to City Gardens	(15)
Original Recharges Budget 2025/26	1,187
Original Budget 2025/26	(2,476)

Appendix 3

Estimates Summary for Natural Environment Division and City Gardens

Summary of Natural Environment Division	Original Budget (OR) 2024/25 £000	Latest Budget 2024/25 £000	Original Budget (OR) 2025/26 £000	Movement 2024/25 OR to 2025/26 OR £000
Expenditure				
Natural Environment Board	(4,761)	(5,172)	(4,664)	97
West Ham Park	(1,072)	(1,115)	(2,161)	(1,089)
Epping Forest	(6,642)	(7,640)	(9,419)	(2,777)
The Commons	(2,850)	(3,451)	(4,354)	(1,504)
Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queens Park	(8,950)	(10,047)	(11,035)	(2,085)
	(24,275)	(27,425)	(31,633)	(7,358)
Income				
Natural Environment Board	988	1,188	1,001	13
West Ham Park	311	311	331	20
Epping Forest	2,212	2,212	2,982	770
The Commons	623	673	695	72
Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queens Park	5,934	5,934	5,315	(619)
	10,068	10,318	10,324	256
Total Net Expenditure before Support Services & Recharges	(14,207)	(17,107)	(21,309)	(7,102)
Support Services & Recharges				
Natural Environment Board	1,286	1,298	1,187	(99)
West Ham Park	(421)	(432)	(519)	(98)
Epping Forest	(1,839)	(1,863)	(2,357)	(518)
The Commons	(608)	(552)	(659)	(51)
Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queens Park	(2,340)	(2,367)	(2,577)	(237)
	(3,922)	(3,916)	(4,925)	(1,003)
Total Net Expenditure	(18,129)	(21,023)	(26,234)	(8,105)

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Committee(s): Natural Environment Board	Dated: 06/02/2025
Subject: Operational Finance Progress Report - Quarter 3 (December 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 3 for 2024/25 for the Natural Environment Division’s (including City Gardens) revenue budget to date to the end of December 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 and City Gardens 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 (£21.697m) net expenditure. Actual net expenditure as at December 2024 currently amounts to (£11.367m), with a current forecast outturn for 2024/25 of (£21.722m) net expenditure. This amounts to a projected net overspend for 2024/25 of (£25k), equivalent to (0.12%) of the total net expenditure budget. This represents an improvement of £227k in the projected net overspend for 2024/25 compared with the forecasted overspend of (£252k) to the end of August 2024 reported previously to your Board.
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 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 £'000s	Actual – Dec 2024 £'000s	Forecast Outturn £'000s	Budget Variance £'000s	Variance %
Gross Expenditure	(35,525)	(19,519)	(36,532)	(1,007)	(2.83)
Gross Income	13,828	8,152	14,810	982	7.10
Net Expenditure	(21,697)	(11,367)	(21,722)	(25)	(0.12)

7. As can be seen from the table above, the Natural Environment Division and City Gardens are currently forecasting a total net overspend of (£25k) compared with the total net expenditure budget for 2024/25. The primary reasons for the projected overspend are set out below:
 - (£207k) 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 with discussions ongoing regarding the potential transfer of The Monument to another department.

- (£139k) projected overspend at West Ham Park. This is attributable to the rephasing of projects falling under the Cyclical Works Programme (CWP) managed by the City Surveyor. This is on top of the charity's incurring additional depreciation expenses compared to budget following the purchase of equipment for the playground in the previous financial year.
- (£138k) overspend currently forecast for City Gardens. This is explained by additional costs incurred on cyclical cleaning, safety checks and the maintenance of irrigation and ornamental sites managed by the Highways Division.
- (£105k) projected overspend at West Wickham and Coulsdon Commons. This is due to additional costs incurred on the building repairs and maintenance contract managed by City Surveyors and additional expenditure required on tree safety.

8. The current forecasted overspend for 2024/25 is partly mitigated by the following:

- £399k total net underspend currently projected at Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Kilburn. This is explained by lower than anticipated staffing costs as a result of vacant posts. This is in addition to extra income generated from tennis as well as lower than anticipated CWP expenditure following a rephasing of CWP projects related to the charity.
- £128k underspend forecast for Epping Forest. This is a result of employment costs projected to be less than budgeted for 2024/25 due to current staffing vacancies, plus additional income from filming licenses and golfing fees being greater than anticipated.

Expenditure

9. As at December 2024, total gross expenditure for the Natural Environment Division amounted to (£19.519m). This represents 54.94% of the division's total gross expenditure budget for 2024/25 of (£35.525m).

10. For 2024/25, the Natural Environment Division are currently forecasting total gross expenditure of (£36.532m), amounting to an overspend of (£1.007m) (2.83%) compared with the latest gross expenditure budget for 2024/25 of (£35.525m).

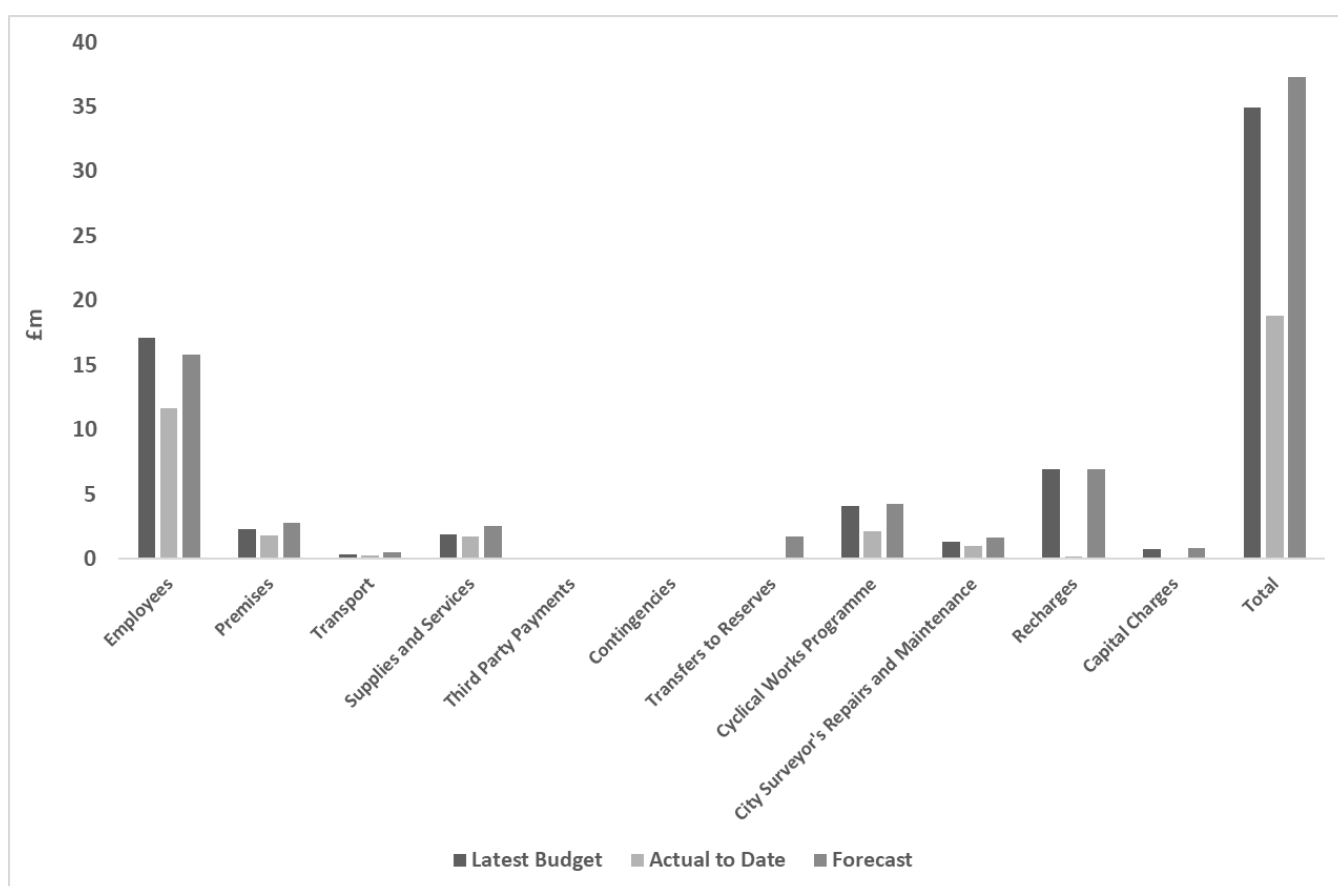
11. The major adverse variances in relation to forecasted gross expenditure for 2024/25 include (£1.227m) at Epping Forest. This is largely explained by transfers to the charity's reserves forecast to take place for additional income received from government grants and contributions from the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS). This is in addition to extra vehicle and equipment purchases planned for 2024/25.

12. In addition, Ashted Common are currently forecasting an overspend of (£282k) on gross expenditure as a result of transfers to the charity's reserves due to take place for additional grant income having been received earlier in the year.

13. Finally, there is a forecasted overspend of (£195k) in relation to expenditure at City Gardens. This can be explained by cyclical cleaning, safety checks and maintenance costs overseen by the Highways Division in addition to signage and equipment being required at City Gardens during 2024/25.

14. 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 current forecasts for 2024/25.

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



Income

15. As at December 2024, total gross income for the Natural Environment Division and City Gardens amounted to £8.152m. This represents 58.95% of the division's total gross income budget for 2024/25 of £13.828m.

16. For 2024/25, the Natural Environment Division are currently forecasting total gross income of £14.810m, amounting to an increase in gross income of £982k, 7.10%, compared with the latest gross income budget of £13.828m.

17. The major favourable variances in relation to gross income include at Epping Forest where the charity is currently forecasting £1.355m in extra income. This is explained by additional SAMMS monies and income from the Countryside

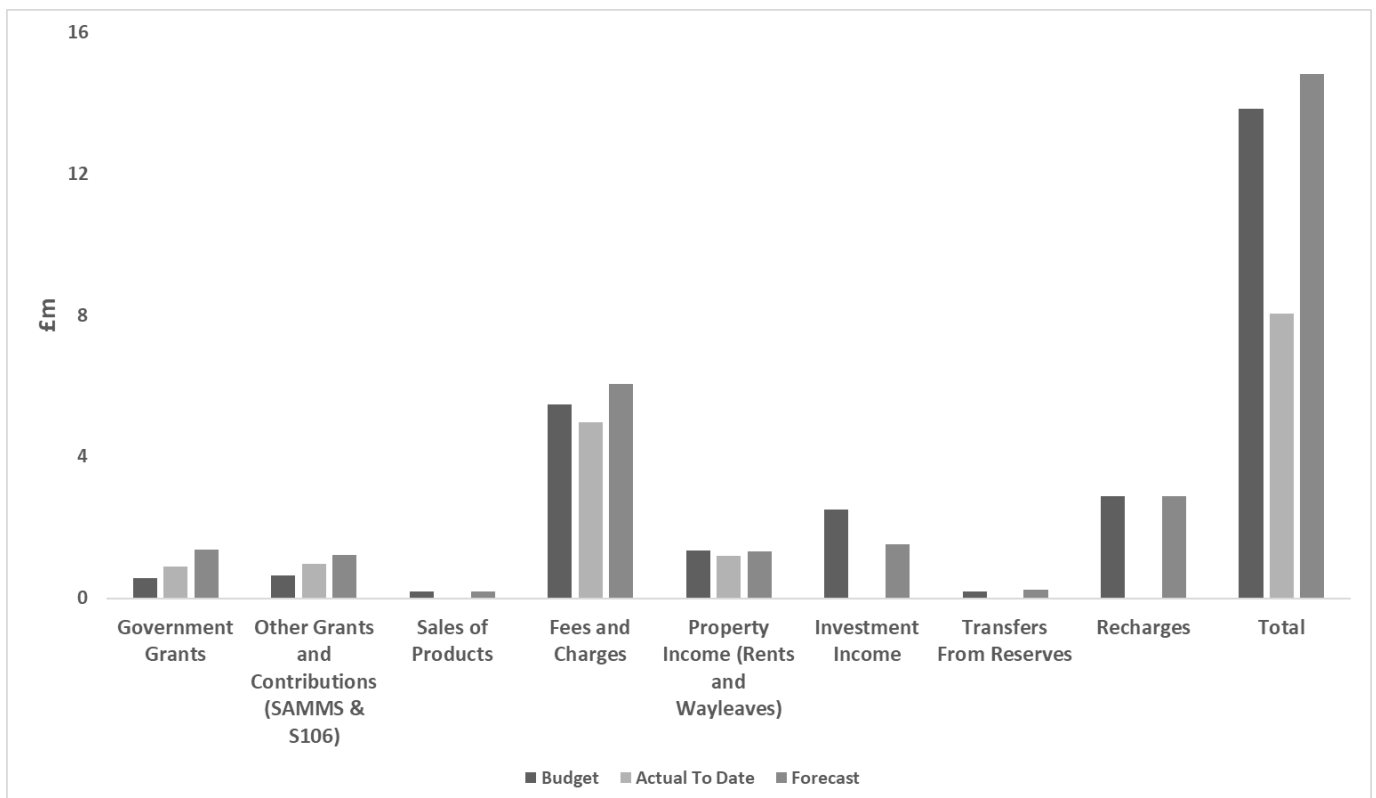
Stewardship Scheme having been received during 2024/25 which is due to be transferred to the charity’s restricted reserves as referenced in paragraph 11. This in addition to extra income generated from filming licenses and golfing fees compared with budget.

18. In addition, there is forecast to be an additional £262k in income generated by Ashted Common compared with budget. This is a result of additional income having been received in 2024/25 from the Countryside Stewardship Scheme.

19. Meanwhile, income at Burnham Beeches for 2024/25 is forecast to be £174k greater than budgeted with extra income received from government grants as well as large scale filming projects having taken place during the current financial year.

20. Graph 2 below provides a summary of the different categories of income received by the Natural Environment Division to December 2024 along with current forecasts for 2024/25.

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



Capital Projects

21. 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.

22. Out of a current approved budget of £13.457m, £7.785m has been spent or committed to date, leaving a remaining budget of £5.672m to progress the various projects to the next project gateway, release of further capital funds or completion.

Outstanding Debts

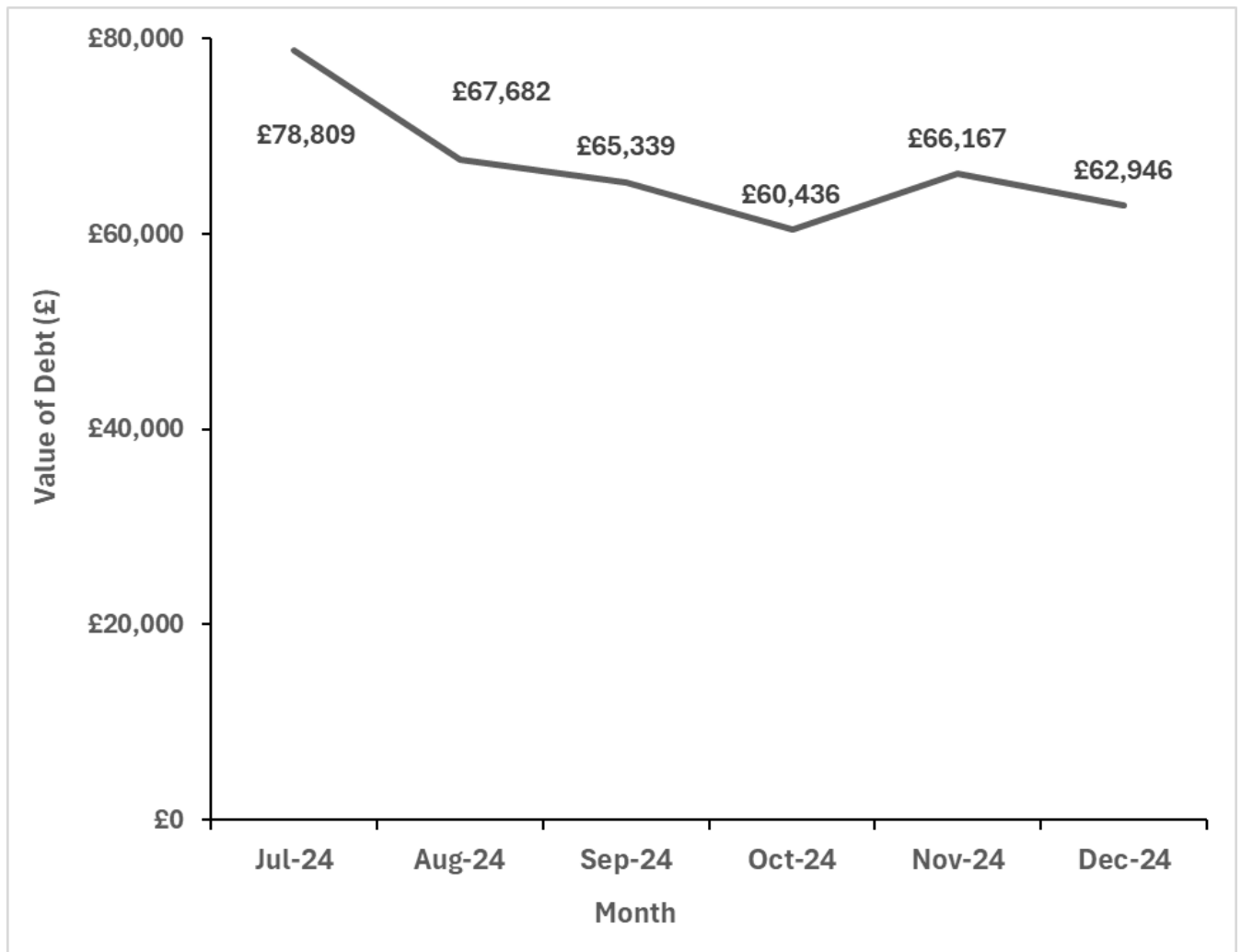
23. At the end of December 2024, total outstanding debt for the Natural Environment Division was £222,041. Table 2 below analyses the current level of outstanding debt according to the age of the debt:

Table 2 – Outstanding Debt Natural Environment Division – December 2024

Age of Debt	Outstanding Debts	% of Total Debt Outstanding
0-30 Days	£122,161	55.01%
31-60 Days	£10,191	4.59%
61-90 Days	£5,186	2.34%
91-120 Days	£21,557	9.71%
121-365 Days	£14,024	6.32%
Over 365 Days	£48,922	22.03%
Total Outstanding Debts	£222,041	100.00%

24. 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 £62,946 in December 2024, a reduction of £3,221 (4.87%) compared with the previous month and a decrease of £15,863 (20.13%) over the six-month period.

Graph 3 – Outstanding Debts Over 120 Days – July to December 2024



25. 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 – December 2024

Section	Outstanding Debts Over 120 Days	% of Total Debt Outstanding Over 120 Days
Ashtead Common	£0	0.00%
Burnham Beeches	£3,520	5.59%
City Gardens	£0	0.00%
Epping Forest	£37,545	59.65%
Hampstead Heath	£14,066	22.35%
Highgate Wood	£21	0.03%
Keats House	£4,972	7.90%
Learning Team	£1,485	2.36%
Queen's Park	£0	0.00%
West Ham Park	£0	0.00%
West Wickham & Coulsdon Commons	£1,337	2.12%
Total Outstanding Debts Over 120 Days	£62,946	100.00%

26. As can be seen above, the majority of the amount owed comprised £37,545 (59.65%) relating to debtors at Epping Forest. This includes £21,736 owed by a single debtor in relation to the Chingford Festival with the debt currently being negotiated by the Comptroller and City Solicitor. The remaining amount of £15,809 consists of property related debts for historic wayleave and rent debts which are being pursued by staff at Epping Forest.

27. Debts over 120 days also includes £14,066 (22.35%) owed by customers at Hampstead Heath. This primarily relates to historic rent and wayleaves owed by utility providers with these debts currently being pursued.

28. In addition, £4,972 (7.90%) is currently owed by customers at Keats House in relation to room hire. These debts are currently being pursued by staff at Keats House. This includes £1,250 owed by a customer on a payment plan with this debt currently being on track to be cleared by the end of the payment plan.

29. Finally, outstanding debts over 120 days includes £3,520 (5.59%) owed by customers at Burnham Beeches. This primarily relates to historic wayleave debts which are currently being pursued.

Charity Funds (Restricted, Unrestricted, Designated and Endowments)

30. 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.

31. 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	£243	£0	£3	£0	£246
Burnham Beeches	£1,072	£3	£989	£0	£2,064
Epping Forest	£1,311	£550	£6,526	£0	£8,387
Hampstead Heath (inc. Hampstead Heath Trust)	£36	£7	£22,485	£37,755	£60,283
Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Kilburn	£0	£186	£210	£0	£396
Keats House	£158	£144	£48	£0	£350
West Ham Park	£1	£0	£935	£0	£936
West Wickham and Coulsdon Commons	£3	£3	£647	£0	£653
Total	£2,824	£893	£31,843	£37,755	£73,315

32. 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.

33. It should also be noted that the external audit of the 2023/24 accounts for some of the individual Natural Environment charities is still taking place and the opening balances shown for reserve funds in Appendix 3 and Appendix 4 may be subject to revision.

Contributions from City's Estate

34. 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.
35. 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.
36. 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.
37. 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 for some of the charities as the external audit has not yet been completed for all Natural Environment charities.

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	539
Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common	1,036	896	1,051	949	888
Epping Forest	5,059	4,527	4,879	6,573	7,589
Hampstead Heath	6,451	5,356	4,842	8,591	4,448
Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Kilburn	1,364	1,033	1,255	1,533	1,859
Keats House	348	292	394	324	360
West Ham Park	1,279	1,250	1,933	1,234	1,427
West Wickham Common and Spring Park Wood, Coulsdon and Other Commons	1,094	1,046	1,249	1,014	1,701
Total Contribution from City's Estate	17,142	14,871	16,127	20,827	18,811

38. 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 £20.827m 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 compared with 2022/23. Members may also wish to note that the reduced contribution for West Ham Park in 2023/24 is largely explained by a one-off capital purchase having taken place during 2022/23.
39. Table 5 also indicates a reduction in the total forecasted contribution projected to be received by the Natural Environment charities in 2024/25 with the total contribution currently estimated at £18.811m compared with £20.827m in 2023/24. The decrease 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 extra income projected to be generated from the swimming facilities at Hampstead Heath compared with the previous year.
40. The projected overall reduction in the contribution from City’s Estate is however partly offset by an increase in the contribution anticipated to be received at Epping Forest. This can be explained by an increase in employment costs following inflationary pay rises to staff and a number of vacant posts having now been filled. This is in addition to extra expenditure expected to be incurred on CWP and capital projects at Epping Forest compared with the previous year. Meanwhile, there is currently anticipated to be an increase in the contribution received by West Wickham & Coulsdon Commons for 2024/25. This is attributable to additional expenditure on staffing, CWP and repairs and maintenance costs as well as reduced income generated from car parking and livestock sales compared with the previous year. Finally, the increased contribution forecast at Highgate Wood & Queen’s Park Kilburn is largely explained by an increase in staffing costs following pay rises to staff and a number of vacant roles having been recruited to during 2024/25.

41. Members should note that alternatives to the charity's current funding model proposed by the Corporation's Natural Environment Charity Review are being implemented. This will involve moving to a grant on local risk budgets for West Ham Park and Epping Forest from 1st April 2025 and using 2025/26 to undergo further work to understand what this level of grant looks like across local risk, central risk and recharge budgets in addition to budgets for capital and CWP projects. This will also be the case for the remaining six charities from 1st April 2026, with 2026/27 being used to finalise the model for all charities.

Other Relevant Financial Issues

42. Members may wish to note that a review of the current recharges reallocation process from corporate departments is currently being finalised following the Target Operating Model and the Governance Review to ensure that the recharges appear more transparent and fairer across all services. The report was originally presented to Finance Committee in September 2024 providing Members with a range of options on changes proposed to recharges for 2024/25 and future years. Finance Committee requested this report to be revised and to be re-presented at a future Committee meeting. Further details will be provided to Members in due course once available following agreement by Finance Committee.
43. 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 3

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 3

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	(3,201)	(2,113)	(3,396)	842	146	899	(2,359)	(1,967)	(2,497)	(138)	1
Total City Fund	(3,201)	(2,113)	(3,396)	842	146	899	(2,359)	(1,967)	(2,497)	(138)	
City's Estate											
Natural Environment Directorate	(2,710)	(985)	(2,629)	2,710	97	2,629	0	(887)	0	0	
Learning Team	(668)	(358)	(551)	193	64	76	(475)	(295)	(475)	0	
Bunhill Fields	(327)	(228)	(337)	0	0	0	(327)	(228)	(337)	(10)	
Epping Forest	(9,534)	(4,788)	(10,761)	2,293	3,077	3,648	(7,241)	(1,711)	(7,113)	128	2
Burnham Beeches	(1,483)	(846)	(1,648)	451	416	625	(1,032)	(430)	(1,023)	9	
Stoke Common	(51)	(41)	(55)	25	5	29	(26)	(36)	(26)	0	
West Wickham and Coulsdon Commons	(1,731)	(1,087)	(1,842)	172	164	178	(1,559)	(923)	(1,664)	(105)	3
Ashtead Common	(761)	(379)	(1,043)	48	248	310	(713)	(131)	(733)	(20)	
Hampstead Heath	(9,924)	(5,764)	(9,349)	5,873	3,127	5,318	(4,051)	(2,637)	(4,031)	20	
Highgate Wood	(1,174)	(634)	(895)	92	102	136	(1,082)	(532)	(759)	323	4
Queen's Park	(1,262)	(769)	(1,209)	129	111	152	(1,133)	(658)	(1,057)	76	5
West Ham Park	(1,469)	(888)	(1,619)	318	232	329	(1,151)	(656)	(1,290)	(139)	6
Keats House	(555)	(293)	(542)	131	111	156	(424)	(182)	(386)	38	6
The Monument	(675)	(346)	(656)	551	252	325	(124)	(94)	(331)	(207)	7
Total City's Estate	(32,324)	(17,406)	(33,136)	12,986	8,007	13,911	(19,338)	(9,400)	(19,225)	113	
Total Natural Environment Division and City Gardens	(35,525)	(19,519)	(36,532)	13,828	8,152	14,810	(21,697)	(11,367)	(21,722)	(25)	

Notes

1. Projected overspend attributable to cyclical cleaning, safety checks and maintenance of irrigation and ornamental sites managed by the Highways Division at City Gardens.
2. Underspend currently forecast at Epping Forest as a result of reduced employment costs due to staff vacancies. This is in addition to income generated from filming licenses and golfing fees at Chingford Golf Course. The underspend is partly offset by additional expenditure required on vehicle and equipment purchases as well as repairs and maintenance costs.
3. Projected overspend as a result of additional costs incurred on the building repairs and maintenance contract managed by City Surveyors. This is in on top of additional expenditure being required on tree safety.
4. Projected underspend attributable to the rephasing of projects falling under the Cyclical Works Programme. This is in addition to underspends on employment as a result of vacant posts.
5. Underspend explained by underspend on staffing costs due to vacant posts and extra income generated from sources such as tennis.
6. Overspend largely explained by rephasing of projects falling under the Cyclical Works Programme managed by City Surveyors. This is in on top of additional depreciation projected to be incurred in relation to the playground.
7. Projected overspend currently forecast for The Monument explained by reduced income levels from admissions which have not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels.

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Natural Environment Capital Projects - 2024/25 - Quarter 3

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	5,783,229	5,783,229	1,194,959	2,583,920	1,029,146	975,204
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	295,000	36,000	1,270	5,800	8,893	20,038
	6,768,854	6,419,851	1,417,997	2,589,720	1,038,038	1,374,096
Epping Forest and Commons						
Epping Forest Various Sites - BEMS Upgrade Phase 2	138,978	138,978	0	4,707	15,293	118,978
Wanstead Park Ponds Project	1,150,000	614,500	169,276	1,129	0	444,095
Baldwins & Birch Hall Park Ponds	1,748,794	502,600	298,980	1,360	1,543	200,717
Climate Action Strategy - Carbon Removals Phase 2	200,000	200,000	85,032	60,619	0	54,349
Climate Action Strategy - Carbon Removals Phase 3	740,000	740,000	0	30,860	92,210	616,929
Great Gregories Yard - Future Proofing Building	408,744	408,744	13,063	388,993	0	6,688
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	35,327	2,501	22,172
Wanstead Flats - Landscaping Jubilee Pond (Cyclical Works Programme)	145,000	145,000	0	0	0	145,000
Artificial Grass Pitch Provision at Wanstead Flats (Parklife)	41,426	70,000	41,426	0	0	28,574
The Warren - Carbon Reduction Measures (Climate Action Strategy)	462,612	462,612	0	0	0	462,612
City Commons - Entry Board Replacement	160,000	160,000	0	0	0	160,000
	6,545,554	4,792,434	607,777	522,996	111,547	3,550,114
Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queens Park						
Hampstead Heath Swimming Facilities - Safety, Access & Security Impr.	1,010,564	1,010,564	806,262	118,685	76,306	9,311
Parliament Hill Lido Photovoltaic Panels (Climate Action Strategy)	293,530	293,530	0	7,340	112,999	173,191
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
Queen's Park Play Area and Sandpit Replacement of Equipment	152,000	152,000	105,955	37,826	4,319	3,900
	1,733,094	1,733,094	912,217	163,851	193,624	463,402
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	15,559,537	13,457,414	3,164,765	3,276,567	1,343,209	5,672,873

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Charity Funds (Restricted, Unrestricted and Designated) - Quarter 3 2024/25

	Opening Balance 2024/25 £'s	Income £'s	Expenditure £'s	Gains, (Losses) & Transfers £'s	Current Balance 2024/25 £'s
Epping Forest					
Restricted Funds:					
Campaign Donations	935	100			1,035
Countryside Stewardship Scheme	458,892	301,135	(302,800)		457,227
Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS)	424,899	448,563	(20,821)		852,641
	884,726	749,798	(323,621)	0	1,310,903
Unrestricted Funds:					
Unrestricted Funds	549,781	27			549,808
	549,781	27	0	0	549,808
Designated (Unrestricted Fund):					
Tangible Fixed Assets (Land & Buildings, Infrastructure, Vehicle & Plant, and Equipment)	5,003,884				5,003,884
Heritage Assets	376,990				376,990
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)	168,593	10,475	(2,005)		177,063
Wanstead Park/ Flats future Projects fund	100,000				100,000
	6,517,241	10,475	(2,005)	0	6,525,711
Total Epping Forest	7,951,748	760,300	(325,626)	0	8,386,422
Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common					
Restricted Funds:					
Legacy Income - Pond Maintenance	60,014				60,014
Campaign Donations	7,232	2,181			9,413
Section 106 Contributions and Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS) Monies	956,288	10,000	(88,458)		877,830
Countryside Stewardship Scheme	76,558	48,248			124,806
	1,100,092	60,429	(88,458)	0	1,072,063
Unrestricted Funds:					
Unrestricted Funds	2,268	577			2,845
	2,268	577	0	0	2,845
Designated (Unrestricted 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	2,091,866	61,006	(88,458)	0	2,064,414
West Wickham Common and Spring Park Wood, Coulsdon and Other Commons					
Restricted Funds:					
Campaign Donations	2,550	10			2,560
	2,550	10	0	0	2,560
Unrestricted Funds:					
Unrestricted Funds	3,272				3,272
	3,272	0	0	0	3,272
Designated (Unrestricted 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	10	0	0	653,095
Ashtead Common					
Restricted Funds:					
Countryside Stewardship Scheme	0	243,522			243,522
	0	243,522	0	0	243,522
Designated (Unrestricted Fund):					
Ancient Trees Reserve	2,386	500			2,886
Total Ashtead Common	2,386	244,022	0	0	246,408
Total Epping Forest and Commons Committee	10,699,085	1,065,338	(414,084)	0	11,350,339

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 for all charities 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 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 Fund - incoming resources that become available to a charity and can be applied by the Trustee to any of the charity's objects. Unrestricted 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 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 3 - 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 Funds:					
Campaign Donations	18,617	1,979			20,596
Parliament Hill Outdoor Gym	2,233				2,233
Installation of Non-Turf Pitches	12,969				12,969
	33,819	1,979	0	0	35,798
Unrestricted Funds:					
General Funds	7,313	152			7,465
Designated (Unrestricted 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	2,131	0	0	22,528,399
Hampstead Heath Trust Fund					
Permanent Endowment	36,025,459				36,025,459
Expendable Endowment	827,434				827,434
Unrestricted 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 Funds:					
General Funds	186,630				186,630
Designated (Unrestricted 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	2,131	0	0	60,679,709
West Ham Park Committee					
Restricted Funds:					
Campaign Donations	0	562	0	0	562
Designated (Unrestricted Fund):					
Tangible Fixed Assets (Equipment)	935,025				935,025
Total West Ham Park	935,025	562	0	0	935,586
Total West Ham Park Committee	935,025	562	0	0	935,586
Culture, Heritage & Libraries Committee (Keats House)					
Restricted Funds:					
Heritage Assets - Keats Love Letter & Watercolour	101,423				101,423
Grant Funding	15,474	48,849	(8,100)		56,223
Campaign Donations	0	100			100
	116,897	48,949	(8,100)	0	157,746
Unrestricted Funds:					
General Funds	143,924				143,924
Designated (Unrestricted Fund):					
Tangible Fixed Assets (Plant & Equipment)	48,616				48,616
Total Keats House	309,437	48,949	(8,100)	0	350,286
Total Culture, Heritage & Libraries Committee (Keats House)	309,437	48,949	(8,100)	0	350,286

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.

Please note that the external audit of the 2023/24 charity accounts has not yet been completed for all charities 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:

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Unrestricted Fund - incoming resources that become available to a charity and can be applied by the Trustee to any of the charity's objects. Unrestricted 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 funding model means that no such minimum can be identified, as at year end the difference between income and expenditure is balanced by a grant from City's Estate.

Designated (Unrestricted 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.

City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee(s): Natural Environment Board	Dated: 6 February 2025
Subject: City Gardens Update	Public report: For Information
This proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes 	Diverse Engaged Communities Leading Sustainable Environment Vibrant Thriving Destination Providing Excellent Services Flourishing Public Spaces
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of:	Katie Stewart Executive Director Environment
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. One of the existing gardeners has been recruited into the new Team Leader role, the Gardeners post that they have vacated will be recruited to shortly.

Operational Activities

2. **Friends of City Gardens:** The FoCG are continuing to deliver the rewilding works at Bunhill Fields, the new pollinator bed and hedging that they have planted are thriving. A section of the main lawn is to be reseeded with a wildflower and wild grass mix. They will also holding be holding a Moss and Lichen Event in February and another open morning on the 23rd March where there will be talks, tours and a tree walk given by the City Gardens Manager.
3. **Corporate Volunteering** – A programme of events has now been agreed with “Leaves Breath” who will deliver the days. This is being done on a two-year trail basis and we will feed back to Natural Environment Board after the trail.
4. **Filming** – City Gardens with the aid of the film team accommodated a filming shoot at Bunhill Fields that generated 25k of income for City Gardens and 6k for the Friends of City Gardens as the shoot impacted on an area that they maintain, which will be reinvested into Bunhill Fields.

Project Updates

5. The following section provides an overview of the current projects being undertaken by City Gardens. These projects aim to enhance and introduce green infrastructure within the city, improve biodiversity, and create more sustainable urban environments. Each project is at various stages of completion and involves collaboration with different stakeholders to ensure successful delivery.
6. Current projects City Gardens are working on that are due to be delivered by the next NEB - To be accompanied by a presentation
 - Finsbury Circus – Planting is well underway with all trees now in the ground. All corten steel planters and stone benches have been installed. Remaining works include installing fencing around the yard area, completing the clay render and M&E fit of the office building, reinstalling two wall openings, and final planting. Open to the public now planned for mid April.
 - Finsbury Circus Western Arm anticipated planting and completion – February 2025
 - Little Trinity - planting and completion – March 2025

- Jubilee Gardens – planting has now been completed, there are some snagging works that need to be completed before the site is opened to the public in February.
- St Brides – Pruning and clearing works completed planting programmed in for March to be carried out with Mace.
- St Olaves Silver Street – Tree planting has been carried out, planting to be carried out in March.
- St Mary Staining was planted up in January
- Nicolas Cole Abbey was planted up in January
- St Anne St Agnes to be planted up in March
- Nicolas Cole Abbey - the two planters on Queen Victoria street are being rebuilt and a new tree planted.
- City Gardens tree planting programme in addition to the trees included in projects, City Gardens are planting 43 trees, 32 in the Highway, 8 in City Gardens and 3 in the Barbican.

7. **Projects to be delivered during 2025**

- Tower Hill Playground – see separate report presented to committee.
- Moorgate London Wall – a redesign of the area around the oldest Oak tree in the Square Mile, works have now started, trees to be planted by end of March but project will not be completed until later in the year.
- King William and Leadenhall Street, significant pavement widening works being carried out with new avenues of trees being established in each site. Winter 25/26
- Buss Gate Cheapside, new in ground planting beds and seating either side of Cheapside at junction of wood street. Winter 25/26
- Bow Churchyard – two new planters with trees, seating and underplanting. Winter 25/26
- St Peters Churchyard Westcheap – Planting and new paving design around the historic Plane tree – 2025/26
- St Andrews Undershaft– New design of Churchyard 2025/26
- 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 during 2025.
- Sustainable Urban Drainage schemes at Lloyds Avenue, Ludgate Broadway, Knightrider Court and St Andrews Hill to be delivered in 2025

8. **The London Urban Forest Partnership** is a network of organisations that collaborate to protect, manage and enhance the capital's trees and woodlands of which City of London are a member. The partnership is updating the Urban Forest Plan and City Gardens will be focusing on helping to develop tree species recommendations for London's current and future climate and increasing literacy in planting and establishment good practices enabling street trees to perform better at reducing climate risks, including extreme heat and flooding.

9. **Clean City awards** – The award for City Gardener of the Year will be awarded at the ceremony on the 13th February

Jake Tibbetts

City Gardens Manager – Gardens and Cleansing

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City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee: Natural Environment Board – For Decision	Dated: 6 Feb 2025
Subject: Tower Hill Play Project	Public report: For Decision
This proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes 	Diverse Engaged Communities Leading Sustainable Environment Vibrant Thriving Destination Flourishing Public Spaces
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	£
What is the source of Funding?	City Fund and Section 106
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	Yes
Report of:	Katie Stewart – Executive Director of Environment
Report author:	Jake Tibbetts

Summary

This report presents a new design for the playground in Tower Hill that has been led by a public consultation exercise. The public consultation garnered 612 responses, and the design focuses on inclusivity, safety for users, biodiversity and low ongoing maintenance costs.

The project, initially approved in 2021, was delayed until 2024 due to the Capital Review Programme and reduced resources. Land Use Consultants (LUC) have been selected, via a procurement process to design and build the playground.

An online consultation was conducted from 29 November to 20 December 2024. The consultation proposed a number of design options and a variety of play equipment. The Fort concept was the most popular, with 47% of the votes. The final design includes the top requested play equipment and design elements

Final costing is pending, but initial estimates suggest the project will be delivered within budget. Planning permission will need to be secured, before we can progress with the build stage.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

1. Approve the design for a new play area at Tower Hill Gardens so that the project can proceed.
2. Authorise preparation and submission of planning applications to Tower Hamlets to secure planning permission for the works along with authority for officers to negotiate and enter any related planning agreements before a gateway 5 report can be developed to draw down the remaining budget and proceed to the build stage.

Main Report

Background

1. Tower Hill Play Area is over twelve years old and maintenance costs have increased with most of the equipment needing to be replaced or have significant repairs carried out. In 2021, this committee agreed on a gateway two report to release funds for staff costs and fees to develop a design for the playground. Due to the Capital Review Programme and reduced resources within City Gardens, the project did not progress further until 2024. Through a procurement exercise, City Gardens identified Land Use Consultants (LUC) to enter into a two-stage design and build contract for a new playground at Tower Hill. The first stage involved a consultation process to inform the design of the new playground.

Current Position

Consultation

2. An online social media consultation was carried out between the 29 November and 20 December 2024. This consultation was promoted on various social media platforms and through the City of London Social Media Accounts. Residents and businesses within 200m of the site were written to directly, and the consultation was advertised Social Housing Estates newsletter. Two public consultation events were held, one in Artizan Street Library and one in Aldgate School during their Christmas fair.
3. Three concept designs were proposed during the consultation: the Cityscape, the Dragon, and the Fort, details of which can be found in appendix 1; Design Concepts.
4. In total, 612 individual responses were received. A report detailing the consultation results can be found in appendix 2. Three stakeholder meetings took

place as the design developed, with stakeholders including Tower Hamlets, The Metropolitan Police, Historic England, Aldgate Connect, Parent and Carers Forum, Ward Members, Representatives from CoL Housing, and City Gardens.

5. The Fort concept emerged as the most popular option, receiving 47% of the votes. The four most requested pieces of play equipment were an obstacle course, swing, climbing frame, and slide. There was a strong preference for a fenced play area, with 66% of respondents supporting this.

The Design

6. The final design, based on the Fort Theme can be found in appendix 3. The design incorporates all of the top four requested play items and includes a fully accessible roundabout suitable for wheelchairs. There are two slides; the popular current slide on site will be reused and a new slide which is more accessible for younger children will be introduced. There are two swings, a large bucket style swing and a smaller swing for younger children, toddlers including those with special needs. The design reflects the Tower of London, which is visible from the site, and focuses on inclusivity, safety, biodiversity and reducing maintenance costs.
7. Key elements of the design include a central fort structure, accessible paths, and various play elements for children of all ages and abilities. Safety considerations were also a priority, and the design has been assessed by ROSPA to ensure it is safe for play. The structure has been designed will be visually open to reduce hiding spots that may be used for anti-social behaviour.
8. There will be an accessible path, ensuring wheelchair accessibility and accessible and sensory play equipment across the site. Benches with wheelchair spaces are provided, offering views of the Tower of London. Planting areas will include an extended hedge to increase biodiversity and meet the planning obligation in regards to biodiversity net gain, whilst central planting will be low-level to ensure clear visibility across the site. The planting will be approximately 50% evergreen, with species that are resilient, enhance sensory interaction, and biodiversity being prioritized.
9. Lessons have been learnt from the initial design and whilst most of the new play equipment will be wooden, all of the legs will be sleeved in metal so no wood comes into contact with the soil. The main structure of the tower will be metal framed clad in wood. The safety surface will be renewed with one with much greater longevity than that currently in Tower Hill. Whilst no play area is maintenance free, the ongoing maintenance costs of the proposed playground will be less than the current play area.
10. The central fort structure is designed to resemble a turret from the Tower of London, with a steel subframe and cladding. It includes various ways for children to approach and climb and reuses the very popular slide that is already on site. The design will be presented to Tower Hamlets Planning Department for approval.

Budget

11. At the time of writing, final costing has not been calculated, but initial estimates suggest that this design can be delivered within budget. If value engineering is required, the ground-level trampoline and second smaller slide would be considered for removal.

Next Steps

12. Officers will submit an application to Tower Hamlets for Planning Permission. Once planning permission has been obtained and the costing realized, a report will be submitted to the corporate project board to release the remaining amount.

Options

1. The play area is removed and the area returned to garden - Not recommended
2. Officers are asked to develop a different design - Not recommended
3. The proposed play area design is approved – Recommended

Proposals

13. Tower Hill is the biggest and most used play area within the square mile, removal of the play area and returning it to garden would reduce the overall play offer from the City Corporation significantly. The project brief has been followed by the consultants and a well thought out, high quality, consultation led design, which is accessible and low maintenance has been produced which will improve the play offer significantly of the wider area.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

14. **Strategic implications** – The Tower Hill Play Project proposal aligns closely with the Corporate Plan 2024-2029 and supports its delivery in several key areas. The project delivers outcomes related to diverse engaged communities, leading sustainable environments, vibrant thriving destinations, and flourishing public spaces.
15. **Financial implications** – Funding for this project has been allocated from City Fund budgets and Section 106, whilst the final costing have not been realised the designers and play supplier are confident that the design can be delivered within budget. If this is not the case the design can be value engineered to fit within the budget envelope.
16. **Resource implications** – The current resource to manage the playground is met by City Gardens local risk. The proposed play area has been designed to reduce ongoing maintenance costs so will not require increased resourcing.

17. Legal implications – This design will require planning permission from Tower Hamlets and Health and Safety regulations, which are being partly managed through having the design approved by ROSPA. Works will not be able to start until all permissions have been secured.

18. Risk implications - The project has several risk implications; these include potential delays in obtaining planning permission, unforeseen increases in project costs, and the risk of not meeting the community's expectations. In regards to planning permission, discussions with Tower Hamlets have started and they have not raised any major concerns and the design will shortly be subject to a pre-planning application engagement meeting before the full application is submitted. Communication with the public during the next stages of the process through updating the website, onsite information and updating the stakeholder group.

19. Equalities implications – The Tower Hill Play Project proposal has been carefully designed to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty 2010. The project aims to create an inclusive play area that caters to children of all abilities. The design includes accessible paths and play elements, ensuring that the play area is welcoming to everyone. The inclusion of a fence and the restrictions of dogs from within the area will encourage those that have beliefs that give them concern around dogs will make them feel more welcomed. By focusing on inclusivity, the project supports the City of London Corporation's commitment to promoting equality and diversity within the community.

20. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been conducted to ensure that the proposals do not negatively impact any protected groups. The EIA has identified potential positive impacts, such as improved accessibility and inclusivity, and has ensured that any potential negative impacts are mitigated.

21. Climate implications - The design includes planting areas with an extended hedge to increase biodiversity and meet planning obligations regarding biodiversity net gain. The use of resilient materials and a design that minimizes maintenance costs further supports sustainability goals.

Security implications

None

Conclusion

22. The project to develop a new playground at Tower Hill Playground has made significant progress since its initial approval in 2021. The consultation process was thorough and inclusive, resulting in a design that reflects the preferences and needs of the community. The Fort concept, which emerged as the top favourite, incorporates key elements of inclusivity, safety, and biodiversity. The project is now awaiting planning permission and final costing, with the expectation that it can be delivered within budget.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 –Design Concepts
- Appendix 2 – Consultation Results
- Appendix 3 – Final Design

Background Papers

Jake Tibbetts

City Gardens Manager – Gardens and Cleansing

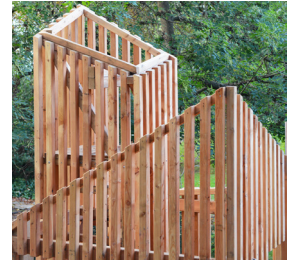
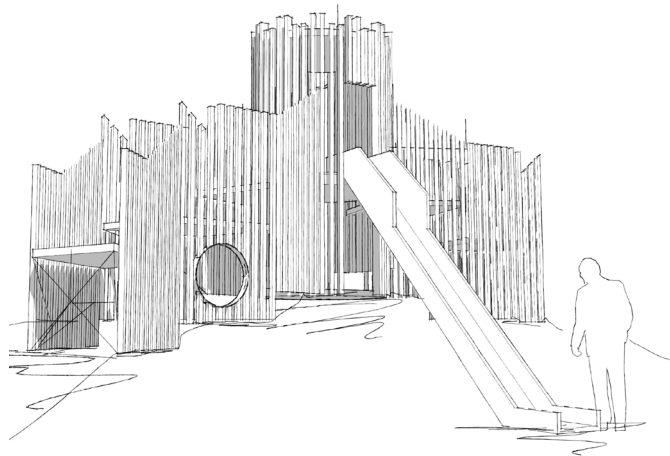
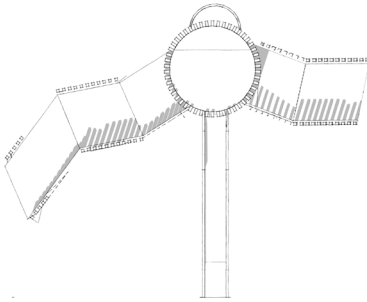
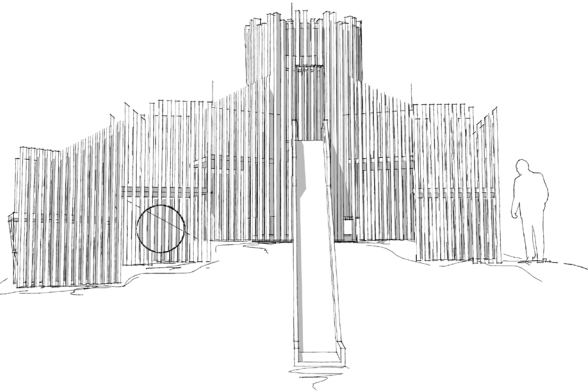
T: 0207 374 4127

E: jake.tibbetts@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Appendix 1:

Design Concepts

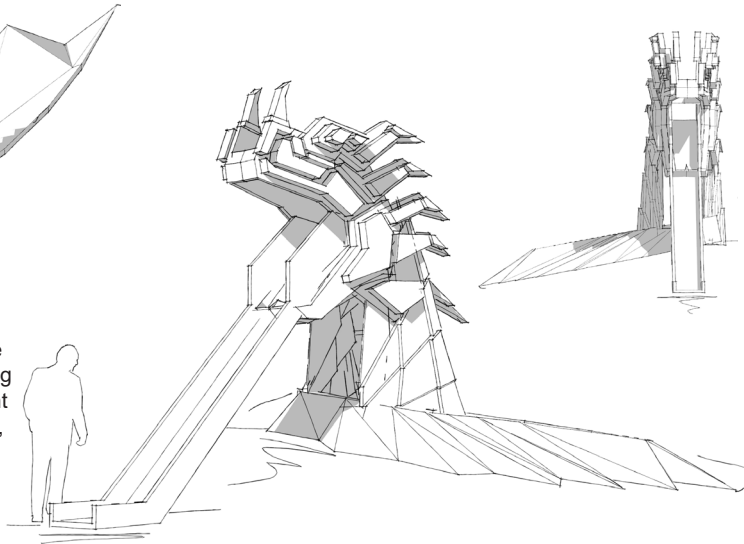
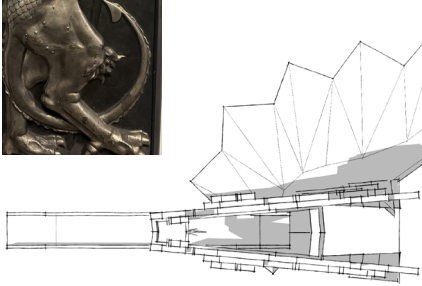
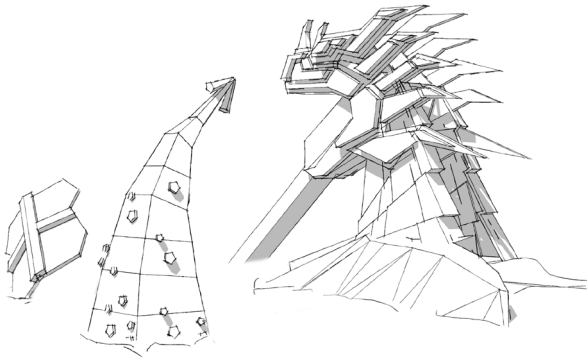
Concept Design 1 Medieval Fort



This design draws inspiration from the historic Tower of London, incorporating play equipment with a rustic style that emphasises balancing and climbing. At the heart of the playground, a defensive line of boulders and logs creates a dynamic central feature, flanked by opposing forts on either side – perfect for imaginative sieges and adventurous play.



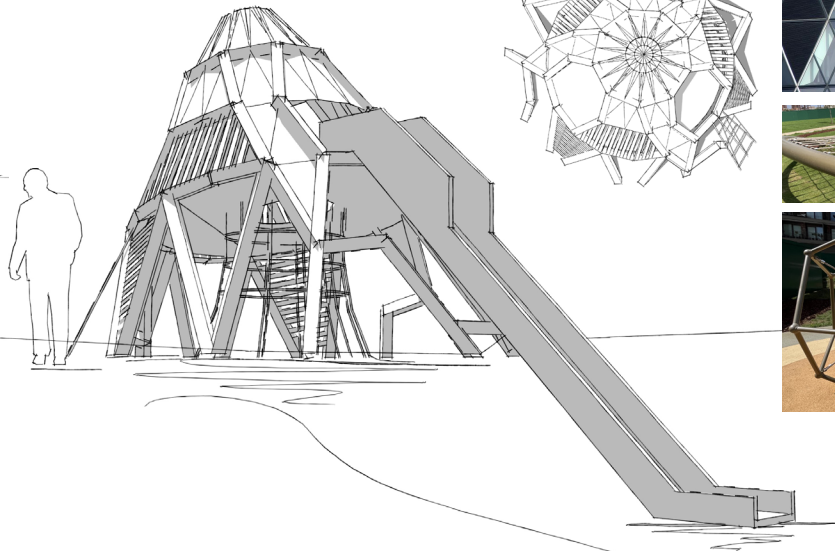
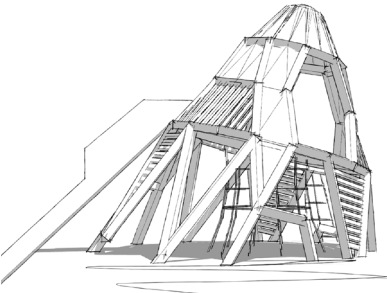
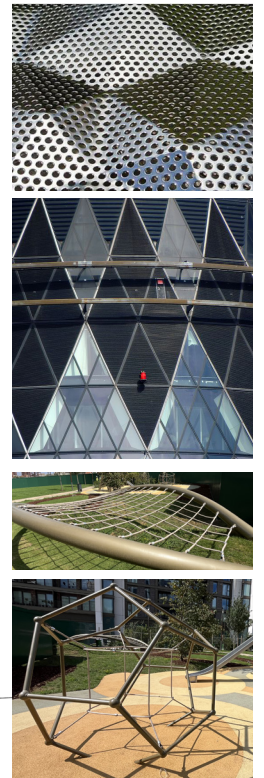
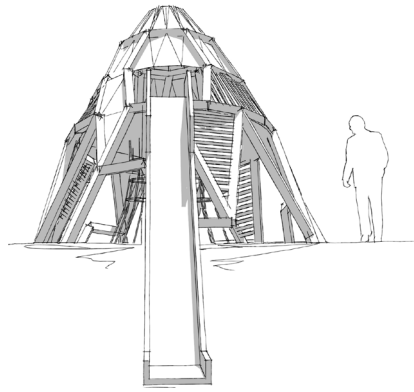
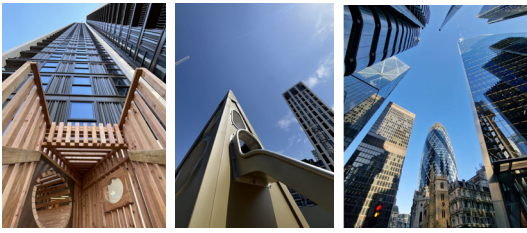
Concept Design 2 Dragon



This design takes inspiration from the dragon boundary markers and the coat of arms of the City of London Corporation, featuring a striking dragon's head and shield. The play equipment emphasises dynamic, fast-paced movements, offering activities like swinging, spinning, and rocking for an energetic and engaging experience.



Concept Design 3 Cityscape



The Cityscape design showcases a structured layout that mirrors the order and geometry of urban environments, highlighted by striking representations of some of the city's iconic buildings. It features blocky, linear play equipment and balancing structures that subdivide the space, resembling roads and reinforcing the theme of city life and organisation.



City of London Corporation: Tower Hill Playground

Give My View Executive Summary
29.11.24 - 22.12.24



Overview data

4,502
Votes



612
Voters



600
Written
feedback



91
Emails



Segmentation data

What is your relationship to Tower Hill Garden?

44%

I am a visitor
to the area

29%

I am a local
resident

23%

I work in
the area

4%

I study in
the area

Key headlines

Fort is the

winner!



The community also want
the playground to:

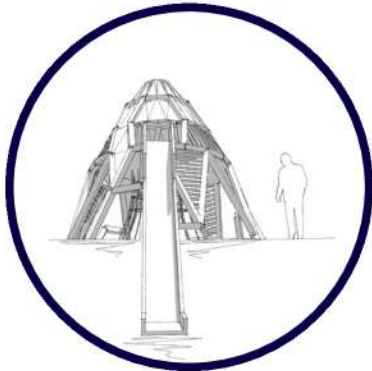
- Be fenced
- Be reflective of the immediate area
- Include an obstacle course, as well as swings & a climbing frame
- Include more trees & planting in the park

Survey results

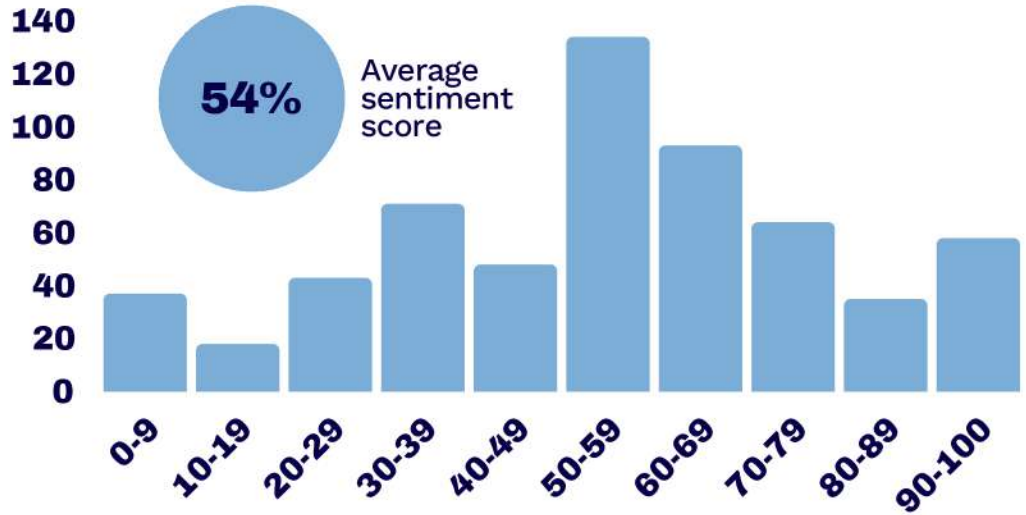


How do you feel about the _____ design option?

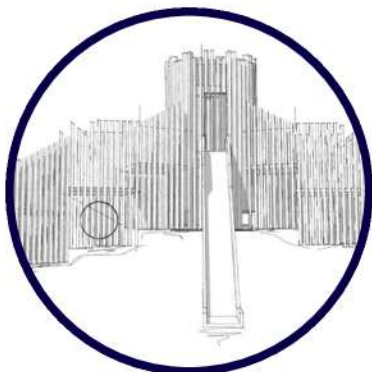
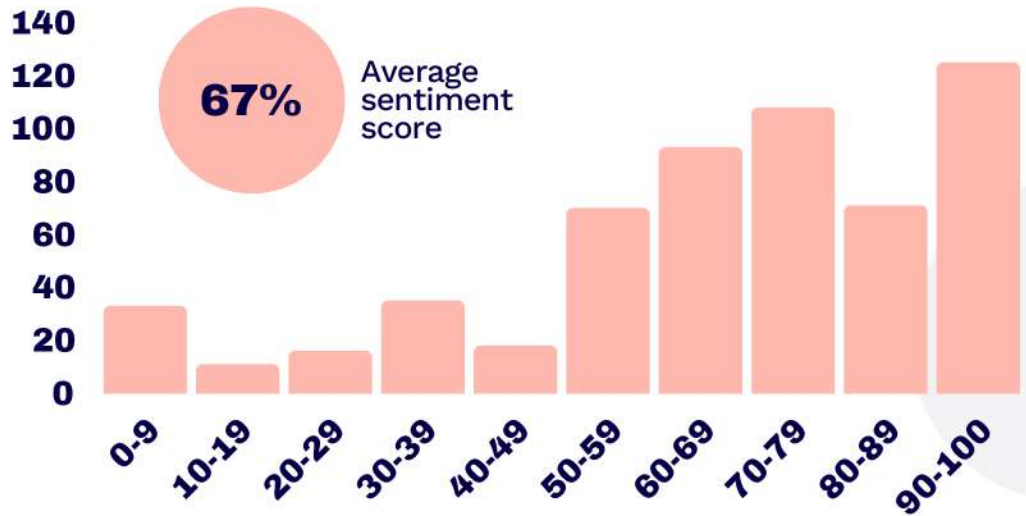
The community was asked 3 questions consecutively in the above format. For each question a new design was detailed. The question was set up as a sliding scale of 100 with an emoji associated with each.



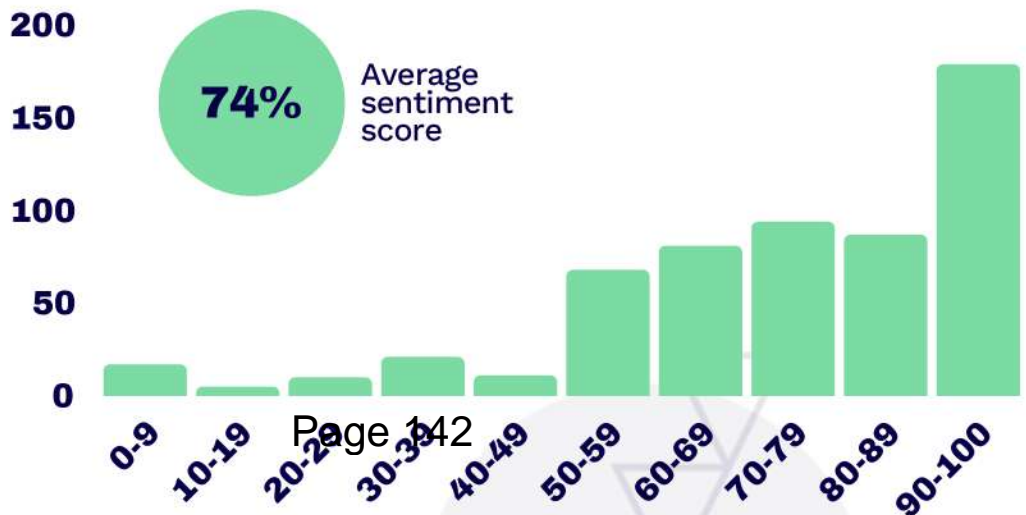
Cityscape



Dragon



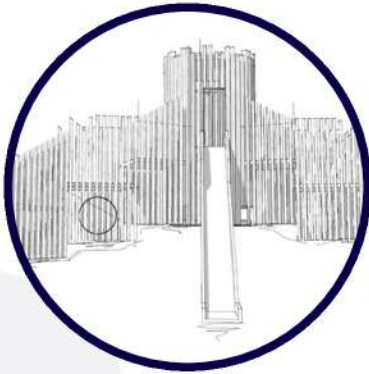
Fort





Which playground theme do you like the most?

The community was asked to pick which they preferred, they were then asked a follow up qualitative question asking why they like this one over the other options available. Below is a brief summary of what they said:



Fort

48%
of votes

209
comments

Reasons for choosing the Fort design:

Over Dragon:

- **Historical Relevance:** The connection to Tower Hill's heritage appealed to many.
- **Educational Potential:** This was seen as better for teaching children about local history.
- **Structured Play:** It offered more organised play opportunities compared to the imaginative Dragon theme.

Over Cityscape:

- **Cultural Fit:** The Fort aligned better with the area's identity than the modern Cityscape.
- **Timelessness:** Commenters viewed the Fort as timeless, while Cityscape felt trendy and short-term.



Dragon

37%
of votes

138
comments

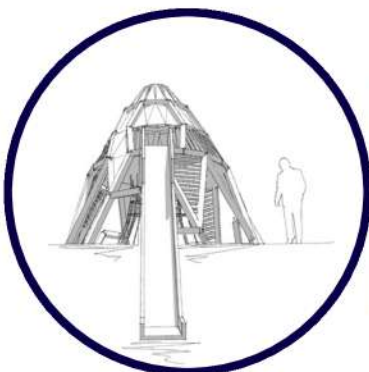
Reasons for choosing the Dragon design:

Over Fort:

- **Imagination and Playfulness:** This design is viewed as more fun and imaginative.
- **Visual Appeal:** It is seen as captivating and visually striking.

Over Cityscape:

- **Uniqueness:** This theme is considered more unique and special.
- **Child-Focused Design:** It is better suited for younger children, in contrast to the Cityscape.



Cityscape

15%
of votes

67
comments

Reasons for choosing the Cityscape design:

Over Dragon:

- **Urban Relevance:** Commenters liked that this theme reflected the surrounding urban environment.
- **Modern Aesthetic:** Described as more sleek, contemporary and advanced vs a more whimsical Dragon

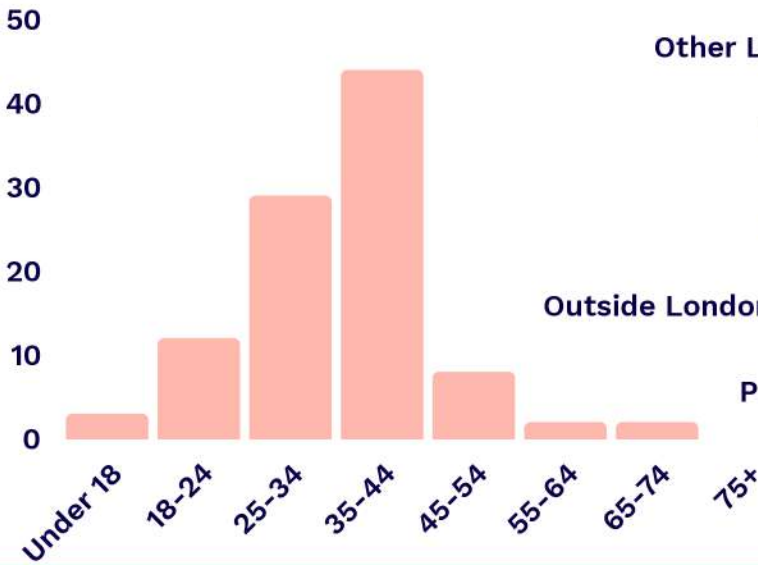
Over Fort:

- **Forward-Looking:** Perceived as progressive and innovative, compared to the Fort, which can be described as old-fashioned or overly traditional.
- **Neutral Theme:** Appreciation of the neutrality of the Cityscape, as it felt more inclusive than the historical Fort.

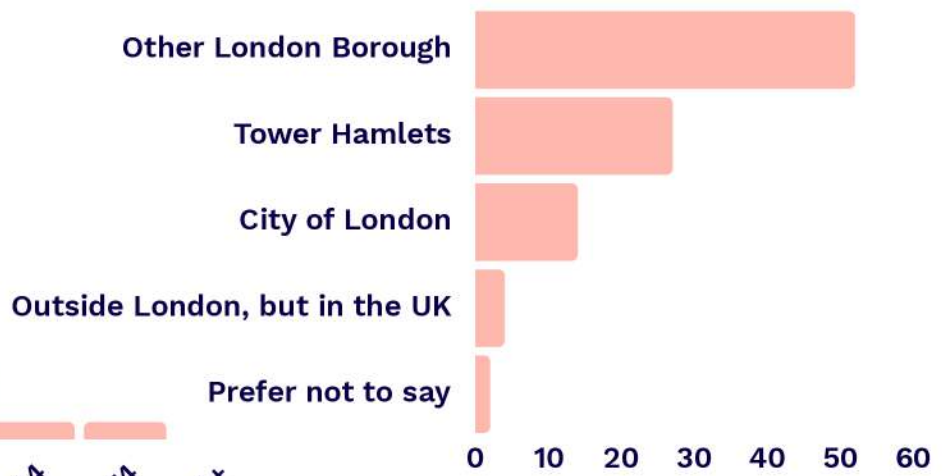
Demographic breakdown



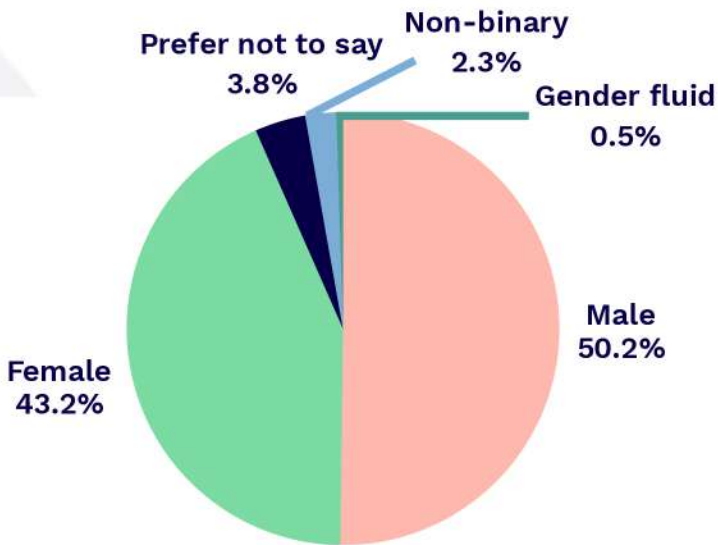
What age are you?



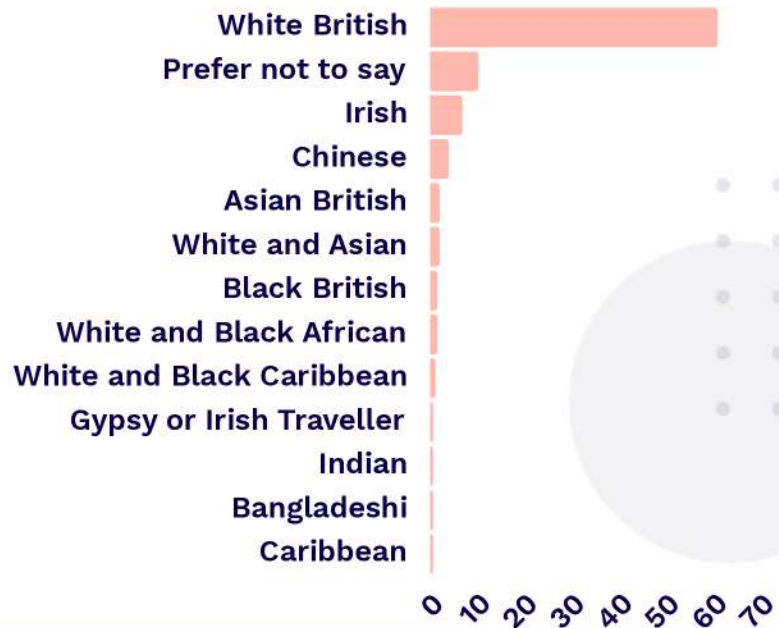
Where do you live?



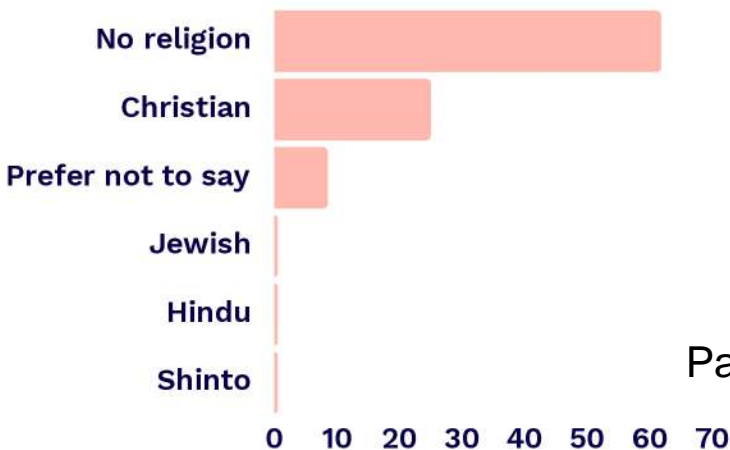
What gender do you identify as?



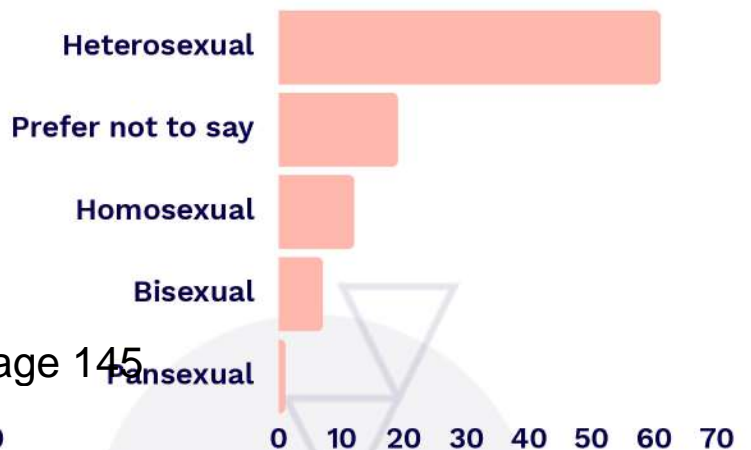
How do you describe your ethnicity?



What is your religion?



What sexuality do you identify as?





Digital Marketing Results

Facebook & Instagram



7,052

Link Clicks

From the digital advertising



199,335

Reach

The amount of people who were shown the ads at least once



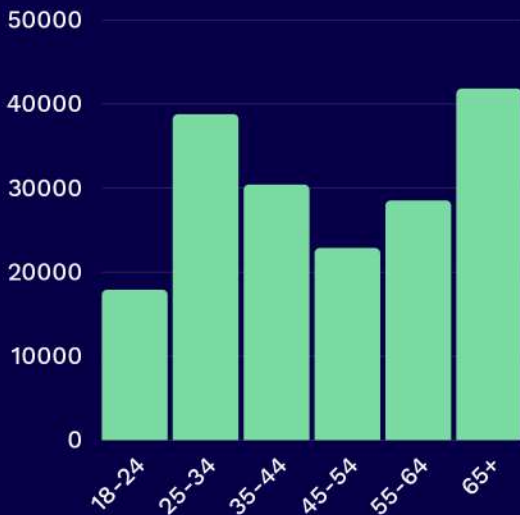
375,926

Impressions

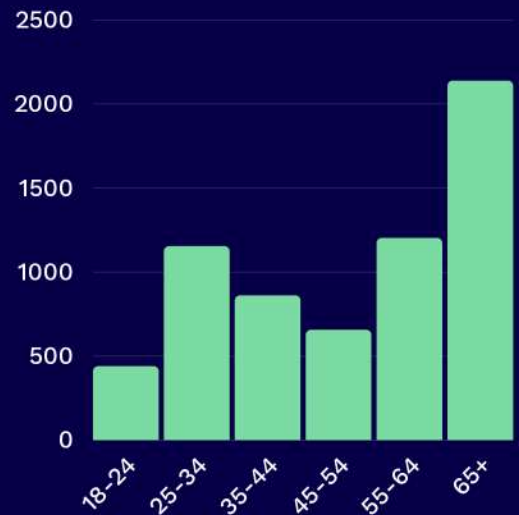
The number of times that adverts were viewed in total

Link clicks are any interactions like clicks, taps, or swipes on the ad's text, media, or call to action that lead to destinations or experiences.

Ages Targeted

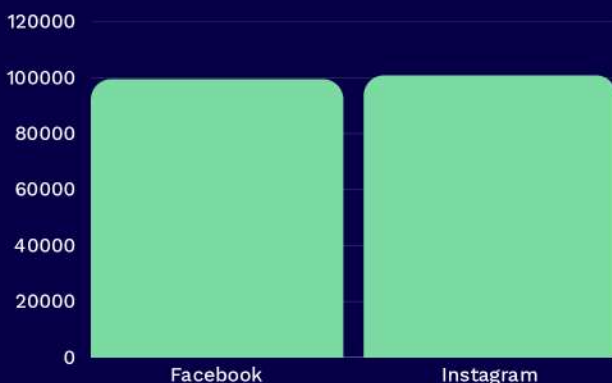


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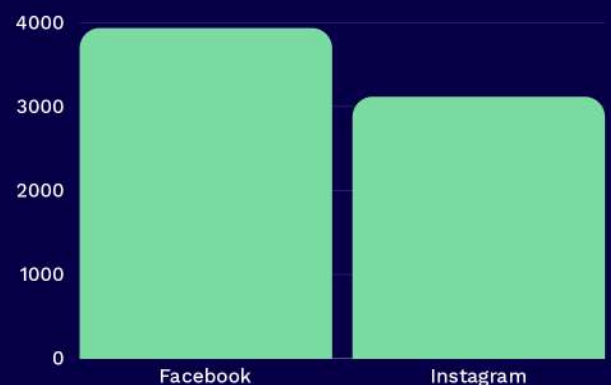


Link Clicks

Ad Placement



Reach



Link Clicks

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Appendix 3:

Final Design

Chosen Design General Arrangement











Key

[Red line]	Application Boundary
[Circle with dot]	Existing trees and RPA
[Brown textured box]	Tiger mulch (Play safety surface)
[Light brown textured box]	Resin bound path (Permeable)
[Dark brown textured box]	Composite Decking
[Hexagon with dot]	Existing boulders repositioned
[Line with 'T']	Timber Edging
[Line with 'F']	Fence
[Line with 'B']	Bench
[Line with 'F03']	Self closing single gate
[Line with 'F04']	Self closing double gate
[Line with 'F05']	Self closing double gate
[Hatched box]	Planting Low Maintenance native mix
[Green textured box]	Proposed Hedge (Double staggered on mixed native species)
[Light green textured box]	Grass Amenity Turf

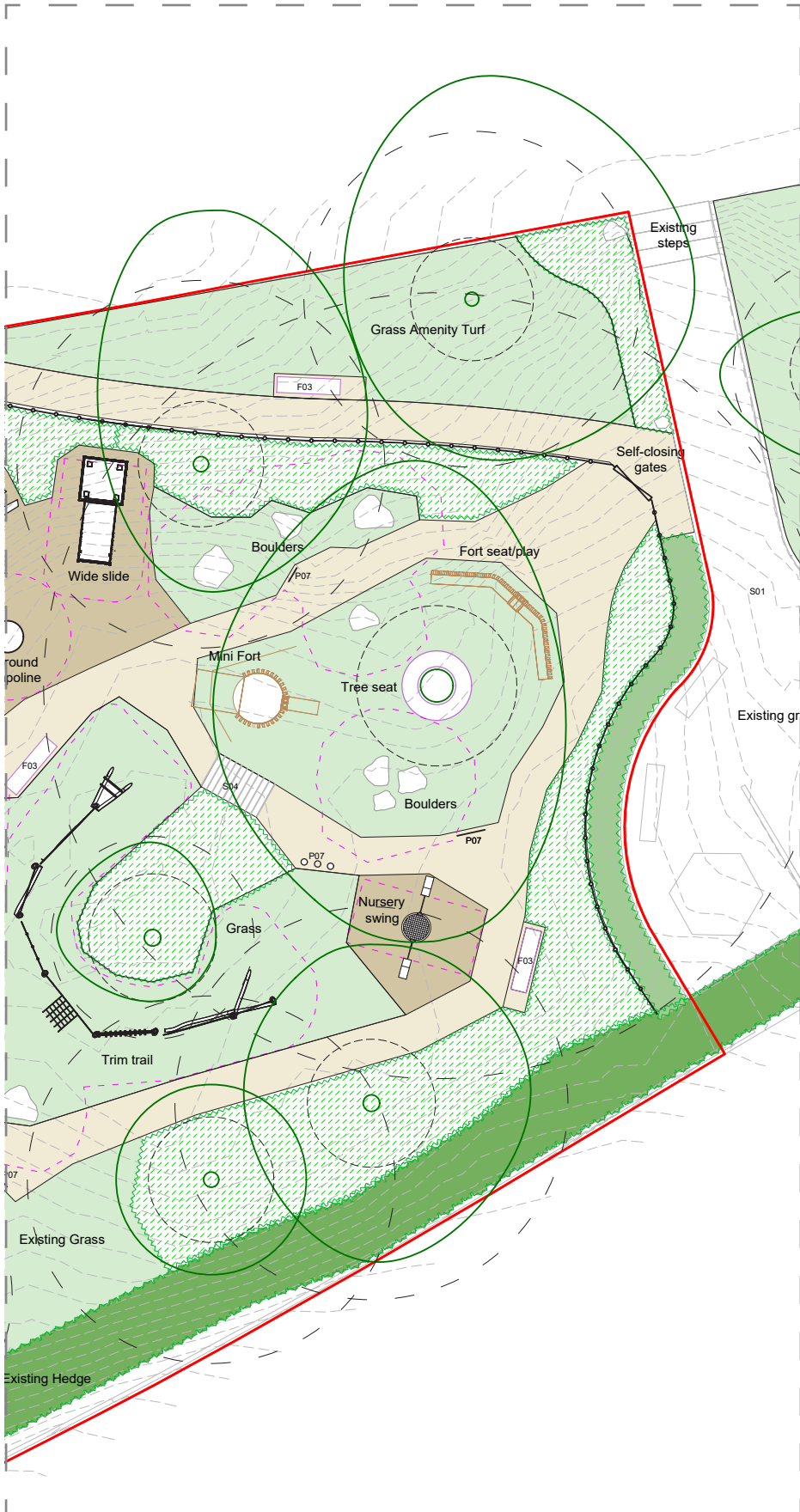
Tower Hill Play Design **General Arrangement (West)**







Key

-  **Application Boundary**
-  **Existing trees and RPA**
-  **S02- Tiger mulch (Play safety surface)**
Allow for removal of top layer of grass, 100mm depth tiger mulch with no edgings, edges feathered in with site won topsoil and seeded.
-  **S03- Resin Bound Gravel path**
Permeable path 1.2m wide
- Edgings**
-  **E01 - Timber edging, thin - pressure treated timber softwood edge boards, 150mm width x 19mm thick, secured using timber softwood pegs at 0.5m centres.**
- Furniture & Fencing**
- F01 - Metal railing of 1.2m high**
- F02 - Existing boulders salvaged and re-positioned**
- F03 - Westminster Seat 1.95m- 4 Seater Hardwood Bench**
<https://www.bransonleisure.com/product/westminster-seat-1-95m/>
- F04 - Self closing double gate**
- F05 - Self closing single gate**
- F06 - Circular Tree Seat**
- Catalogue Play Equipment by Play Equip**
- P01 - Nursery Swing**
- P02 - Group Basket Swing**
- P03 - Inclusive Roundabout**
- P04 - Trim Trail**
- P05 - Wide Slide**
- P06 - In-ground Trampoline**
- P07 - Sensory Play**
- Bespoke Play Equipment by Play Equip**
- P08 - Fort Play Structure**
-  **Proposed amenity grass turf**
Cultivated and prepared. DLF seed mix PM 51 Greenscape @ 35g/m².
-  **Proposed low mixed planting**
Low maintenance native mix, average no. plants per m²
-  **UK Native evergreen hedgerow**
Double staggered UK native evergreen hedgerow.


Tower Hill Play Design General Arrangement (East)



Key

-  **Application Boundary**
-  **Existing trees and RPA**
-  **S02- Tiger mulch (Play safety surface)**
Allow for removal of top layer of grass, 100mm depth tiger mulch with no edgings, edges feathered in with site won topsoil and seeded.
-  **S03- Resin Bound Gravel path**
Permeable path 1.2m wide

Edgings

-  **E01 - Timber edging, thin - pressure treated timber softwood edge boards, 150mm width x 19mm thick, secured using timber softwood pegs at 0.5m centres.**

Furniture & Fencing


- F01 - Metal railing of 1.2m high**
- F02 - Existing boulders salvaged and re-positioned**
- F03 - Westminster Seat 1.95m- 4 Seater Hardwood Bench**
<https://www.bransonleisure.com/product/westminster-seat-1-95m/>
- F04 - Self closing double gate**
- F05 - Self closing single gate**
- F06 - Circular Tree Seat**

Catalogue Play Equipment by Play Equip

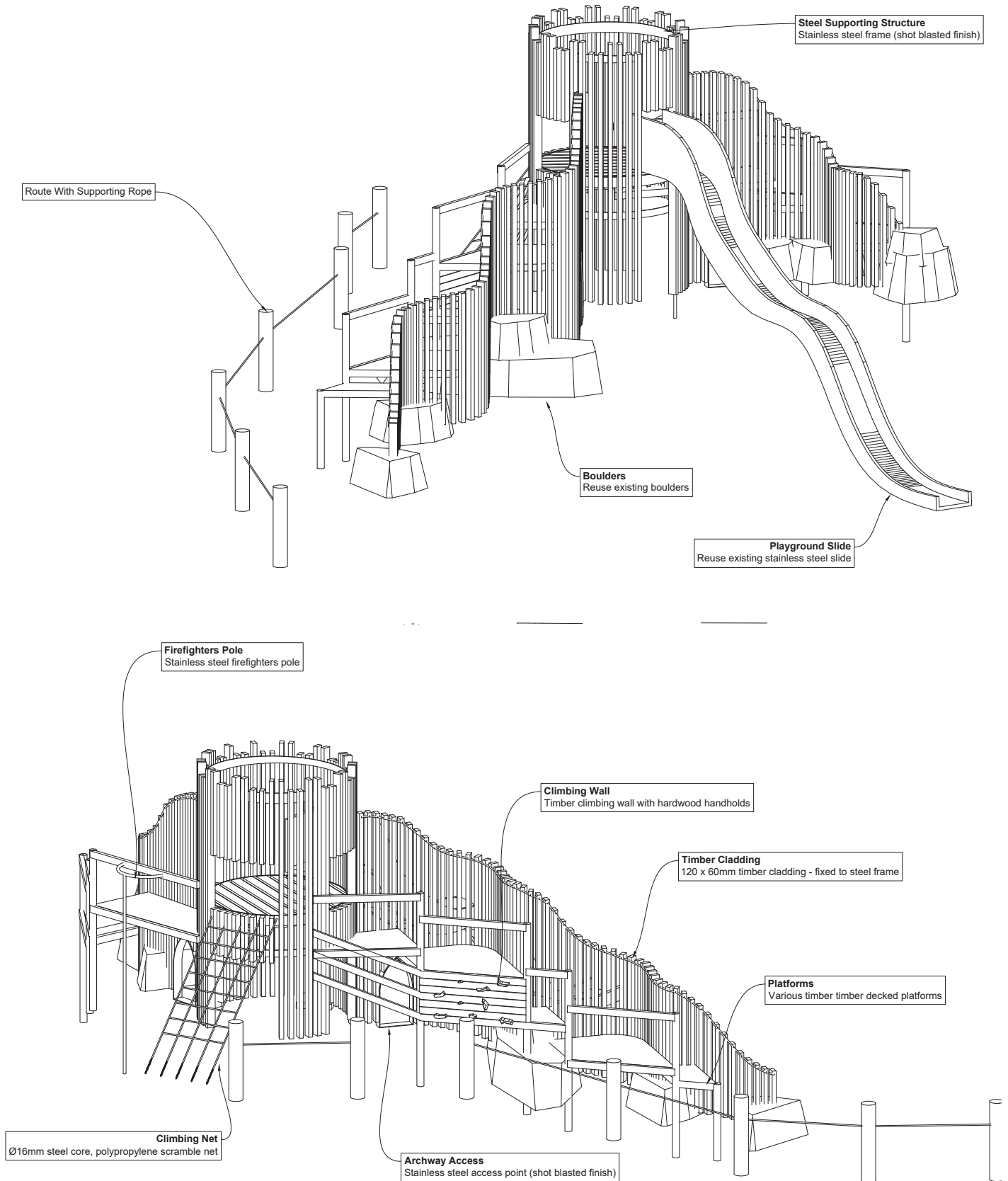
- P01 - Nursery Swing**
- P02 - Group Basket Swing**
- P03 - Inclusive Roundabout**
- P04 - Trim Trail**
- P05 - Wide Slide**
- P06 - In-ground Trampoline**
- P07 - Sensory Play**

Bespoke Play Equipment by Play Equip

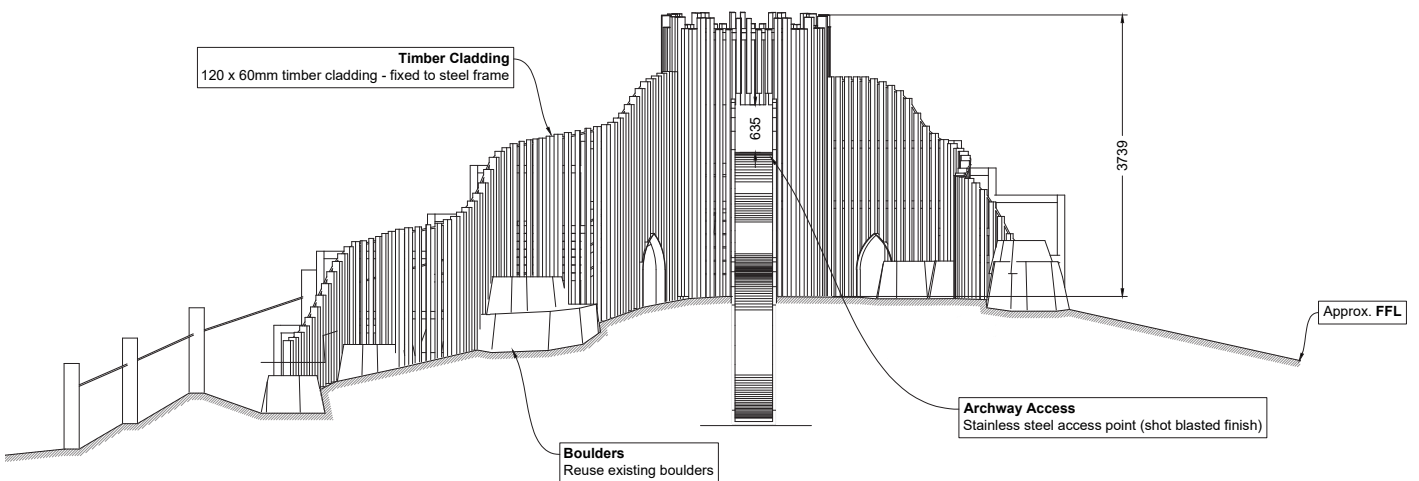
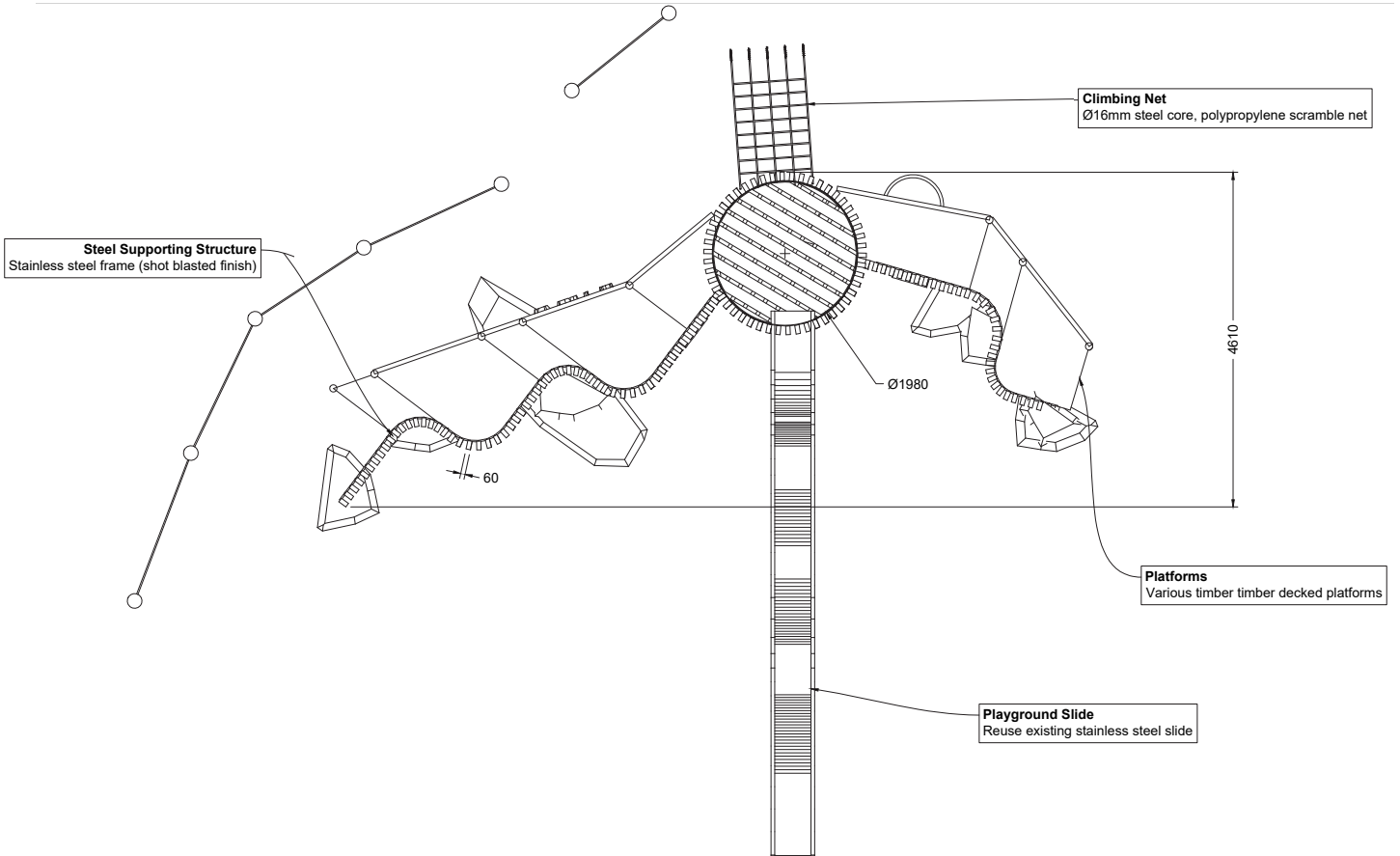
- P08 - Fort Play Structure**

-  **Proposed amenity grass turf**
Cultivated and prepared. DLF seed mix PM 51 Greenscape @ 35g/m².
-  **Proposed low mixed planting**
Low maintenance native mix, average no. plants per m²
-  **UK Native evergreen hedgerow**
Double staggered UK native evergreen hedgerow.

Play Equipment **Bespoke Fort Play**



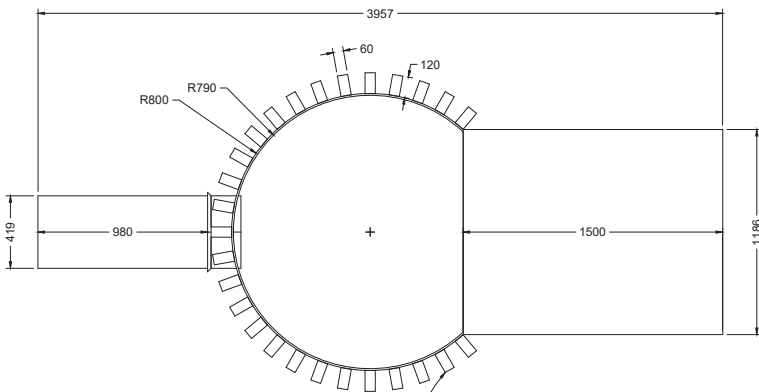
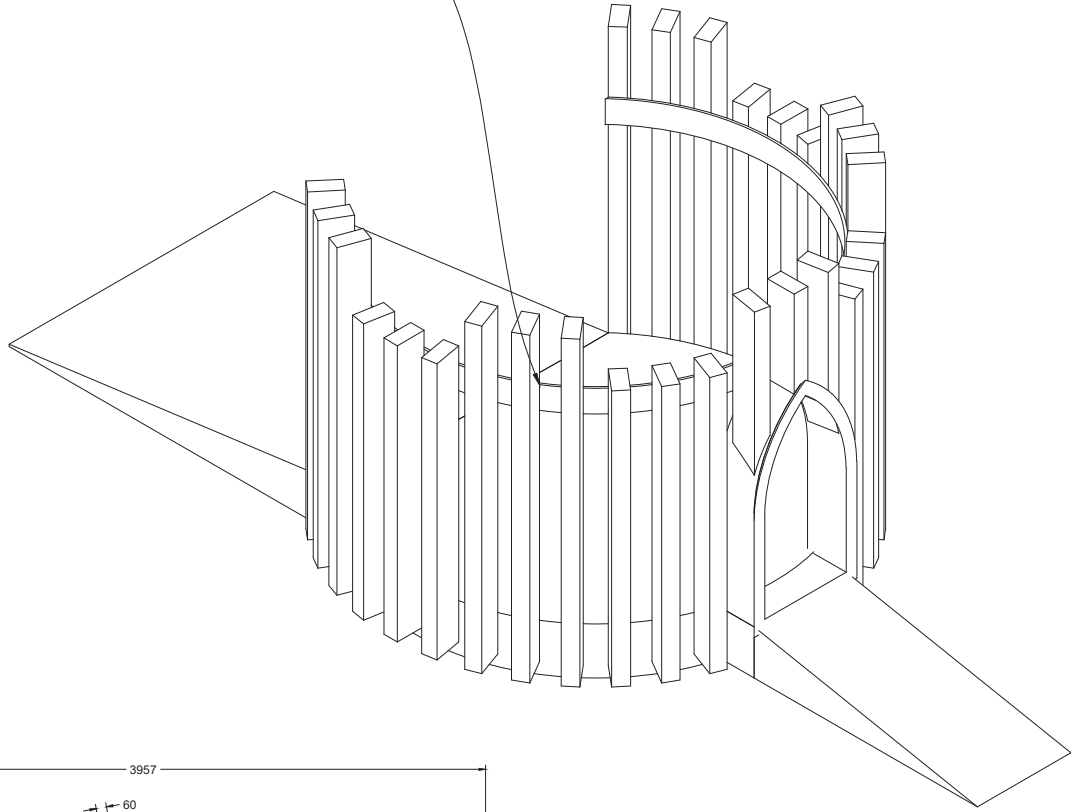
Play Equipment Bespoke Fort Play



is specified otherwise

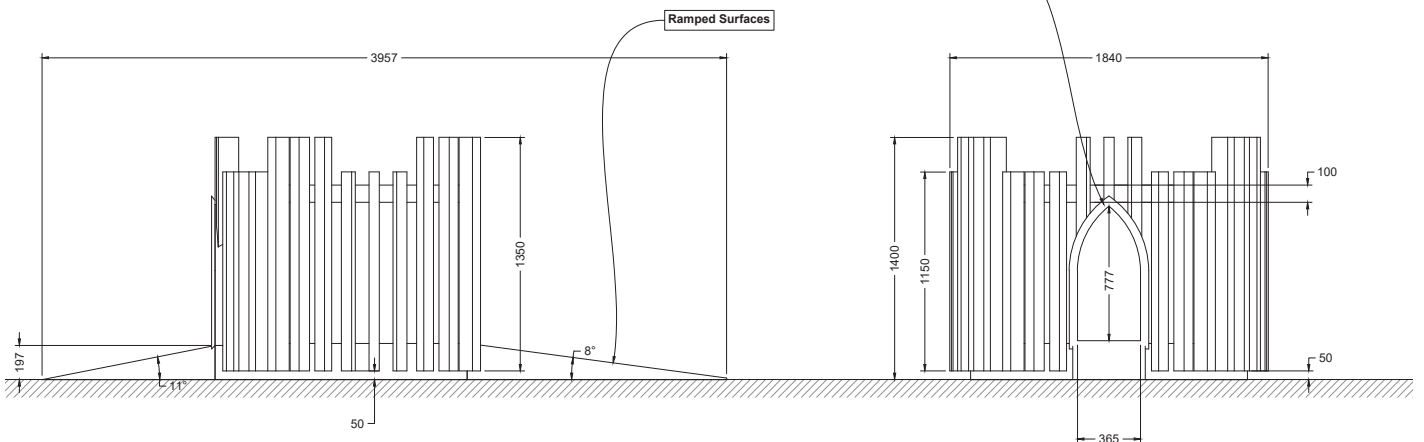
Play Equipment Bespoke Fort Play- Mini Fort

Steel Supporting Structure
Stainless steel frame (shot blasted finish)

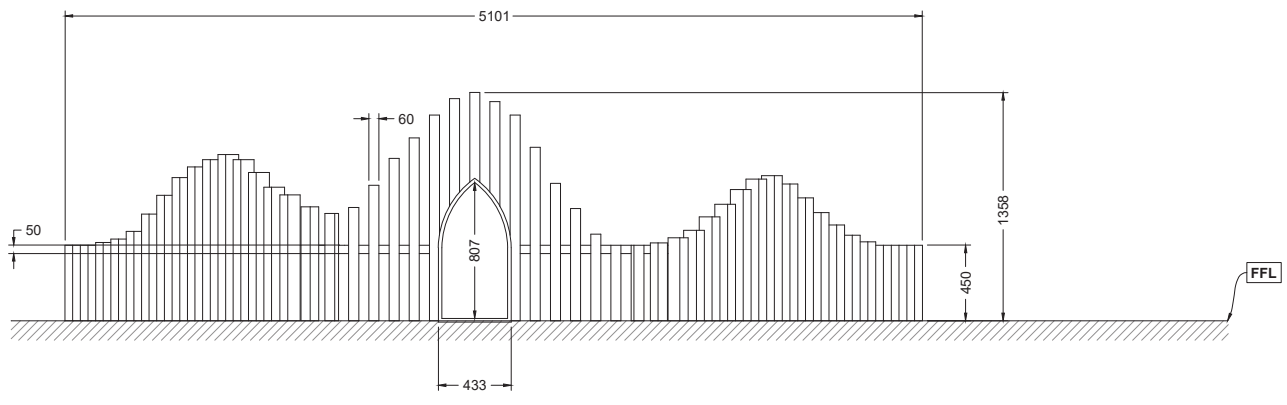
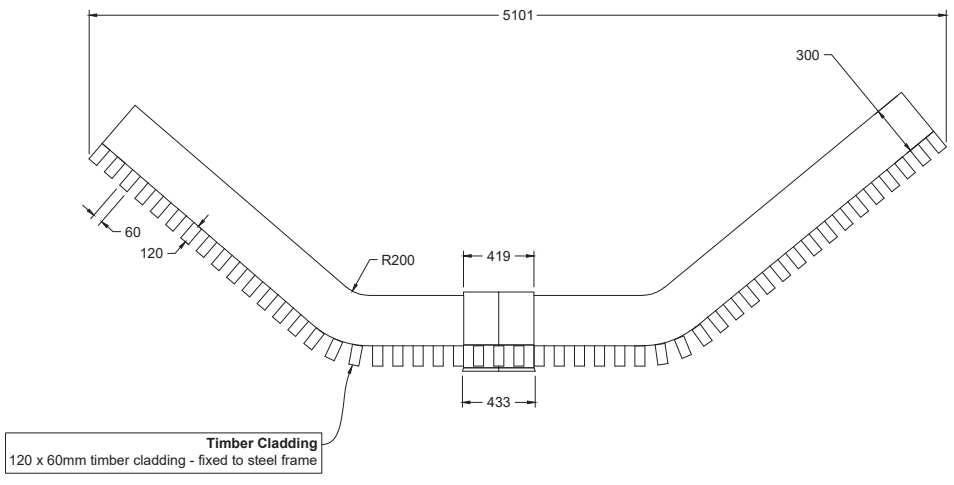
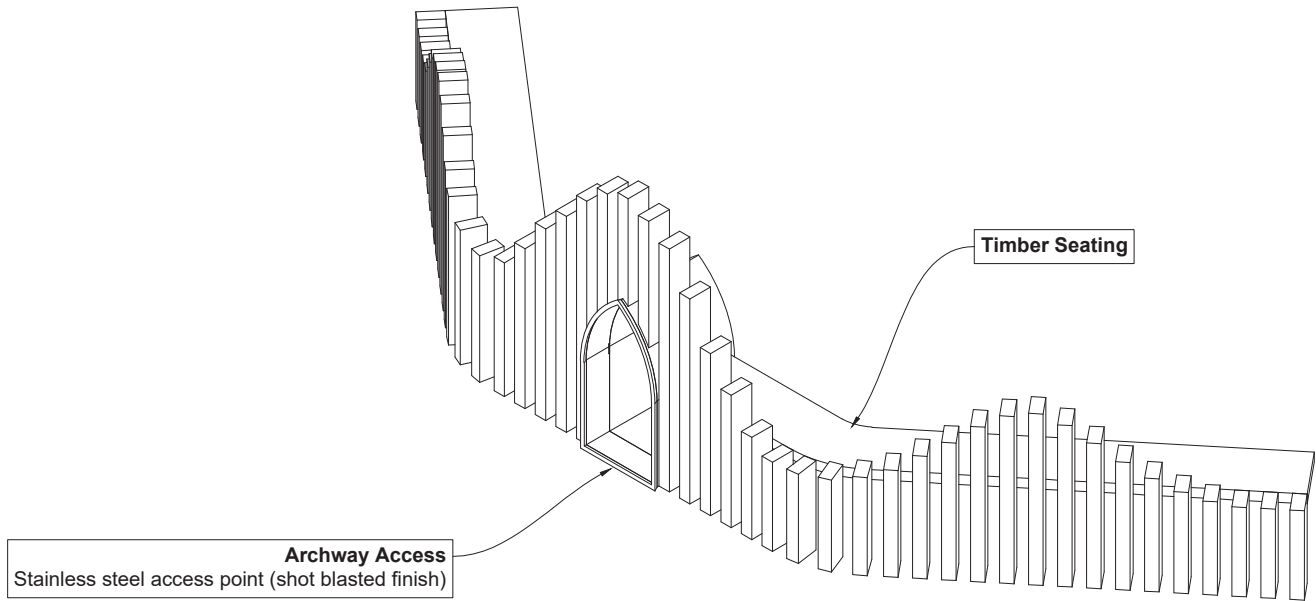


Timber Cladding
120 x 60mm timber cladding - fixed to steel frame

Archway Access
Stainless steel access point (shot blasted finish)



Play Equipment **Bespoke Fort Play- Fort Play/ Seat**

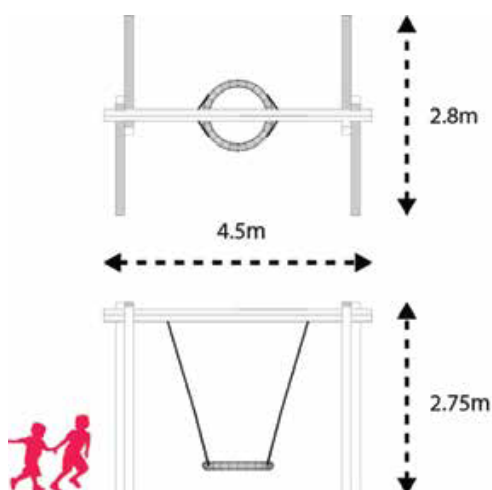
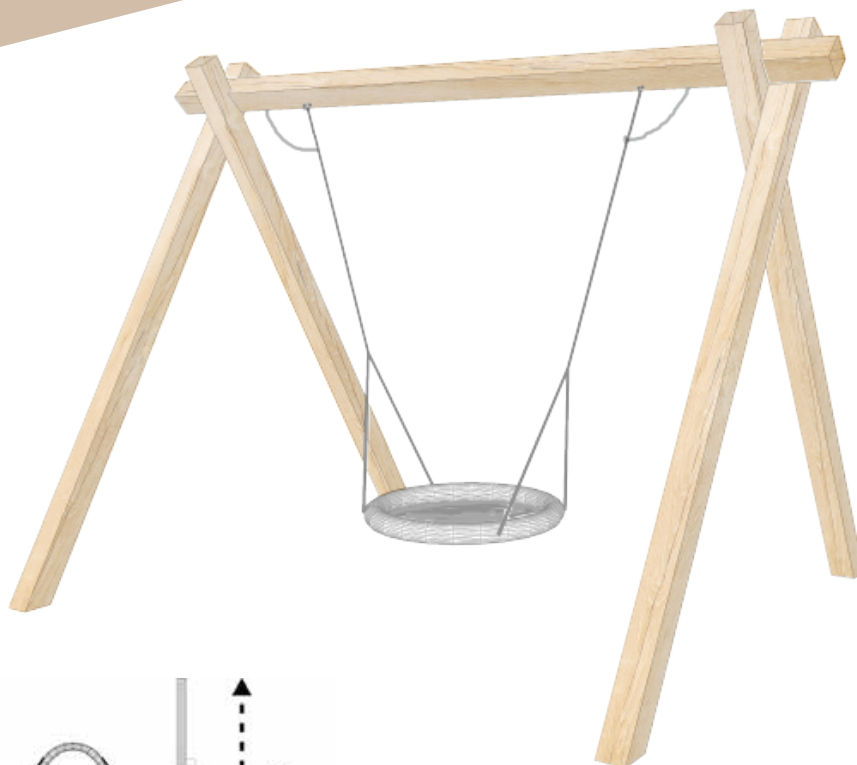


Play Equipment **Group Swing**

Group Swing

Product code SW.03

PLAYEQUIP



Dimensions LxWxH (m)
4.5 x 3.4 x 2.7

CFH - 1.5

Safety Surface Area - 22 sqm

Guarantees

Timber - 15 years

Ropes & Nets - 1 year

Fixings - 20 years

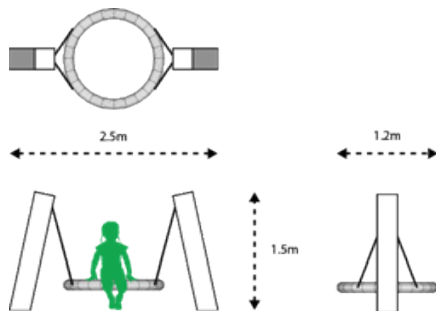
The wooden group swing is designed to allow several children to play together, including those with special needs. The swing is made from heavy duty oak beams or 200 mm diameter robinia poles, stainless steel swing fixings and can be supplied with a variety of cradles depending on your needs. We supply super durable chain cradles, steel core rope cradles and soft rope cradles in a choice of colours. A great piece of wooden playground equipment for a natural playground.

Play Equipment Nursery Swing

Nursery Swing

Product code SW.02

PLAYEQUIP



Dimensions LxWxH (m)

2.5 x 1.2 x 1.5

CFH - 1.2

Safety Surface Area - 15 sqm

Guarantees

Timber - 15 years

Ropes & Nets - 1 year

Fixings - 20 years

The nursery school swing allows several younger children and toddlers to play together, including those with special needs. The swing is made from heavy duty oak beams, stainless steel swing fixings and a soft and durable cradle. The unique contemporary design of this swing makes it the perfect wooden swing for toddlers and smaller children in nurseries and gardens.

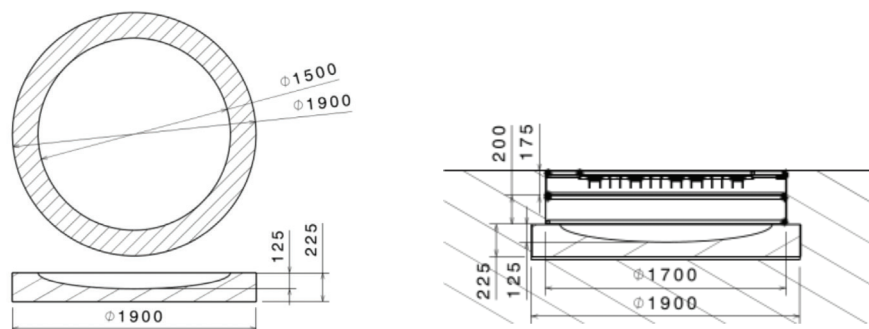
Playground Trampoline (Round)

Product code PT.01

PLAYEQUIP



More sizes available.



Our mini playground trampoline is a really fun way to exercise and have a great time at the same time. It's highly durable components make it a fantastic feature to any playground, school or garden. Designed to be flush with ground level, the trampoline fits discreetly into any environment until discovered.

Outdoor In-Ground Playground Trampoline Features

- Variation of sizes of jumping surface to suit your space
- EN-1176 Safety Standard
- Durable for public space use
- Lifiable top to allow cleaning

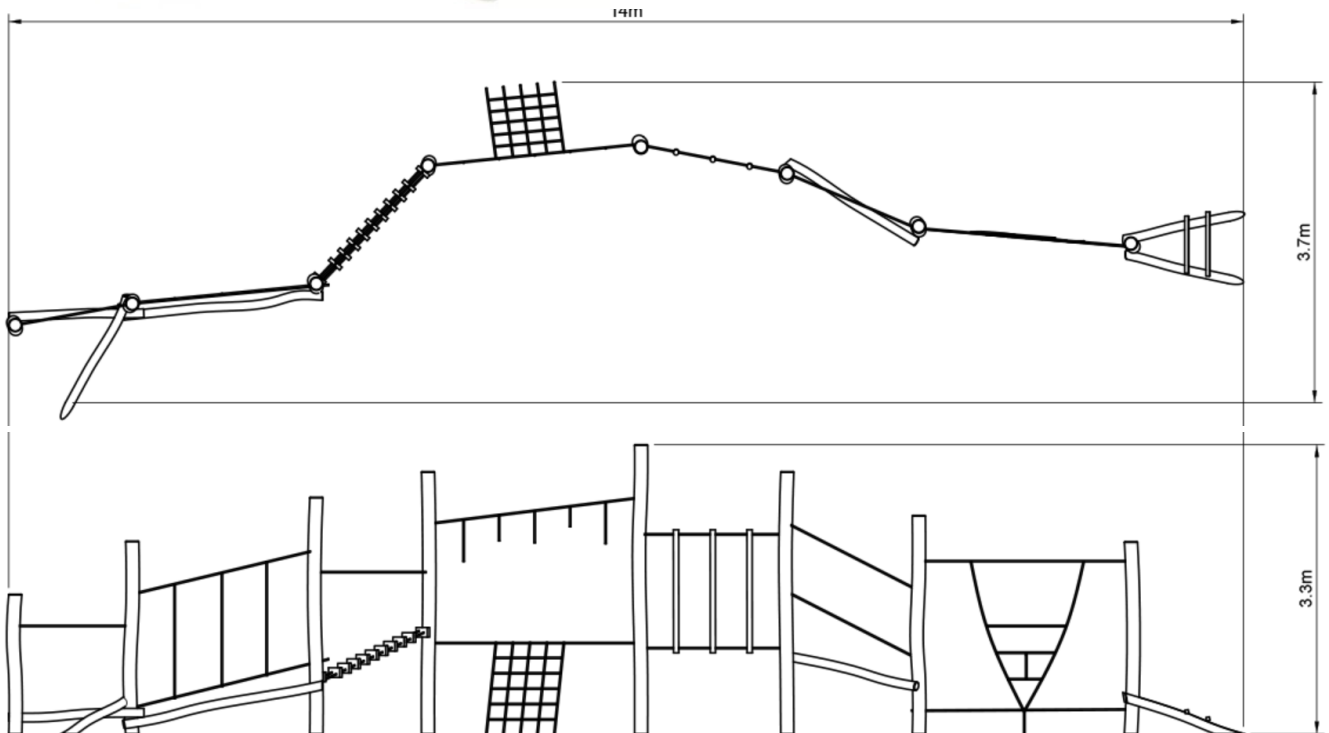
Dimensions LxWxH (m)

Jumping area from \varnothing 1.2m
External from \varnothing 1.7m

CFH - 1.2

Safety Surface Area - from
22sqm

Play Equipment **Jungle Trim Trail**



Introducing the Jungle Trim Trail, an ultimate playground challenge meticulously crafted from high-quality robinia hardwood. This adventure-packed experience seamlessly blends various ropes and timber bridges, promising endless fun for all.

Built with durability in mind, the Jungle Trim Trail features a robust construction with anti-vandal stainless steel fixings. This ensures longevity, making it a lasting investment that stands up to the test of time.

More than just a play structure, the Jungle Trim Trail is a statement of quality and craftsmanship. Designed to captivate and endure, it elevates your play space with dynamic and resilient additions, guaranteeing both safety and

boundless entertainment. Upgrade your playground with this high-quality and exciting adventure for all ages.

The nature of this construction allows it to be located around bends and not just in a straight line. Giving flexibility and a more natural aesthetic (subject to compliancy).

Key Features

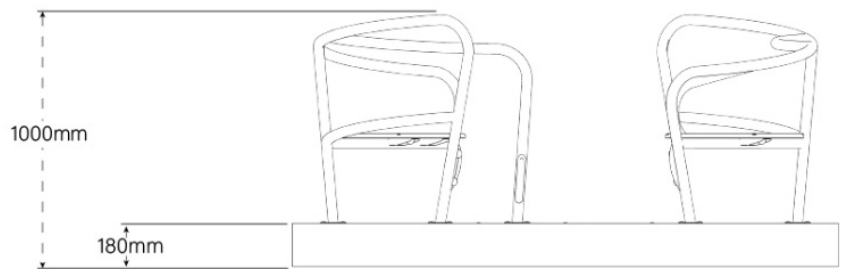
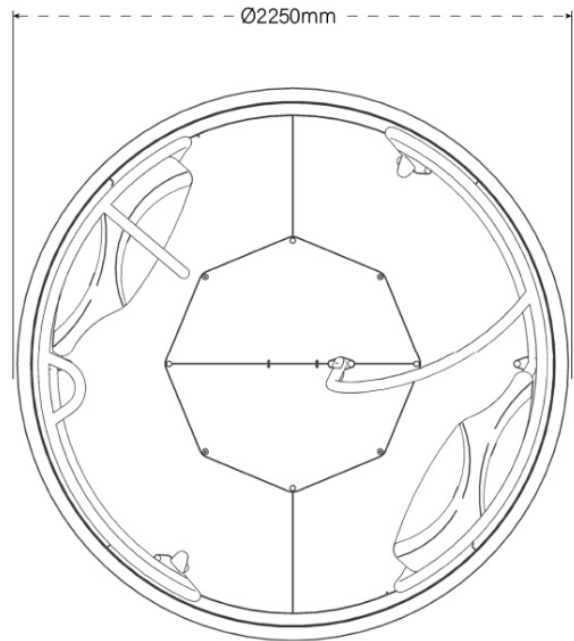
- Stainless steel fixtures and fittings
- Naturally durable robinia hardwood (FSC®)
- Premium finish
- 16mm steel core play rope and nets

Play Equipment **Inclusive Roundabout**

Introducing our flush-to-the-ground Inclusive Roundabout, expertly designed for effortless access and maximum safety. Ideal for wheelchair users, this addition not only enhances inclusivity but also promotes shared enjoyment. Crafted with precision, it symbolizes our commitment to safety and accessible play. Elevate your playground with this inclusive and well-designed feature.

Key Features

- Wheel chair access
- Available seating
- Steel tread plate floor for grip
- Powder coated finish



Play Equipment **Wide Slide**



Our 1m super wide metal embankment slides are the ultimate in collaborative play slides. These slides are wide enough for 2 people to side down at once creating that extra exhilaration and excitement. We supply and install wide embankment slides at a variety of lengths with platforms ranging from 0.9m – 2.75m. All of our slides are made from stainless steel, making them durable and as vandal proof as possible.



Because of the generous width and the placing of the slide on an existing embankment, it is possible for children with reduced mobility to be assisted onto and accompanied down this slide. This has been very successful for children of all abilities in previous schemes.

Play Equipment **Sensory Play; Activity Panel and Telephones**



The activity panel was designed to provide entertaining and stimulating activities for any playground, school, or garden. Colored spinners will enable interactive play, promoting the development of social and coordination skills.

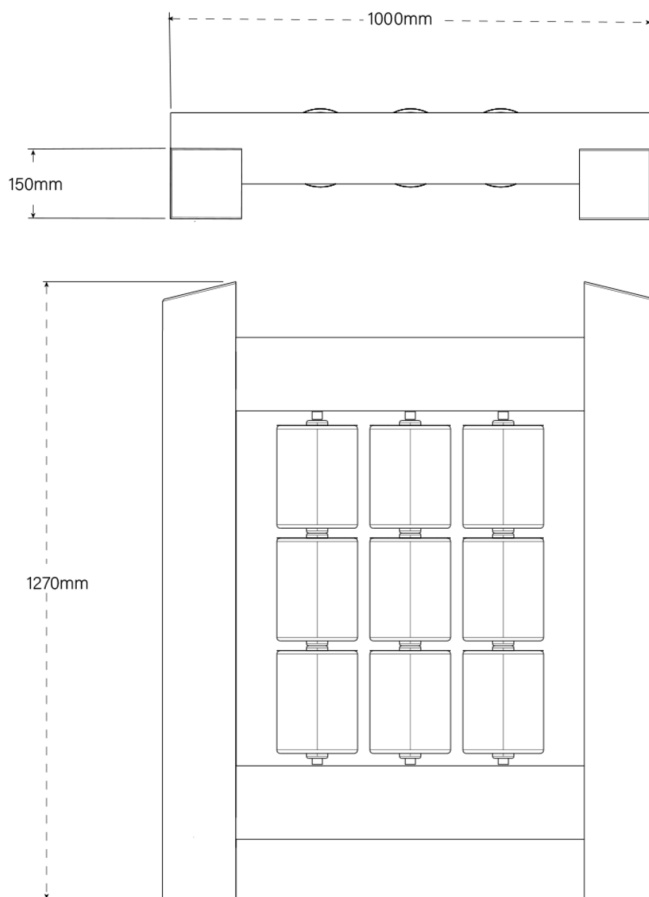
Constructed from solid oak with stainless steel fixings, the activity panel will stand the test of time. All of the timber used FSC® certified and sourced as locally as possible.

Key Features

- Solid oak frame for natural durability
- Anti vandal stainless steel fixings
- Interactive coloured spinners
- FSC® certified timber used

Guarantees

- Timber – 15 years
- Fixings – 20 years

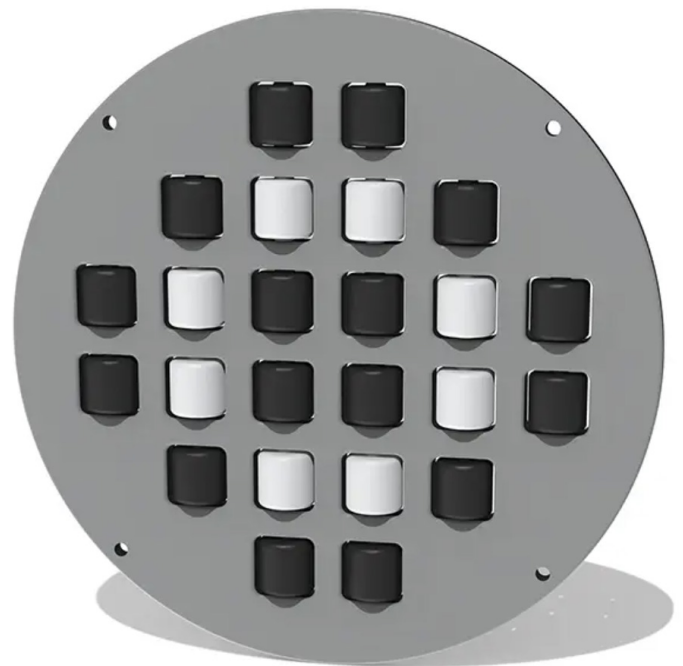


The elegant and durable stainless steel flutes are a great playground feature that gives a whole other dimension to the fun in all settings.

Key Features

- 2 stainless steel flutes 1m high
- 15m of 30mm bend proof and pressure proof linking pipe with steel inlay (variable lengths supplied to order)

Play Equipment **Sensory Play; Play Panel**



Maze Slide: Navigate the ball through winding paths and tricky turns in this tactile maze game. It encourages hand-eye coordination, problem-solving, and patience.

Roller Pixel: Rotate the rollers to reveal different images and patterns. It's a fun, dynamic way to inspire creativity and pattern recognition in children.

Crafted for durability, the oak frame ensures the Play Panel withstands the elements, while the inserts are designed to be low-maintenance and long-lasting. Whether installed in a public park or a private play area, the Play Panel will become a favourite spot for children to learn and play.

Key Features:

- Sturdy solid oak frame for longevity and aesthetic appeal
- Choice of three game inserts: Maze Slide, Pattern Slider, and Roller Pixel
- Promotes cognitive development, motor skills, and creative thinking
- Suitable for outdoor use in schools, parks, or residential gardens
- Easy to maintain, with all parts designed to withstand heavy use

Play Equipment **Journeying; Timber steps, stumps and trunk**

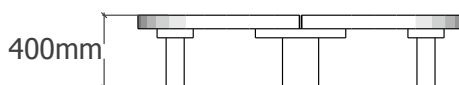
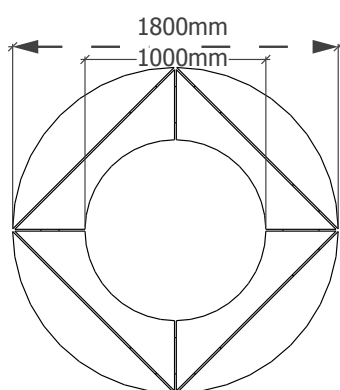
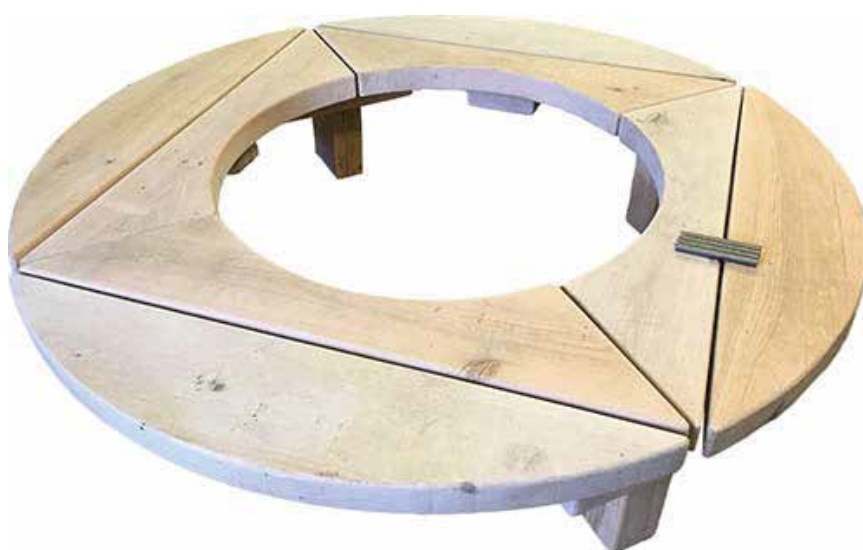


Timber stumps and trunk, set in Tiger Mulch play safety surface



Timber steps, set in Tiger Mulch play safety surface

PLAYEQUIP



Dimensions LxWxH (m)
1.8 x 1.8 x 0.4

CFH - 0

Safety Surface Area - 0 sqm

Our circular tree benches are made from premium oak and are designed to fit around any sized tree. Tree benches can make a great addition to any garden, school or public space, converting a tree into a natural rest spot.

The super robust 75mm thick oak seat makes the tree bench highly durable and suitable for spaces exposed to all types of weather.

Tree benches are also extremely easy to assemble and come with tamper proof stainless steel bolts that can be easily fixed to the ground with the stainless steel concrete mixing supplied.

Guarantees

Timber - 15 years

Fixings - 20 years

Planting Palette **Shade planting (below tree canopies)**



Alchemilla mollis



Polystichum setiferum



Geranium macrorrhizum White-Ness



Asplenium scolopendrium



Geranium sylvaticum



Deschampsia cespitosa Golden Veil

Planting Palette **Pollinators and Sensory Planting**



Lavandula angustifolia 'Hidcote'



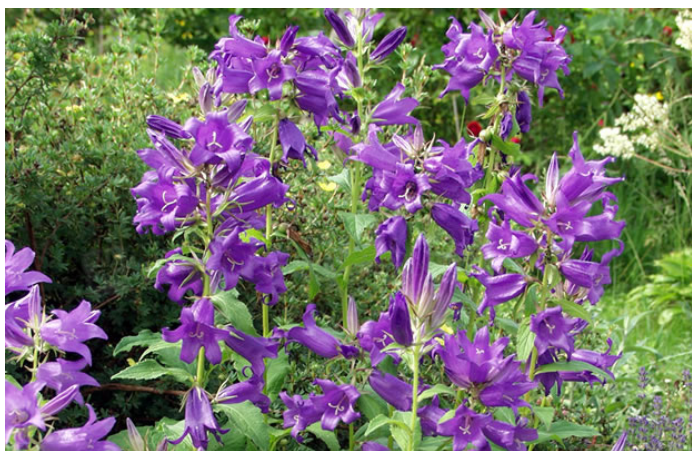
Persicaria amplexicaulis 'Firedance'



Stipa tenuissima



Pennisetum villosum



Campanula latifolia var. *macrantha*



Libertia formosa

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