



Natural Environment Board

Date: THURSDAY, 23 OCTOBER 2025

Time: 11.00 am – or at the rising of the West Ham Park Committee, whichever is later.

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

Members:

James St John Davis (Chair)	Deputy Benjamin Murphy
Charles Edward Lord, OBE JP (Deputy Chair)	William Upton KC
Deputy Anne Corbett	Heather Barrett-Mold
Karina Dostalova, Bishopsgate	Vladislav Dobrokhoto
Deputy Caroline Haines	Tony Leach
Alderman Gregory Jones KC (Ex-Officio Member)	Dani Stephenson
Wendy Mead OBE	John Beyer, Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee (Observer)
	Catherine Bickmore (Observer)
	Verderer Paul Morris (Observer)

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

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Ian Thomas CBE
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

AGENDA

NB: Certain matters for information will be taken without discussion, unless the Committee Clerk has been informed that a Member has questions or comments prior to the start of the meeting.

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 Thursday 3 July 2025.

For Decision
(Pages 7 - 12)

4. **RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE**

Report of the Executive Director, Environment.

For Information
(Pages 13 - 62)

5. **CLIMATE ACTION STRATEGY UPDATE**

The Committee to receive a verbal update and presentation from Officers of the Environment Department.

For Information

Open Spaces

6. **REVENUE OUTTURN REPORT - 2024/25**

Report of the Chamberlain and Executive Director, Environment.

For Information
(Pages 63 - 74)

7. **NATURAL ENVIRONMENT OPERATIONAL FINANCE PROGRESS REPORT Q1 2025/26**

Report of the Chamberlain.

For Information
(Pages 75 - 94)

8. **ENJOYING GREEN SPACES AND THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT – ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25**

Report of the Interim Managing Director of City Bridge Foundation.

For Information
(Pages 95 - 116)

9. **COOL STREETS AND GREENING – PROGRAMME UPDATE**

Report of the Executive Director, Environment.

For Information
(Pages 117 - 146)

10. **MOORGATE CROSSRAIL STATION LINKS: FINSBURY CIRCUS WESTERN ARM**

Director of the Built Environment.

For Information
(Pages 147 - 166)

11. **PONDS - VERBAL UPDATE**

The Committee to receive a presentation from Officers of the Environment Department.

For Information

City Gardens

12. **CITY GARDENS TREE ANNUAL UPDATE**

Report of the Executive Director, Environment.

For Information
(Pages 167 - 178)

13. **CITY GARDENS UPDATE**

The Committee to receive a verbal update from Officers from the Environment Department

For Information

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**

Part 2 - Non-Public Agenda

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

17. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

To agree the non-public minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 3 July 2025.

For Decision
(Pages 179 - 180)

18. **NATURAL ENVIRONMENT OUTSTANDING DEBT ARREARS - 30 JUNE 2025**

Report of the Executive Director, Environment.

For Information
(Pages 181 - 192)

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**

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NATURAL ENVIRONMENT BOARD Thursday, 3 July 2025

Minutes of the meeting of the Natural Environment Board held at Committee Rooms
- 2nd Floor West Wing, Guildhall on Thursday, 3 July 2025 at 11.00 am

Present

Members:

James St John Davis (Chair)
Charles Edward Lord, OBE JP (Deputy Chair)
Deputy Caroline Haines
Deputy Benjamin Murphy
William Upton KC
Heather Barrett-Mold
Catherine Bickmore (Observer)

In attendance:

Deputy Anne Corbett
Alderman & Sheriff Gregory Jones KC (Ex-Officio Member)
John Beyer (Observer)

Officers:

Jack Joslin	- City Bridge Foundation
Anna Cowperthwaite	- Comptroller and City Solicitor's Department
Ian Hughes	- Environment Department
Joanne Hill	- Environment Department
Jo Hurst	- Environment Department
Andrew Impey	- Environment Department
Joe Kingston	- Environment Department
Heinz Traut	- Environment Department
Zoe Williams	- Town Clerk's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Karina Dostalova, Vladislav Dobrokhoto, Wendy Mead and Verderer Paul Morris.

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

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED – That, the public minutes and non-public summary of the previous meeting held on Thursday 1 May 2025 be agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

The Chair welcomed Karina Dostalova and John Beyer as new Members of the Committee.

4. **RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Environment that sought to provide assurance that risk management procedures in place within the Environment Department were satisfactory and that they meet the requirements of the Corporate Risk Management Framework and, where applicable, the Charities Act 2011.

The Chair acknowledged that work-related stress among staff was a recurring risk across Natural Environment Charities. They noted that during the West Ham Park Committee meeting, Members discussed how this could be monitored, and how they could achieve a balance the Committee's ambitions with the limited staff resources.

A Member observed that while work-related stress was listed on the risk register for the North London Open Spaces Committees, it did not appear on the risk register for the Natural Environment Board. They queried how the risk registers for these committees were aligned. Officers explained that the Natural Environment Board's risk register had been developed prior to those of the North London Open Spaces Committees. They confirmed that this would be considered during the next review of the Natural Environment Board's risk register.

A Member highlighted the need for caution when addressing the matter of work-related stress, noting its complexity. They emphasised the importance of clearly identifying the specific source of stress before determining how it should be addressed.

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- Considered and noted the content of the report and the Natural Environment Cross Divisional Summary Risk Register (as shown in Appendix 1 of the report).
- Consider and noted the content of the report and the City Gardens Summary Risk Register (as shown in Appendix 2 of the report).

5. **CLIMATE ACTION STRATEGY UPDATE**

The Committee received a presentation from the Innovation and Growth Department about the Climate Action Strategy.

The Chair sought clarification on whether 10% of the City Corporation's tree sequestration remained at risk, despite the mitigation measures implemented. Officers responded that the actions taken were helping to alleviate the risk, and noted that the calculations were based on estimates, which allowed for a degree of variance.

A Member commented that they must clearly communicate the environmental and financial benefits of the work across the open spaces. They emphasised the importance of framing this work not as something being imposed by the City

Corporation, but as a valuable contribution to each charity's objectives, highlighting improvements such as soil health, longevity of ancient trees and cost efficiencies.

In response to a query, Officers confirmed that this work was being funded from the central fund through the Climate Action Strategy.

Another Member, also the Chair of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee, noted the success of the recent international conference on veteran trees. They noted that they needed to continue to promote the message that the City Corporation were international leaders in that space. Members commended the success of the international conference at Burnham Beeches. A Member emphasised the importance of engaging not only with other industry leaders, but also of considering the next steps in relation to policy.

The Member also noted an upcoming event being held at Copped Hall on Monday 13 October 2025 and encouraged Members to attend.

A Member commented that natural resources such as wood chips were useful in protecting the roots of trees as it discouraged people from walking in those areas. Another Member noted that in some sites they were allowing brambles to grow around the roots to achieve a similar effect. It was noted that using natural resources in this way was a creative and cost-effective approach that reduced the need for interventions such as fencing.

A Member sought clarity on whether the 210 tonnes of Carbon Dioxide equivalent in additional sequestration was a target for 2027 or if it was a measurement of what had been achieved. They also asked what was expected to happen following 2027. Officers confirmed that it was a target to achieve 210 tonnes of Carbon Dioxide equivalent in additional sequestration by March 2027. They noted that the largest component of this would be the transition from arable to meadow land at Copped Hall. Officers also noted that they were assessing what would be done after 2027. They commented that they were in discussion with site managers at various open spaces to identify future opportunities.

RESOLVED – That, Members received the presentation and noted its contents.

6. **ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT HIGH-LEVEL BUSINESS PLAN 2024/25 – YEAR-END PROGRESS REPORT**

The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Environment which provided an update on progress made by the Natural Environment Division and the City Gardens Team towards delivery of the Environment Department's high-level Business Plan 2024/25.

A Member suggested that the report should begin to function as an impact report, clearly demonstrating how the corporate strategy was being delivered. They expressed concern that the current format was not achieving the intended outcome. The Chair agreed and proposed that a separate session be arranged

to explore a framework that could be recommended to Officers to support this approach.

RESOLVED – That, Members received the report and noted its contents.

7. **NATURAL ENVIRONMENT CHARITY REVIEW – UPDATE ON FUNDRAISING WORKSTREAMS**

The Committee received a report of the Chamberlain and Executive Director, Environment which detailed the progress since 2024 and the next stages of this workplan.

The Chair noted that the slides from the briefing on Biodiversity Net Gain which was held on 24 June 2025 would be circulated to Members.

RESOLVED – That, Members received the report and noted its contents.

8. **ASSETS UPDATE**

The Committee received a verbal update from Officers of the Environment Department about the work carried out on charity and complementary land assets.

A Member, also the Deputy Chair of the Epping Forest and Commons Committee commented that there was a desire to continue to refer to the Epping Forest Buffer Land as such, whilst referring to complementary land across the Natural Environment Charities. They noted that there was some cross over in the report between these two terms in the update.

RESOLVED – That, Members noted the verbal update.

9. **CITY GARDENS UPDATE**

The Committee received a verbal update on City Gardens from Officers from the Environment Department which provided an update on City Gardens projects.

A Member congratulated the City Gardens team on their work, noting that Little Trinity Gardens had attracted many people. They noted the garden's proximity to Thames River and commented that signage to the river would be useful for visitors. The Chair agreed and commented that technology should also be embraced in the move to encourage people to explore different parts of the Square Mile.

The Member also commented that City Gardens should have a higher profile within the Destination City growth strategy. The Chair noted that he would be meeting with the Deputy Chair and Officers to discuss how to move this forward.

Officers commented that their position and priorities within Destination City was beginning to evolve. They also noted that they were in discussion about what they would like to draw people towards within the Square Mile, and what wayfinding should direct people towards.

Officers also noted the proposed changes to project governance, noting that they aim to streamline the progression of smaller-scale projects, particularly relevant to work in City Gardens. They explained that the changes would reduce the need for frequent committee reports and Member signoff, shifting the focus towards more strategic engagement with Ward Members and the Committee. The Officer emphasised the importance of ensuring that Board Members remain well-briefed and had opportunities to contribute meaningfully, both as representatives of the Board and as Ward Members.

A Member queried how the Natural Environment Division's digital strategy connected with broader initiatives such as Destination City. They suggested that there may be scope for policy development to better align this work. They also highlighted the effective use of interpretive signage in the gardens at Buckingham Palace, where plant species and their ecological roles were clearly explained. They suggested that similar storytelling could be explored across City Gardens to better communicate the rationale behind planting choices, particularly in relation to the Climate Action Strategy. Officers responded that interpretative signage for Finsbury Circus Gardens was being finalised. They noted they would consider if there was an opportunity to introduce this signage in other gardens.

The Member also noted that constituents had expressed missing the 'Geoffrey Barkington' stone bench, which commemorated the historical origins of Houndsditch. They asked whether interpretive work could be undertaken to help communicate and preserve the story of Houndsditch in the area. Officers responded that they would consider this and respond in due course.

With regard to income generation, a Member expressed interest in exploring potential opportunities within City Gardens, including advertising, naming rights, and tour guide services. In response, Officers noted that institutions had approached them regarding sponsorship and naming rights for events at Finsbury Circus Gardens. They also mentioned the possibility of introducing a coffee cart in the gardens as a means of generating income. They noted that large-scale events would not be held in the garden this year due to the potential impact it could have on the newly established lawn.

Officers also noted that, while there had been interest in exploring income generation through advertising, longstanding City Corporation policies, including the Local Plan, contained a presumption against such activity. They acknowledged that advertising may present challenges and suggested that branding sponsorship could be considered separately and may offer a more suitable route for City Gardens.

RESOLVED – That, Members noted the verbal update.

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

There were no questions raised.

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

There was no urgent business.

12. **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.

13. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

RESOLVED – That, the non-public minutes of the previous meeting held on Thursday 1 May 2025 be agreed as a correct record of the meeting.

14. **CITY CORPORATION GOVERNANCE OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT CHARITIES – UPDATE ON PLANNED CHANGES**

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

15. **COMPLEMENTARY LAND POLICY AND ASSETS APPRAISAL**

The Committee received a verbal update from Officers of the Environment Department.

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

There were no questions raised in non-public.

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

One matter of urgent business was raised in non-public.

The meeting ended at 12.15pm

Chairman

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City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee(s): Natural Environment Board	Dated: 23/10/2025
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 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 the detailed register is provided at Appendix 1. Each of the Natural Environment charities holds its own risk register which is reported to its respective Management Committee.

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

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- A. **Natural Environment Division Risk Register:** Members are asked to consider and note the content of this report, the Natural Environment Cross-Divisional Risk Register (Appendix 1) and the action being taken to effectively manage these risks.
- B. **City Gardens Risk Register:** Members are asked to consider and note the content of this report, the City Gardens Risk Register (Appendix 2), and the action being taken to effectively manage these risks.

Main Report

Corporate Risk Management Process

1. The City of London's Risk Management Framework incorporates the Risk Management Policy; the Risk Management Strategy 2024-29; and Risk Management Guidance and Training.
2. The Risk Management Policy outlines the City Corporation's overarching approach and requirements in risk management.
3. The Risk Management Strategy 2024-2029 articulates the City of London Corporation's approach to identifying, mitigating, and managing risk. It ensures that the City Corporation upholds duties, delivers priorities, and supports and aligns with organisational ambitions including our Corporate Plan 2024-2029 strategic outcomes enabling delivery, continuous improvement and innovation.

Risk governance and reporting

4. To ensure our risk management process is robust, the risks on our risk registers are regularly reviewed by, and reported to, a variety of internal stakeholders – both Officers and Members.
5. Officers (and our Town Clerk and Chief Executive) are responsible – and ultimately accountable - for identifying and managing risk within the City Corporation. This includes what risks should be put onto the risk register, updating these in timely and responsive manner and managing any mitigating actions.
6. Members monitor and oversee the City Corporation's Risk Management Strategy and arrangements. They play an essential role in scrutinising risk management and its effectiveness. This is distinct from operational decision-making on risks/officer actions to identify and manage risk but works in tandem with this to ensure sound and appropriate risk management.
7. The City of London's Risk Management Framework requires each Chief Officer to report regularly to Committees on the risks faced by their department.

8. Detailed risk registers are presented to the Natural Environment Board every six months. The two interim quarterly reports present summary risk registers, with individual risks being reported in detail by exception.
9. New risk management reporting appendices have recently been developed for use across all departments as part of the *Informed Decision Making* objective of the Risk Management Strategy 2024-2029. These appendices are intended to help promote consistency and accuracy in risk management reporting to support strategic decision-making. Members will note that the risk registers appended to this report take this new format.

Natural Environment charities

10. The responsible Management Committee retains oversight of risk for their charity (or charities), with officers under their relevant delegated authority in the operational management of each charity having day-to-day responsibility for managing and controlling risk.
11. 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.
12. Members of each Charity Management Committee, on behalf of the City Corporation as trustee, review risks on a quarterly basis to gain assurance that risks are being effectively identified and managed. This reporting frequency aligns with the City of London's Risk Management Framework and exceeds the requirements of the Charity Commission.

Current position

13. 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 charities, the Charities Act 2011.
14. 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.
15. New and emerging risks are identified through several channels, including:
 - Directly by Senior Leadership Teams as part of the regular review process.
 - In response to ongoing review of progress made against Business Plan objectives and performance measures, e.g., slippage of target dates or changes to expected performance levels.

- In response to emerging events and changing circumstances which have the potential to impact on the delivery of services. For example, changes to legislation, resource availability, severe weather events.

Natural Environment Cross-Divisional Risks

1. 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.
2. The Natural Environment Director reviews the cross-divisional risks regularly in liaison with her Senior Leadership Team. Since the date of the last report to your Committee, all risks have been reviewed and updated in the risk management information system.
3. The highest risk on the Cross-Divisional register remains '**Decline in condition of assets**'. The risk is currently scored at Red 32 (likely to occur, with a serious impact) due to ongoing concerns about inadequate repair and maintenance of operational property across all Natural Environment sites. Additional funding to address the backlog of maintenance works across the Corporation has been approved and 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.
4. One risk has now been closed: '**Lack of asset register**'. The concern that the lack of an accurate, comprehensive register of assets and ownership details had the potential to cause non-compliance with Charity Commission requirements has now been reduced. The Natural Environment Charity Review has now concluded its review of land assets, and the built assets associated with them, meaning that ownership of assets is understood for the majority. The next steps are the independent assessment of complementary land assets which is addressed under risk ENV-NE 003 'Decline in condition of assets'.
5. All Natural Environment cross-divisional risks are listed below along with explanations of any significant changes. Three risks have decreased and for three others the risk approach has been changed to 'accept' rather than 'reduce'. Full details of the risks and their mitigating actions are set out in the detailed risk register at Appendix 1.
 - **ENV-NE 003: Decline in condition of assets**
(Current risk score: RED 32, constant)
 - **ENV-NE 010: Budget pressures and uncertainty over future funding model**
(Current risk score: RED 16, constant)

- **ENV-NE 015: Impacts of anti-social behaviour on staff and sites**
(Current risk score: RED 16, constant)
 This risk remains at a score of Red 16 (likely to occur with a major impact). However, the approach has changed from aiming to reduce the risk, to accepting that it is presently at the lowest achievable level. There are currently no additional actions available to officers to enable them to further influence public behaviour and reduce the likelihood of the risk occurring. However, our officers continue to do everything they can to control the impacts of the risk, ensuring our staff and visitors are safe and our sites are protected and well-maintained.
- **ENV-NE 016: Tree maintenance**
(Current risk score: RED 16, constant)
 This risk remains at a score of Red 16 (likely to occur with a major impact). However, the approach has changed from aiming to reduce the risk, to accepting that it is at the lowest achievable level. The escalating impacts of climate on tree health mean that it is not possible to further reduce the likelihood of the risk occurring, nor the impact should it occur. The greater frequency of severe storms, extreme weather conditions and tree disease, associated with climate change, are resulting in more frequent tree and tree limb failures. However, a range of robust actions continue to maintain the risk at the current level and ensure the safety of staff and site users. The risk will remain under regular review.
- **ENV-NE 002: Adverse impacts of extreme weather and climate change**
(Current risk score: AMBER 12, constant)
 This risk remains at a score of Amber 12 (possible to occur with a major impact). However, the approach has changed from aiming to reduce the risk, to accepting that it is not currently possible to reduce the score any further. The ongoing, escalating, effects of climate change are leading to more frequent extreme weather conditions which are beyond our control. The actions in place have reduced the impact score to the lowest possible level at the present time. Work continues to identify actions to adapt to climate change and to deliver the Climate Action Strategy's Carbon Removals Project. The risk is kept under regular review
- **ENV-NE 005: Negative impacts of development and encroachment**
(Current risk score: AMBER 12, constant)
- **ENV-NE 001: Risks to health and safety**
(Current risk score: AMBER 8, decreasing)
 The risk score has now been reduced from Amber 12 (possible to occur with a major impact) to the target score of Amber 8 (unlikely to occur with a major impact) due to the reduction in vacancies across the Natural Environment Division and new staff having become familiar with, and supporting the implementation of, policies, processes and safe working practices. The risk is now accepted at this new level and will be kept under regular review.

- **ENV-NE 004: Negative impacts from pests and diseases**
(Current risk score: *AMBER 8, decreasing*)
This risk has now been reduced from a score of Red 16 (likely to occur with a major impact) to a score of Amber 8 (likely to occur with a serious impact) due to the range of effective actions being undertaken by staff across all Natural Environment sites, such as monitoring, inspections, spraying and pest removal, to mitigate the impact of the risk. It is, however, recognised that the presence of existing and new pests and diseases will continue and it will not be possible to reduce the risk further. Therefore, the risk is accepted at the new level and will be kept under regular review.
- **ENV-NE 013: Negative impacts of visitor pressure**
(Current risk score: *AMBER 8, constant*)
- **ENV-NE 011: Recruitment of suitable staff**
(Current risk score: *GREEN 4, decreasing*)
The score of this risk has now been reduced from Amber 8 (unlikely to occur, with a major impact) to the target score of Green 4 (unlikely to occur, with a serious impact) following successful recruitment across the Division, reducing the potential impact of this risk should it occur. The risk is accepted at this new level as there are still some key posts to be recruited to and the delay in the Ambition 25 Project has resulted in an extended freeze on job evaluations. The risk will be kept under review.
- **ENV-NE 012: Negative impacts of carrying out wildlife management**
(Current risk score: *GREEN 2, constant*)

City Gardens Risks

6. City Gardens is part of the City Operations Division of the Environment Department. The City Gardens Risk Register, summarised below and presented in full at Appendix 2, contains five risks (one RED, and four AMBER) which are owned and managed by the City Gardens Manager and his Management Team. Work to manage the risks is ongoing.
7. Since the last report to the Natural Environment Board, all risks have been reviewed and updated in the risk management information system.
8. The score of one risk, '**Negative impacts of anti-social behaviour**' has increased and this is now the highest risk on the register. There has been a rise in problematic behaviour across City Gardens sites due to the increase in encampments which result in greater cleaning and repair needs and may have a negative effect on staff safety and wellbeing. The likelihood of the risk has been raised from possible to likely, giving a new score of Red 16 (likely with a major impact). Officers are working to identify a solution and improve the situation. They are working in partnership with an external security provider and the City's Outreach Team. It is hoped that these actions will decrease the risk over time.

9. The **‘Climate and weather’** risk has now been closed. The risk was reduced to a score of Green 3 (possible likelihood; minor impact) in April 2024 and had been maintained at that low level ever since. Robust actions are in place to manage the residual risk, including a well-tested Extreme Weather Policy which reduces risk by closing sites before extreme weather events occur. The risk is also mitigated through planting a wider variety of species, including those which are more tolerant of drought and other extreme weather conditions. Both actions are fully embedded into day-day processes, enabling the risk to be sufficiently managed as ‘business as usual’.
10. The full list of current City Gardens risks is as follows:
 - **ENV-CO-GC 018: Negative impacts of anti-social behaviour**
(Current risk score: RED 16, increasing)
 - **ENV-CO-GC 011: Tree and plant diseases and other pests**
(Current risk score: AMBER 12, constant)
 - **ENV-CO-GC 016: Staff resources**
(Current risk score: AMBER 12, constant)
 - **ENV-CO-GC 017: Decline in condition of assets**
(Current risk score: AMBER 12, constant)
 - **ENV-CO-GC 009: Risk to health and safety**
(Current risk score: AMBER 8, constant)

Corporate and Strategic Implications

11. 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.
12. The risk management processes in place in the Environment Department support the delivery of the Corporate Plan, our Departmental and Divisional Business Plans and relevant Corporate Strategies, such as the Climate Action; Cultural; Sport and Physical Activity; and Volunteering Strategies. Risks are also being considered as part of the Natural Environment and City Operations Divisions’ strategies.
13. 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

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

Appendices

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

Contact

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ENV NE - Cross-divisional Risk Register

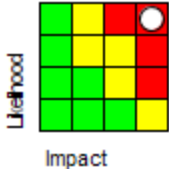
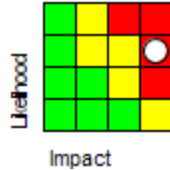
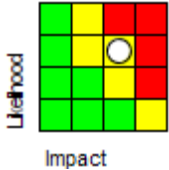
Report Type: Risks Report
Report Author: Joanne Hill
Generated on: 30 September 2025



Rows are sorted by Risk Score

Risk Level Description Service

Risk Code	ENV-NE 003	Risk Title	<i>Decline in condition of assets</i>
Description	<p>Cause: Inadequate planned and/or reactive maintenance; failure to identify and communicate maintenance issues; failure to retain expertise necessary to maintain complex buildings / sites. Reduced CWP budget and limited capital programme.</p> <p>Event: Fail to meet statutory regulations and checks. Operational, residential or public buildings deteriorate to unusable/unsafe condition.</p> <p>Effect: Potential serious health and safety risks including fatality or serious injury to users. Service capability disrupted; ineffective use of staff resources; damage to corporate reputation and poor customer satisfaction; increased requirement and costs for reactive maintenance and lack of budget to replace. Delays will have operational impact. Poor condition of assets, loss of value, permanent closure.</p>		

Current Risk		Target Risk		Original Risk	
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Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
32	Likely	Extreme
Red	Trend	Constant

Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
24	Possible	Extreme
Red	Target Date	31-Mar-2026

Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
12	Possible	Major
Amber	Creation Date	25-May-2022

Page 2 Latest Note	<p>This risk has been assessed as Red 32 (Likely; Extreme) due to ongoing and increasing concerns about inadequate repair and maintenance of operational property across all Natural Environment sites. The target date to achieve a reduced risk score has been set as the end of the 2025/26 financial year to allow time for progress to be made on addressing the backlog of required maintenance works.</p>	19-Sep-2025
	<p>Chief Officers in occupation are typically accountable for asset condition within their functional area. They are responsible for commissioning required work, and ensuring an appropriate funding route is identified. This action is often delivered upon the professional advice of the City Surveyor's Department (CSD). Once a work package is commissioned, it is the responsibility of CSD to deliver those works as agreed and funded within the given cost/timeline/specifications.</p>	
	<p>Documents outlining responsibilities by asset and task are under review, in particular the Division of Responsibilities between CSD and the Environment Department, and the Corporate Controller of Premises Policy.</p>	
	<p>The Assistant Director Charity Development is taking forward recommendations for changes to ways of working with CSD and other corporate departments. In particular, Service Level Agreements.</p>	
	<p>Surveys of condition of high priority lodges have been undertaken and have informed further agreements and working with CSD to maximise investment in neglected assets, particularly housing in need of improvement and buildings that have income generation potential. There has been agreement from Peer Group to allocate additional CWP funding to enable some Epping Forest lodges to be let as soon as possible.</p> <p>Work is underway with CSD and other corporate departments to assess, allocate and prioritise backlog funding to areas of most need.</p>	

Risk Level	Service
Department	Environment

Risk Approach	Reduce
Risk Owner	Emily Brennan

Associated Actions

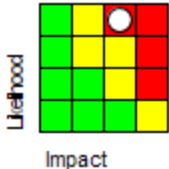
Ref No:	Description	Latest Note	Note Date	Owned By	Due Date
ENV-NE 003a Liaison with other departments	Liaise with City Surveyor's Department and other internal departments to press for action to be taken especially with regard to the most urgent issues.	We continue to work with the City Surveyor's Department to resolve service delivery issues.	19-Sep-2025	Jo Hurst	31-Mar-2026
ENV-NE 003b Regular monitoring	Keep risk under regular review and monitor the actions and progress of each Natural Environment site.	This is a standing agenda item for discussion at all Senior Leadership Team meetings.	19-Sep-2025	Emily Brennan	31-Mar-2026
ENV-NE 003e Complementary land assets	Independent options assessment of complementary land.	Consultants have been appointed to carry out an independent review of complementary land assets – their report is due at the end of 2025 and will be presented to Committees in Q1 2026.	19-Sep-2025	Emily Brennan	31-Mar-2026
ENV-NE 003e Delivery of works	City Surveyor's Department to deliver works as agreed and funded either by CWP funds and/or directly by the Environment Department.	<p>The CSD's Operations Group deliver work packages as agreed with the Environment Department, within agreed allocated funds, timelines and specifications. This is delivered either via the Cyclical Works Programme (CWP), capital and/or local risk budget.</p> <p>Regular liaison meetings are held between Environment and CSD to manage the delivery programme, and to ensure any risks / issues /</p>	19-Sep-2025	Peter Collinson	31-Dec-2025

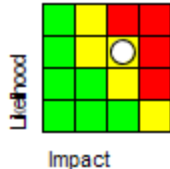
		conflicts / etc are escalated and understood by all parties.			
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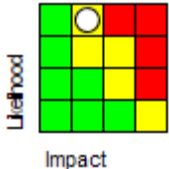
Risk Code	ENV-NE 010
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Risk Title	<i>Budget pressures and uncertainty over future funding model</i>
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Description	<p>Cause: Reduction in income and the need for greater investment in order to deliver services. Pressures on the Corporation's finances have led to a proposed new financial model for the charities.</p> <p>Event: Inability to generate sufficient income to cover operating costs.</p> <p>Effect: Reduction or cessation of services; decline in quality of services; inability to respond to the impacts of other business risks.</p>
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Current Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
16	Likely	Major
Red	Trend	Constant

Target Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
12	Possible	Major
Amber	Target Date	31-Mar-2026

Original Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
8	Likely	Serious
Amber	Creation Date	16-Dec-2022

Latest Note	<p>A Fundraising Consultant has produced a draft options report for consideration by the Director and her management team – this will be used to identify fundraising priorities for each charity. This work will help us to set clear targets, define priority income streams and develop a coordinated approach. Actions will be built into the new five-year charity business plans.</p> <p>The Assistant Director, Charity Development is the Natural Environment Division's lead officer on the Natural Environment Charity Review. The Charity Review will also aim to develop a sustainable funding model for the charities and enable funds to be restricted for specific use within the Natural Environment Division. A Draft Funding Agreement has been produced by Chamberlain's Department and is being consulted on.</p>	19-Sep-2025
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	<p>An additional piece of work has been commissioned, following a request from Policy and Resources Committee, to carry out a detailed asset appraisal for all complementary land assets; this appraisal will identify income generation opportunities.</p> <p>As part of the Natural Environment Charity Review, Epping Forest and West Ham Park transitioned to a grant funding model in FY 2025/26, with the other six charities transitioning in FY 2026/27</p>	
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Risk Level	Service
Department	Environment

Risk Approach	Reduce
Risk Owner	Emily Brennan

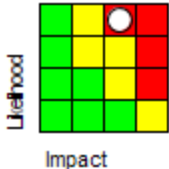
Associated Actions

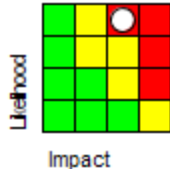
Ref No:	Description	Latest Note	Note Date	Owned By	Due Date
ENV-NE 010a Charity Fundraising Income	Develop income generation plans.	The Assistant Director Charity Development is taking this forward with the Fundraising Consultant and the Superintendents, and will seek Committee approval of the final version.	19-Sep-2025	Jo Hurst	31-Mar-2026

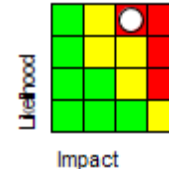
Risk Code	ENV-NE 015
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Risk Title	<i>Impacts of anti-social behaviour on staff and sites</i>
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Description	<p>Cause: Anti-social behaviour of members of the public.</p> <p>Event: Anti-social, irresponsible or unsafe behaviour; abuse of staff; fly-tipping; litter; dog fouling; dog attacks; vandalism; abandoned/burnt out vehicles; traveller incursions.</p> <p>Effect: Safety of staff and visitors; damage to sites; reputational damage; disruption to operations; cost of repair and increased insurance premiums; loss of staff time.</p>
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Current Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
16	Likely	Major
Red	Trend	Constant

Target Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
16	Likely	Major
Red	Target Date	31-Dec-2025

Original Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
16	Likely	Major
Red	Creation Date	20-Dec-2023

Latest Note	<p>The risk has now been accepted at the score of Red 16 as we recognise that we are unable to do anything more to reduce the likelihood of the risk occurring. However, officers do everything they can to control the risk and maintain it at the current level, ensuring our staff and visitors are safe.</p> <p>A departmental 'Unreasonable Behaviour Protocol' has been developed to tackle abuse of staff, including rapid reporting of incidents so that appropriate action can be taken as necessary - this is followed by officers at all sites.</p> <p>We ask members of the public and staff to be vigilant and report incidents as soon as they notice them so that staff can respond rapidly. Full emergency procedures are also in place.</p>	19-Sep-2025
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	The Target Date shown is the date that the risk will next be reviewed.	
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Risk Level	Service
Department	Environment

Risk Approach	Accept
Risk Owner	Emily Brennan

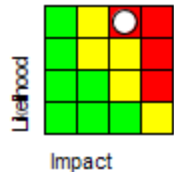
Associated Actions


Ref No:	Description	Latest Note	Note Date	Owned By	Due Date
ENV-NE 015a Departmental 'Abuse of Staff Policy' Page 28	Departmental 'Abuse of Staff Policy' and emergency response procedures.	An Environment Department reporting system is now in place and followed. The 'Unreasonable Behaviour Protocol' includes rapid reporting of instances of abusive and unacceptable behaviour experienced by members of staff. Emergency response procedures are also in place and are followed.	19-Sep-2025	Emily Brennan	31-Dec-2025
ENV-NE 015b Staff training	Training for staff on conflict management.	First-time or refresher training on conflict management was delivered to relevant staff at the end of 2024. This training will be given to groups of new staff on an ongoing basis.	19-Sep-2025	Emily Brennan	31-Dec-2025
ENV-NE 015c Enforcement partnerships	Build enforcement partnerships.	This is ongoing at each site with relevant local agencies and partners.	19-Sep-2025	Emily Brennan	31-Dec-2025
ENV-NE 015d Educate visitors	Educate visitors to use the sites responsibly.	The use of social media messaging, press releases, signage and face to face engagement with members of the public to encourage responsible behaviours is ongoing at each site as appropriate.	19-Sep-2025	Emily Brennan	31-Dec-2025

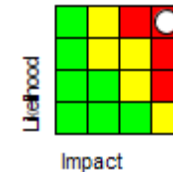
Risk Code	ENV-NE 016
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Risk Title	<i>Tree Maintenance</i>
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<div>Page 29</div> <div>Description</div>	<p>Cause:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trees are subject to decline, physical damage and infection. As trees deteriorate, they are increasingly likely to shed limbs or fall in strong winds and the potential to cause harm increases. • Therefore, a robust programme of proactive and reactive tree inspections is in place at each of the City of London open spaces to identify trees which require works to make them safe. • The impact of drought and a rise in tree disease, combined with more frequent extreme weather events due to climate change, is increasing the risk of trees failing. • There is, as a result, an increasingly large number of vulnerable trees across our open spaces which will require works to prevent failure. • There have been a series of incidents of tree failures where trees have fallen onto vehicles and buildings. • Our sites have more than 100 miles of highway verge predominately lined with trees. <p>Event:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater frequency of tree failure across all sites due to ongoing climate change and extreme weather conditions. <p>Effect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public safety - serious injury/death. • Damage to City of London's physical assets. • Disruption to public highways. • Damage to cars and adjoining properties with increased exposure to public liability claims. • Adverse media attention and significant reputational damage to the City of London Corporation. • Financial impact of insurance claims.
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Current Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
16	Likely	Major
Red	Trend	Constant

Target Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
16	Likely	Major
Red	Target Date	31-Dec-2025

Original Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
32	Likely	Extreme
Red	Creation Date	14-Feb-2024

Page 30	<p>Significant progress has been made in reducing the key factors of this risk, as set out below. The risk score remains Red 16 (Likely/Major). Because of the escalating impacts of climate on tree health, we accept that we cannot do any more to reduce the risk score. We will, however, continue to take actions to protect the safety of staff and site users, but cannot reduce the likelihood of the risk occurring, nor the impact should it occur.</p> <p>The risk will be kept under regular review - the target date shown is the date of the next review.</p> <p>Regular tree inspections are carried out at each open space to identify vulnerable trees that require work. Works are then prioritised in order of risk. At all sites, climate change, and the associated greater frequency of severe storms, extreme weather conditions, and tree disease, is resulting in more frequent tree (and tree limb) failures and this will continue to increase over time. This has been particularly noticeable during 2025 where the climate has caused greater frequency of sudden limb drop and tree failure.</p> <p>Long term funding: Long term funding for tree safety works is being considered as part of the Natural Environment Charity Review and through identification of opportunities to increase income generation across the Natural Environment Division. Officers are also working in collaboration with colleagues in the Chamberlain's Department to consider options for increasing our budgets for tree management in the long term.</p> <p>Epping Forest outstanding works: Work is now underway to clear the outstanding tree safety works at Epping Forest. Annual tree surveys have now been reviewed and the results reprioritised. A 'scheme of works' has been</p>		19-Sep-2025
Latest Note			

	specified to address trees needing attention, in order of priority, and this is progressing on schedule. This activity will resolve the backlog of works by early 2026, using existing resources.	
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Risk Level	Service
Department	Environment

Risk Approach	Accept
Risk Owner	Emily Brennan

Associated Actions

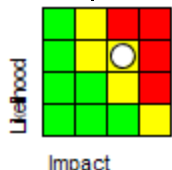
Ref No:	Description	Latest Note	Note Date	Owned By	Due Date
CR41 005e Funding for ongoing tree works Page 31	Explore options to identify funding for the ongoing management of tree safety across all Environment Department sites.	We are working with colleagues in the Chamberlain's Department to consider options for increasing budgets for tree management at all sites in the long-term. This is also being addressed as part of the income generation strand of the Natural Environment Charity Review.	19-Sep-2025	Emily Brennan	31-Dec-2025
CR41 005f Tree Safety Policy	Review Natural Environment Division Tree Safety Policy.	The Natural Environment Division Tree Safety Policy sets out the requirements and processes that must be in place at all sites for proactive tree inspection programmes, based upon prioritisation criteria, and reactive inspections following incidents such as severe weather events. The Policy is based upon guidance issued by the National Tree Safety Group (NTSG) and has proven effective when tested following previous incidents. The Natural Environment Division's Tree Safety Group will review the Policy to check	19-Sep-2025	Emily Brennan	31-Dec-2025

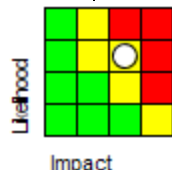
		<p>that it is being implemented fully across the Division and amend the content as necessary to reflect any changes.</p> <p>The NTSG has recently released revised guidance. The Divisional Tree Safety Group will further review the Policy to ensure it aligns with the National Guidance.</p>			
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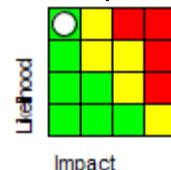
Risk Code	ENV-NE 002
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Risk Title	<i>Adverse impacts of extreme weather and climate change</i>
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Description	<p>Causes: Climate change causes more frequent and severe weather events: storms, wind, rainfall, snow, drought.</p> <p>Event: More frequent and prolonged periods of drought, flooding, storm damage, wildfires etc.</p> <p>Effect: Service capability disrupted; incidents increase demand for staff resources to respond and maintain public and site safety; temporary site closures; increased costs for reactive management. Strong winds cause tree limb drop; prolonged heat results in fires; snow disrupts site access; rainfall results in flooding and impassable areas. Damage/loss of rare/fragile habitats and species. Risk of injury or death to staff, visitors, contractors and volunteers. Damage to property and infrastructure.</p>
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Current Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
12	Possible	Major
Amber	Trend	Constant

Target Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
12	Possible	Major
Amber	Target Date	31-Dec-2025

Original Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
4	Likely	Minor
Green	Creation Date	21-Jan-2016

Latest Note	<p>Each site carries out a range of appropriate actions to control this risk at the current level of Amber 12 (Possible/Major) but we accept that we cannot reduce the score any further.</p> <p>Officers continue to work with the Environment Department's Environmental Resilience Team to develop a Climate Adaptation Action Plan for the Natural Environment Division. This work includes identifying specific climate change related risks and actions.</p> <p>Carbon Removals Project: A Project Manager and Project Officer are now in post and are taking the project</p>	19-Sep-2025
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	forward.	
	The risk will be kept under regular review - the target date shown is the date of the next review.	

Risk Level	Service
Department	Environment

Risk Approach	Accept
Risk Owner	Emily Brennan

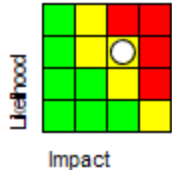
Associated Actions

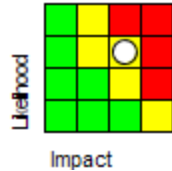
Ref No:	Description	Latest Note	Note Date	Owned By	Due Date
ENV-NE 002b Review and monitoring	Regular review and monitoring of climate and weather risks held by each Natural Environment site.	The risks held by each site on this subject are kept under regular review.	19-Sep-2025	Andrew Impey	31-Dec-2025
ENV-NE 002d Carbon Removals Project	Progress the Carbon Removals Project.	<p>The Project Manager and Project Officer are taking the project forward.</p> <p>The project will protect the carbon stored on our open spaces and provide additional carbon storage. Actions include fencing to protect vulnerable trees; tree and hedge planting; and deer management.</p>	19-Sep-2025	Emily Brennan	31-Mar-2026

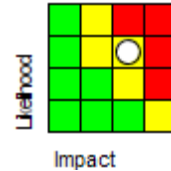
Risk Code	ENV-NE 005
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Risk Title	<i>Negative impacts of development and encroachment</i>
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Description	<p>Cause: Pressure on housing and infrastructure in London and South East; failure to monitor planning applications and challenge them appropriately; unsuccessful challenges; lack of resources to employ specialist support, carry out necessary monitoring/research or consult on Local Plans; lack of partnership working with, and engagement from, Planning Authorities.</p> <p>Event: Major development(s) have a negative impact on our sites through loss and damage to habitats.</p> <p>Effect: Loss, damage, destruction or fragmentation of habitats. Encroachment/loss of land.</p>
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Current Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
12	Possible	Major
Amber	Trend	Constant

Target Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
12	Possible	Major
Amber	Target Date	31-Dec-2025

Original Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
12	Possible	Major
Amber	Creation Date	10-Mar-2015

Latest Note	<p>Staff at all Natural Environment sites work with their neighbouring local authorities and consult with stakeholders. They seek out opportunities to integrate sustainability into proposed developments, e.g. asking for CIL funds from developers to mitigate the impact where possible.</p> <p>We have accepted this risk at its current score as there is currently no additional actions we can take to reduce it further. The target date shown is the date of the next risk review.</p>	19-Sep-2025
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Risk Level	Service
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Risk Approach	Accept
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Department	Environment
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Risk Owner	Emily Brennan
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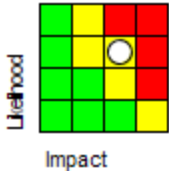
Associated Actions

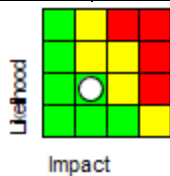
Ref No:	Description	Latest Note	Note Date	Owned By	Due Date
ENV-NE 005a Regular monitoring and review	Regular monitoring of the risks held by individual sites and action taken.	The Director keeps the risks held by individual sites under review and is notified by her Assistant Directors of any specific planning issues and concerns that arise.	19-Sep-2025	Emily Brennan	31-Dec-2025

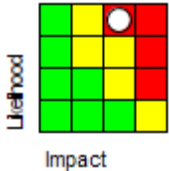
Risk Code	ENV-NE 014
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Risk Title	<i>Lack of asset register</i>
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Description	<p>Cause: We do not hold an accurate, comprehensive, asset register for the Natural Environment sites.</p> <p>Event: We do not know the ownership details of all our assets.</p> <p>Effect: Potential to be non-compliant with Charity Commission requirements.</p>
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Current Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
12	Possible	Major
Amber	Trend	Constant

Target Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
4	Unlikely	Serious
Green	Target Date	31-Dec-2025

Original Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
16	Likely	Major
Red	Creation Date	22-Aug-2023

Latest Note	<p>This risk will now be closed.</p> <p>The NECR has concluded its review of land assets and, therefore, the built assets associated with them. The next steps are the independent assessment of complementary land assets which is address under risk 'ENV-NE 003 Decline in condition of assets'</p>	19-Sep-2025
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Risk Level	Service
Department	Environment

Risk Approach	Reduce
Risk Owner	Jo Hurst

Associated Actions

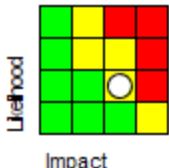
Ref No:	Description	Latest Note	Note Date	Owned By	Due Date
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<div>Page 108</div> <div>ENV-NE 014a Asset review</div>	<div>Carry out Natural Environment Asset Review</div>	<div>The NECR has concluded its review of land assets and therefore, the built assets associated with them. This is being reported to Charity Management Committees in Summer 2025. The outcome will be the compilation of a comprehensive, accurate asset register which will enable us to identify ownership of our assets.</div> <div>Ownership of land and associated built assets is now understood for the majority. Work is now underway to develop policy for the governance of assets managed and occupied by the charities but which are not at present charity assets – these land parcels are now referred to as Complementary Land (and complementary assets).</div>	<div>13-Jun-2025</div>	<div>Jo Hurst</div>	<div>31-Dec-2025</div>
<div>ENV-NE 014b Establish and monitor protocols</div>	<div>Establish and monitor protocols to ensure compliance with Charity Commission requirements.</div>	<div>Establish and monitor protocols for ensuring compliance with Charity Commission requirements in relation to charity-owned assets.</div>	<div>13-Jun-2025</div>	<div>Jo Hurst</div>	<div>31-Dec-2025</div>

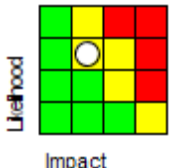
Risk Code	ENV-NE 001
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Risk Title	<i>Risks to health and safety</i>
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Description	<p>Causes: The operation of vast, widespread and diverse public green spaces carries a range of potential health and safety implications for members of the public, staff, volunteers and contractors.</p> <p>Event: Incident or accident with health and safety implications.</p> <p>Effect: Injury or death of a member of the public, volunteer, staff or contractor.</p>
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Current Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
8	Unlikely	Major
Amber	Trend	Decreasing

Target Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
8	Unlikely	Major
Amber	Target Date	31-Dec-2025

Original Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
6	Possible	Serious
Amber	Creation Date	

Latest Note	<p>Due to the nature of our sites and the types of activities carried out, there are a range of health and safety risks associated with working practices and use of the sites.</p> <p>Each site has appropriate mitigating actions in place. The Department's Health and Safety Manager provides advice and assistance with identifying and managing health and safety risks. Health and Safety is a standing agenda item at regular Divisional SLT meetings. The Deputy Director is taking the lead on H&S for the Natural Environment Division and is currently developing a Roles and Responsibilities document.</p> <p>The risk score has now been reduced from its previous score of Amber 12 (Possible/Major) to the target score of Amber 8 (Unlikely/Major) due to the reduction in vacancies across the division and new staff having become familiar with, and supporting the implementation of, policies, processes and safe working practices. The risk is now</p>	19-Sep-2025
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	accepted at this new level and will be kept under regular review - the target date shown is the date of the next risk review.	
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Risk Level	Service
Department	Environment

Risk Approach	Reduce
Risk Owner	Emily Brennan

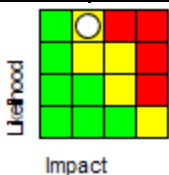
Associated Actions


Ref No:	Description	Latest Note	Note Date	Owned By	Due Date
ENV-NE 001a Regular review and monitoring Page 40	Regular review and monitoring of health and safety risks held by individual sites.	<p>The Deputy Director keeps the health and safety risks of individual sites under review.</p> <p>Major health and safety risks are identified and discussed at Senior Leadership Team meetings.</p> <p>This is an ongoing action which is kept under regular review.</p>	19-Sep-2025	Emily Brennan; Andrew Impey	31-Dec-2025
ENV-NE 001b Health and Safety support and advice	Seek support and advice from Departmental Health and Safety Manager and other relevant health and safety resources.	<p>The Environment Department's Health and Safety Manager is actively engaged in assisting sites to identify and manage their health and safety risks.</p> <p>Relevant staff are members of departmental and divisional health and safety groups at which issues are discussed, knowledge shared, and advice and support provided.</p> <p>This is an ongoing action which is kept under regular review.</p>	19-Sep-2025	Emily Brennan; Andrew Impey	31-Dec-2025

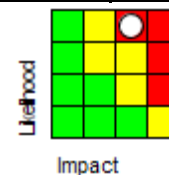
Risk Code	ENV-NE 004
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Risk Title	<i>Negative impacts from pests and diseases</i>
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Description	<p>Causes: Inadequate biosecurity; purchase or transfer of infected trees, plants, soil and/or animals; ‘natural’ spread of pests and diseases from neighbouring areas.</p> <p>Event: Sites become infected by animal, plant or tree diseases e.g. Oak Processionary Moth (OPM), foot and mouth, Massaria, Ash Die Back, <i>Salmonella</i> (DT 191a), Bleeding Canker of Horse Chestnut.</p> <p>Effect: Service capability disrupted; public access to sites restricted; tree decline; reputational damage; increased cost of monitoring and control of invasive species; risk to human health from OPM or other invasive or indigenous species; loss of key native species; threat to existing conservation status of sites particularly those with woodland habitats.</p>
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Page 41	Current Risk		
	Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
	8	Likely	Serious
	Amber	Trend	Decreasing

Target Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
8	Likely	Serious
Amber	Target Date	31-Dec-2025

Original Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
16	Likely	Major
Red	Creation Date	10-Mar-2015

Latest Note	<p>This risk has been reduced from Red 16 (likely/major) to a score of Amber 8 (likely/serious) due to the range of effective actions being undertaken by staff across all Natural Environment sites, such as monitoring, inspections, spraying and pest removal, to mitigate the impact of the risk. It is, however, recognised that the presence of existing and new pests and diseases will continue and it will not be possible to reduce the risk further. Therefore, we accept the risk at the new level and the target date shown is the date that the risk will next be reviewed.</p>	19-Sep-2025
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Risk Level	Service
Department	Environment

Risk Approach	Accept
Risk Owner	Emily Brennan

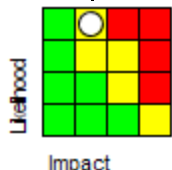
Associated Actions

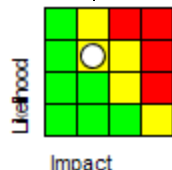
Ref No:	Description	Latest Note	Note Date	Owned By	Due Date
ENV-NE 004a Liaison and joint working	Cooperation and coordination across the Natural Environment Division and wider Department.	Natural Environment sites collaborate to share information and knowledge. This ongoing cooperation and coordination includes other parts of the Environment Department such as City Gardens and the Cemetery and Crematorium. The 'Due Date' shown is the date of the next scheduled risk review.	19-Sep-2025	Emily Brennan	31-Dec-2025
ENV-NE 004b Review and monitoring	Regular review and monitoring of sites' local risks.	The risks of each individual site are kept under regular review. The 'Due Date' shown is the date of the next scheduled risk review.	19-Sep-2025	Emily Brennan	31-Dec-2025

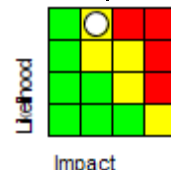
Risk Code	ENV-NE 013
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Risk Title	<i>Negative impacts of visitor pressure</i>
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Description	<p>Cause: Continual increase in number of visitors due to greater popularity of natural environment sites, population growth and new housing in local areas.</p> <p>Event: Long-term environmental damage, with a particular focus on protected landscapes and Sites of Special Scientific Interest and SACs which are not designed for such high visitor numbers. Increased use of car parks and parking on adjacent roads and land.</p> <p>Effect: Ecological and environmental damage; negative press coverage; loss of grants related to preservation; increased spend required to maintain sites / mitigate damage.</p>
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Current Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
8	Likely	Serious
Amber	Trend	Constant

Target Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
6	Possible	Serious
Amber	Target Date	31-Mar-2026

Original Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
8	Likely	Serious
Amber	Creation Date	22-Aug-2023

Latest Note	<p>Works to improve visitor infrastructure are being undertaken where possible and/or funding to enable this work is being sought.</p> <p>Education of visitors to encourage responsible use of sites is carried out via publicity, social media messaging and signage. Opportunities to increase this will be sought and taken up.</p> <p>The target date to reduce the risk has been set as the end of the current financial year to reflect the ongoing work to assess visitor numbers and usage.</p>	19-Sep-2025
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Risk Level	Service
Department	Environment

Risk Approach	Reduce
Risk Owner	Emily Brennan

Associated Actions

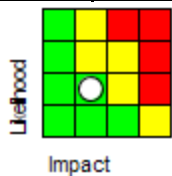
Ref No:	Description	Latest Note	Note Date	Owned By	Due Date
ENV-NE 013a Improve visitor infrastructure	Improve visitor infrastructure.	Officers seek ways to improve visitor infrastructure to encourage visitors to stay on designated routes and minimise damage.	19-Sep-2025	Emily Brennan	31-Mar-2026
ENV-NE 013b Education and messaging	Carry out education and messaging campaigns to encourage responsible use of the sites.	Education and messaging campaigns are carried out to encourage the public to use sites responsibly in order to conserve them for the future.	19-Sep-2025	Emily Brennan	31-Mar-2026
ENV-NE 013c Assess visitor numbers	Assess visitor numbers and usage of the natural environment sites.	Officers are seeking appropriate methods to assess visitor numbers and usage at the sites	19-Sep-2025	Emily Brennan	31-Mar-2026

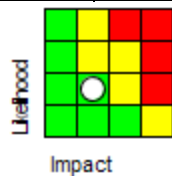
28/09/24

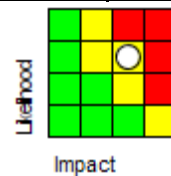
Risk Code	ENV-NE 011
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Risk Title	<i>Recruitment of suitable staff</i>
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Description	<p>Cause: There is a lack of appropriately skilled candidates in the wider environment employment market.</p> <p>Event: Difficulty in filling new and existing posts at the right level.</p> <p>Effect: Inability to deliver front-line and back-office services.</p>
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Current Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
4	Unlikely	Serious
Green	Trend	Decreasing

Target Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
4	Unlikely	Serious
Green	Target Date	31-Dec-2025

Original Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
12	Possible	Major
Amber	Creation Date	16-Dec-2022

Latest Note	<p>A key element of delivering the new divisional structure is to offer our existing staff more learning and development opportunities to enable them to fill new and vacant posts in the future.</p> <p>Vacancies are being advertised across a broad range of recruitment outlets in an attempt to attract suitable candidates.</p> <p>The score of this risk has now been reduced from Amber 8 (Unlikely/Major) to the target score of Green 4 (Unlikely/Serious) because recruitment has continued to be successful across the division, reducing the potential impact of this risk should it occur. We accept the risk at that new level as there are still some key posts to be recruited to and the delay in the Ambition 25 Project has resulted in an extended freeze on job evaluations.</p> <p>The risk will be kept under regular review - the target date shown is the date of the next review.</p>	19-Sep-2025
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Risk Level	Service
Department	Environment

Risk Approach	Reduce
Risk Owner	Emily Brennan

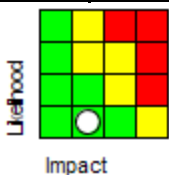
Associated Actions


Ref No:	Description	Latest Note	Note Date	Owned By	Due Date
ENV-NE 011a Develop staff	Develop our staff	We offer staff learning and development opportunities to enable them to fill new and existing vacancies. This is an ongoing action. Management training for managers has been delivered and some additional sessions are planned.	19-Sep-2025	Emily Brennan	31-Dec-2025

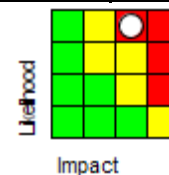
Risk Code	ENV-NE 012
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Risk Title	<i>Negative impacts of carrying out wildlife management</i>
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Description	<p>Cause: Control of wildlife is necessary across the Natural Environment sites to ensure populations remain healthy and in balance with their environment, to conserve biodiversity and protect carbon stocks. For example, deer culling and grey squirrel control. Humane despatch of injured wildlife may also be necessary. These activities often require the use of firearms.</p> <p>Event: Failure to maintain and/or follow robust plans and policies to undertake deer culling and other wildlife controls responsibly, to a sufficiently high standard, in compliance with legal requirements, and with due regard to health, safety and animal welfare.</p> <p>Effect: Injury to staff or members of the public due to non-compliant use of firearms, lone working etc; risk to human health; road traffic accidents; damage to property. Detrimental impact on stakeholder relationships; negative publicity; reputational risk.</p>
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Current Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
2	Rare	Serious
Green	Trend	Constant

Target Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
2	Rare	Serious
Green	Target Date	31-Dec-2025

Original Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
16	Likely	Major
Red	Creation Date	22-Aug-2023

Latest Note	<p>Deer management is a key issue at Epping Forest - contractors, in conjunction with the Wildlife Management Officer, carried out a successful cull during winter 2024/25. This was managed carefully to ensure the work was undertaken responsibly and in accordance with local policies and legal requirements. There were no incidents or issues. Another reduction cull is planned for autumn/winter 2025/26.</p> <p>Other wildlife management actions and associated policies are in place across the division and are kept under regular review to manage the risk.</p>	19-Sep-2025
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	The risk remains at a score of 2 (Rare/Serious) and is accepted at that level. The risk will be retained on the risk register for oversight and monitoring purposes - it will be kept under ongoing review. The target date shown is the date of the next review.	
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Risk Level	Service
Department	Environment

Risk Approach	Accept
Risk Owner	Emily Brennan

Associated Actions

Ref No:	Description	Latest Note	Note Date	Owned By	Due Date
ENV-NE 012a Deer management Page 48	Deer management at Epping Forest	Contractors, in conjunction with the Wildlife Management Officer, successfully carried out a deer cull at Epping Forest during winter 2024/25. A further reduction cull is planned for autumn/winter 2026. This action will be kept under regular review.	19-Sep-2025	Jacqueline Eggleston	31-Mar-2026
ENV-NE 012d Maintain up to date policies	Review, update and communicate relevant policies.	Divisional and site-specific Firearms and other relevant policies (e.g. lone working) are reviewed and updated on a regular basis, and are communicated to appropriate staff. This is an ongoing action.	19-Sep-2025	Emily Brennan	31-Mar-2026

ENV - City Gardens

Report Type: Risks Report

Report Author: Joanne Hill

Generated on: 30 September 2025



Rows are sorted by Risk Score

Risk Level Description Service

Risk Code	ENV-CO-GC 018	Risk Title	<i>Negative impacts of anti-social behaviour</i>
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Description	<p>Cause: Problematic, anti-social and criminal behaviour.</p> <p>Event: Litter; public urination and defecation (human and dog); dog fouling, dog attacks, street drinking; drug use; vandalism; wanton damage and theft.</p> <p>Effect: Damage and loss of assets; reduction in user experience and satisfaction; increased costs of cleaning and repairing damage; reputational harm and the negative effect this has on staff safety and wellbeing.</p>		
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Current Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
16	Likely	Major
Red	Trend	Increasing

Target Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
6	Possible	Serious
Amber	Target Date	30-Sep-2026

Original Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
16	Likely	Major
Red	Creation Date	04-Aug-2022

Appendix 2

Latest Note	<p>Actions are in place to address anti-social, criminal, and other problematic behaviours in and around our sites.</p> <p>The Keeper based at Bunhill Fields has had a positive influence on promoting responsible dog ownership there. However, there has been a rise in anti-social behaviour across the rest of the City Gardens sites due to the rise in encampments. We have, therefore, increased the current risk score to 16 (Likely/Major) but we will continue to implement the other mitigating actions with a view to achieving the target score (Amber 6) in the future.</p>	30-Sep-2026
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Risk Level	Service
Department	Environment

Risk Approach	Reduce
Risk Owner	Jake Tibbetts

Associated Actions

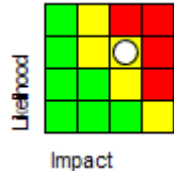
Ref No:	Description	Latest Note	Note Date	Owned By	Due Date
ENV-CO-GC 018a Partnership working	Continue to use Parkguard to engage with ASB offenders, and the Outreach Team in regard to rough sleepers. Maintain and develop relationship with City Police.	<p>We continue to work to identify a solution and improve the situation.</p> <p>We continue to work in partnership with Parkguard to engage with ASB offenders, and with the City's Outreach Team to engage with rough sleepers. We are feeding into the ASB Working Group and providing data to them.</p>	29-Sep-2025	Jake Tibbetts	31-Dec-2025
ENV-CO-GC 018b Enforcement of byelaws	Utilise, where necessary, the enforcement powers of the new Keeper to encourage positive public behaviour.	<p>A keeper who has enforcement duties has had a positive impact - the post holder has formed good relationships with dog owners who frequent Bunhill Fields and the resultant improvements have enabled the risk score to be reduced.</p> <p>As a result of this good work, the need to</p>	29-Sep-2025	Jake Tibbetts	31-Dec-2025


		introduce PSPOs is no longer necessary. A report to Committee will be presented in December 2025.			
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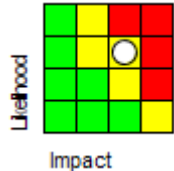
Risk Code	ENV-CO-GC 011
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Risk Title	<i>Tree and plant diseases and other pests</i>
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Description	<p>Cause: Inadequate biosecurity, purchase or transfer of infected plants and soil. Invasion of pests and diseases from neighbouring areas e.g. Oak Processionary Moth, Massaria, Xyella; Box blight.</p> <p>Event: Sites become infected by plant or tree diseases.</p> <p>Effect: Threat to human health, either directly or indirectly; service capability disrupted; ineffective use of staff resources; damage to corporate reputation; loss of species; site closures (temporary) and associated access; increased costs for reactive maintenance.</p>
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Current Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
12	Possible	Major
Amber	Trend	Constant

Target Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
12	Possible	Major
Amber	Target Date	31-Dec-2025

Original Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
12	Possible	Major
Amber	Creation Date	25-Nov-2015

Latest Note	<p>This risk includes plant diseases such as Xyella which, while not known to be present in the UK, has spread in Europe, including France.</p> <p>City Gardens have moved away from using box hedging and are trialling alternative species as appropriate.</p> <p>The target date shown is the date of the next review.</p>	29-Sep-2025
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Risk Level	Service
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Risk Approach	Accept
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Appendix 2

Department	Environment
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Risk Owner	Jake Tibbetts
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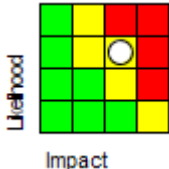
Associated Actions

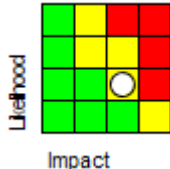
Ref No:	Description	Latest Note	Note Date	Owned By	Due Date
ENV-CO-GC 011a Staff training	Ongoing action: Ensure staff training is kept updated to enable timely identification of pests and knowledge of correct treatment/prevention.	Provision of staff training is continuing. Information on training is shared through the Departmental Health and Safety Group, Equalities Board, SLT, and other avenues.	29-Sep-2025	Jake Tibbetts	31-Dec-2025
ENV-CO-GC 011b Inspections	Ongoing action: Annual tree inspections undertaken by qualified personnel through framework contract.	An annual programme is in place for cyclical inspections and targets are being met.	29-Sep-2025	Jake Tibbetts	31-Dec-2025
ENV-CO-GC 011c Information and communication	Ongoing action: Maintain relationships with industry bodies, internal CoL departments, and neighbouring local authorities to ensure free flow of information.	Relationships with industry bodies, internal partners and neighbouring local authorities continue to be maintained.	29-Sep-2025	Jake Tibbetts	31-Dec-2025

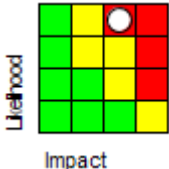
Risk Code	ENV-CO-GC 016
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Risk Title	<i>Staff resources</i>
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Description	<p>Cause: Aging workforce combined with difficulties in recruitment and retention of younger workforce due to remuneration and benefits package becoming increasingly uncompetitive for the market sector.</p> <p>Event: Reduction in skill and human resources within the service.</p> <p>Effect: Increased staff absence due to sickness; inability to deliver the necessary level of service or meet business objectives; increased number of complaints from the public; negative publicity/reputational damage.</p>
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Current Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
12	Possible	Major
Amber	Trend	Constant

Target Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
8	Unlikely	Major
Amber	Target Date	31-Dec-2025

Original Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
16	Likely	Major
Red	Creation Date	04-Aug-2022

Latest Note	<p>Gardening resource has been increased in recognition of the greater volume of work and we have secured additional funding for resources through the On-Street Parking Reserve (OSPR).</p> <p>We aim to reduce the score of this risk when the Ambition 25 programme outcomes are realised.</p>	29-Sep-2025
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Risk Level	Service
Department	Environment

Risk Approach	Reduce
Risk Owner	Jake Tibbetts

Associated Actions

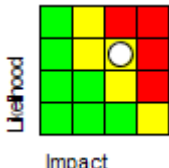
Appendix 2

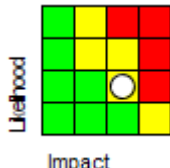
Ref No:	Description	Latest Note	Note Date	Owned By	Due Date
ENC-CO-GC 016a Job desirability	Review the overall work package and consider how the offer can be developed to increase desirability of roles.	The new Corporate People Strategy has been published. We will re-evaluate the situation as the reward and development elements are clarified (Ambition 25).	29-Sep-2025	Jake Tibbetts	31-Dec-2025
ENV-CO-GC 016c Apprentice programme	Work towards securing a rolling apprentice programme to ensure continuous apprentices in City Gardens.	We recruited four new levy-funded apprentices in January 2024. The next recruitment of apprentices will take place in January 2026.	29-Sep-2025	Jake Tibbetts	30-Jan-2026

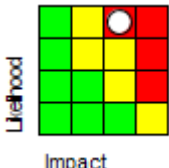
Risk Code	ENV-CO-GC 017
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Risk Title	<i>Decline in condition of assets</i>
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Description	<p>Cause: Poor maintenance of assets; failure to implement recommendations.</p> <p>Event: Failure to meet statutory regulations and checks. Built assets deteriorate to unusable/unsafe condition.</p> <p>Effect: Poor condition of assets; service failures; loss of value; cost of repair; potential fines from statutory bodies and insurance claims.</p>
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Current Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
12	Possible	Major
Amber	Trend	Constant

Target Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
8	Unlikely	Major
Amber	Target Date	31-Dec-2025

Original Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
16	Likely	Major
Red	Creation Date	04-Aug-2022

Latest Note	<p>We are one year into a three year programme we will continue to address the back log maintenance programme. We are working with City Surveyor's Department (CSD) to identify priority works.</p> <p>We aim to reduce the risk score further once priority works are underway.</p>	29-Sep-2025
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Risk Level	Service
Department	Environment

Risk Approach	Reduce
Risk Owner	Jake Tibbetts

Associated Actions

Appendix 2

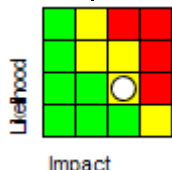
Ref No:	Description	Latest Note	Note Date	Owned By	Due Date
ENV-CO-GC 017a Investment and maintenance	Undertake an annual review of the 20 year programme of investment and maintenance of all built assets.	The 20-year works programme is reviewed on an annual basis.	29-Sep-2025	Jake Tibbetts	31-Dec-2025
ENV-CO-GC 017b Regular inspections and reporting of defects	Carry out inspections and report defects as they arise. Ensure that unresolved actions are highlighted to City Surveyor's Department.	This is an ongoing action. All necessary inspections are carried out and any defects are reported to City Surveyor's Department.	29-Sep-2025	Jake Tibbetts	31-Dec-2025
ENV-CO-GC 017c Review and monitoring	Undertake regular internal review and monitoring of condition and safety of assets.	Internal checks are carried out on an ongoing basis. These are monitored every quarter to ensure they have been completed.	29-Sep-2025	Jake Tibbetts	31-Dec-2025

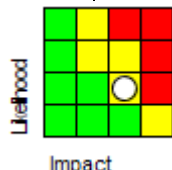
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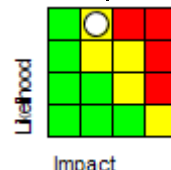
Risk Code	ENV-CO-GC 009
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Risk Title	<i>Risk to health and safety</i>
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Description	<p>Cause: Failure to adhere to health and safety policies and procedures. Failure to link work activity with adequate procedures; risk assessments and safe systems of work not complied with; inadequate appropriate training; failure to implement the results of audits.</p> <p>Event: Staff, volunteers, contractors or licensees undertake unsafe working practices, notably working at roadside or at height in City.</p> <p>Effect: Injury to staff, volunteers, contractors or member of the public; prosecution and fine by HSE and/or Police; increased insurance premiums; reputational damage.</p>
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Current Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
8	Unlikely	Major
Amber	Trend	Constant

Target Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
8	Unlikely	Major
Amber	Target Date	31-Dec-2025

Original Risk		
Risk Score	Likelihood	Impact
8	Likely	Serious
Amber	Creation Date	25-Nov-2015

Latest Note	<p>While we cannot remove this risk, we continue to take actions to mitigate it as far as possible and maintain the score at the current level.</p> <p>Health and safety procedures are kept under regular review and the Emergency Plan will be reviewed and updated during the coming months.</p> <p>A recent review of City Gardens' health and safety procedures produced positive results. Some additional practices were recommended, such as increasing the number of external audits that are carried out, and we are</p>	29-Sep-2025
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Appendix 2

	working to implement these.	
	The target date shown is the date of the next review.	

Risk Level	Service
Department	Environment

Risk Approach	Accept
Risk Owner	Jake Tibbetts

Associated Actions

Ref No:	Description	Latest Note	Note Date	Owned By	Due Date
ENV-CO-GC 009a Accident Reporting	Ongoing action: Continue to develop a good culture of reporting accidents, incidents and near misses.	Officers continue to report accidents, incidents and near misses. Accidents are subject to investigation and review by the Departmental Health and Safety Group.	29-Sep-2025	Jake Tibbetts	31-Dec-2025
ENV-CO-GC 009b Contractor protocol	Ongoing action: Monitor compliance by contractors (City Surveyor's and external) with the Contractor Protocol. Regularly review documentation and processes in light of investigation findings and changes in legislation.	The Contractor Protocol covers works undertaken by City Surveyor's Department and external contractors. All contractors are required to sign up to, and comply with, the Protocol: it has been implemented with existing contractors and is rolled out to new contractors as required. Regular progress meetings are held with City Surveyor's Department and other service areas when working on larger projects.	29-Sep-2025	Jake Tibbetts	31-Dec-2025
ENV-CO-GC 009d Training programme	Ongoing action: Essential and desirable training needs are identified for each staff role. All staff are required to undertake security and terrorism training, e.g. Project Griffin, Argus and	The staff training programme is reviewed regularly, and individual training is monitored.	29-Sep-2025	Jake Tibbetts	31-Dec-2025

Appendix 2

	Prevent. Completion of appropriate training is kept under review.				
ENV-CO-GC 009h Improvements to processes	Seek improvements to process and monitoring.	Use Safe 365 feedback to identify areas for improvement and draw on internal Corporate and Departmental health and safety expertise to enhance processes and monitoring.	29-Sep-2025	Jake Tibbetts	31-Dec-2025

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

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

(A) Likelihood criteria

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

(B) Impact criteria

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

(C) Risk scoring grid

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

(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

Committee(s): Natural Environment Board	Dated: 23/10/2025
Subject: Natural Environment Board Revenue Outturn 2024/25	Public report: For Information
This proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes • provides statutory duties 	Providing Excellent Services Flourishing Public Spaces
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	£0
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of:	Executive Director Environment Chamberlain
Report author:	Clem Harcourt, Chamberlain's Department

Summary

This report compares the revenue outturn for the services overseen by your Board in 2024/25 with the final budget for the year. In total, there was an adverse budget position of £285k for the services overseen by your Board compared with the final budget for the year as set out in the table below.

The Natural Environment Board is the strategic overarching committee for the entire Natural Environment Division and whilst this report details the 2024/25 revenue outturn position for the Natural Environment Directorate, Learning Programme, City Gardens and Bunhill Fields (see table below), the report also provides a summary of the revenue outturn for all of the sections within the Natural Environment Division (excluding Keats House and The Monument which are reported to the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee) as provided in Appendix 2.

	Final Budget	Revenue Outturn	Variation (Better)/Worse
	£000	£000	£000
Local Risk			
Executive Director Environment	3,532	3,648	116
City Surveyor	507	576	69
Total Local Risk	4,039	4,224	185
Central Risk	22	12	(10)
Recharges	(903)	(793)	110

Total Net Expenditure	3,158	3,443	285
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Explanations for significant budget variances are detailed in paragraphs 5 to 8.

The Executive Director Environment had an overall local risk overspend of £116k (excluding City Surveyor) for activities overseen by your Board. The Executive Director Environment also had a net local risk underspend totalling £355k (excluding City Surveyor) on activities overseen by other Committees within her remit, after adjusting for unspent carry forwards from 2023/24. The Executive Director Environment proposed that £200k be carried forward into 2025/26, none of which related to your Board.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Budget Position for 2024/25

1. The 2024/25 original budget for services overseen by your Board (received in December 2023) was £2.487m net expenditure. This budget was endorsed by the Court of Common Council in March 2024 and subsequently updated for approved net increases of £671k resulting in a final budget for 2024/25 of £3.158m net expenditure. This is explained by the following budget movements:
 - £475k removal of Learning Team recharges to Natural Environment charities which are no longer being recharged effective from 2024/25;
 - £201k rephasing of projects falling under the Cyclical Works Programme (CWP) at Bunhill Fields and City Gardens;
 - £116k funding for Natural Environment Charities Review related to costs incurred by the Natural Environment Division in 2024/25 for staffing and consultancy costs;
 - £65k net additional funding provided to local risk budgets to cover centrally funded apprentices, additional costs from the July 2024 pay award and film liaison costs at City Gardens;
 - £3k net change in inter-departmental recharges for 2024/25 relating to the Natural Environment Directorate and the Cleansing section;
 - £2k agreed central risk carry forward bid from the Transformation Fund for IT Transformation work at City Gardens;
 - (£95k) reduction in central support recharges from corporate departments following a corporate review of recharges during 2024/25;
 - (£61k) local risk contribution provided to the Finsbury Circus Reinstatement capital project; and
 - (£35k) funding provided from the Natural Environment Directorate local risk budget for the 150th anniversary at West Ham Park.

2. A reconciliation between the original budget and the final budget for 2024/25 is provided in Appendix 1.

Revenue Outturn 2024/25

3. Actual net expenditure for your Board's services during 2024/25 totalled £3.443m, an adverse budget variance of £285k compared with the final budget of £3.158m net expenditure.
4. A summary comparison with the final agreed budget for the year is tabulated below. In the tables, brackets are used to denote income, decreases in expenditure, or increases in income. Please note that this is a departure from the convention used in previous reports and has been adopted across the Financial Service Division. Only significant variances (generally those greater than £50k) are commented on.

Natural Environment Board

Comparison of 2024/25 Revenue Outturn with Final Budget

	Original Budget £000	Final Budget £000	Revenue Outturn £000	(Better)/ Worse £000	Para
LOCAL RISK					
Executive Director Environment					
City Gardens	1,495	1,426	1,676	250	5
Bunhill Fields	122	124	132	8	
Directorate	1,381	1,530	1,397	(133)	6
Learning Programme	449	452	443	(9)	
Total Net Expenditure	3,447	3,532	3,648	116	10
City Surveyor's Local Risk (Repairs and Maintenance)	44	44	42	(2)	
City Surveyor's (Cyclical Works Programme)	262	463	534	71	7
	306	507	576	69	
TOTAL LOCAL RISK	3,753	4,039	4,224	185	
CENTRAL RISK					
City Gardens	20	22	12	(10)	
TOTAL CENTRAL RISK	20	22	12	(10)	
RECHARGES					
Insurance	23	23	28	5	
Admin Buildings	82	24	24	0	
Support Services	515	407	407	0	
Surveyor's Employee Recharge	65	87	87	0	
IT Recharges	61	110	110	0	
Capital Charges	26	26	12	(14)	
Recharges Within Fund (Directorate, Democratic Core, & Learning)	(2,896)	(2,609)	(2,418)	191	
Recharges Across Fund (Directorate Recharges)	838	1,029	957	(72)	

TOTAL RECHARGES	(1,286)	(903)	(793)	110	8
OVERALL TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE	2,487	3,158	3,443	285	

Reasons for Significant Variations

5. The £250k overspend at City Gardens is explained by £122k additional costs incurred by the Highways Division on general repairs and maintenance expenditure. This was in addition to extra equipment and material purchases being incurred which were £140k greater than budgeted with part of these costs being funded from a contribution from the On Street Parking Reserve (OSPR). Although staffing costs were predicted to come in under budget, to offset the planned overspend in materials, the late notification of a staffing budget adjustment accumulated from previous years of £179k led to a £63k overspend in total staffing costs at City Gardens. An additional £43k was incurred on other expenditure items including internal legal fees and consultancy fees such as an archaeological historic environment assessment funded from the OSPR contribution. The overspend was partly mitigated by extra income received consisting of (£56k) in additional Section 106 contributions, (£33k) from fees and charges and (£29k) increased transfers from reserves compared with budget.
6. There was a (£133k) underspend on the Natural Environment Directorate's local risk budget for 2024/25. This is explained by a (£135k) underspend on staffing costs as a result of vacant posts not being filled as well as a (£107k) variance due to the Director's contingency budget not being fully utilised for 2024/25. This was partly offset by £104k reduced income from self-funded posts as a result of these posts not being filled for the whole of 2024/25. This was in addition to a £5k overspend on other areas of expenditure within the Directorate.
7. Expenditure on projects falling under the CWP managed by the City Surveyor was £71k greater than the final budget for 2024/25 comprising an overspend of £51k at City Gardens and £20k at Bunhill Fields. The variance was due to the rephasing of projects such as wall repairs at Bunhill Fields and works taking place at St. Bride Churchyard. Please note that the CWP does not form part of the City Surveyor's local risk budget, and any variances will be carried over to 2025/26. Under the governance of the programme, variances on budgets are adjusted for the life of the programme to allow for the completion of works which can span multiple financial years.
8. Total net income from recharges for your Board was £110k less than budgeted for 2024/25. This is largely due to reduced recharges from the Natural Environment Directorate to other sections of the division attributable to an underspend on the Directorate for 2024/25 resulting in less costs being recharged.

Local Risk Carry Forward to 2025/26

9. Chief Officers can generally request underspends of up to 10% or £500,000 (whichever is the lesser) of the final agreed local risk budget to be carried forward, so long as the underspending is not fortuitous and the resources were for a planned purpose that was prevented from happening during the year. Such requests are subject to the approval of the Chamberlain in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Resources Allocation Sub Committee. In accordance with Financial Regulations, any overall

Departmental overspends are carried forward in full and are met from the agreed 2025/26 budgets.

10. The Executive Director Environment had a local risk overspend of £116k on the activities overseen by your Board. The Executive Director also had a net local risk underspend totalling (£355k) on activities overseen by other Committees within her remit, after adjusting for unspent carry forwards from 2023/24. The Executive Director Environment has proposed that £200k of her eligible underspend of (£239k) be carried forward, none of which relates to activities overseen by your Board.

Natural Environment Division Revenue Outturn – 2024/25

11. Appendix 2 provides a summary of the outturn for the whole Natural Environment Division and City Gardens for 2024/25 which is analysed between the different sections of the Division and provides explanations for significant variances above £50k. Appendix 2 shows total net expenditure of £25.019m for 2024/25 for the Natural Environment Division, amounting to an overspend of £2.543m compared to the final net expenditure budget of £22.476m. Please note that the summary excludes the outturn position for both Keats House and The Monument which are reported separately to the Culture, Heritage and Libraries committee. Further detail has been provided in the various outturn reports to the individual Natural Environment service committees.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Strategic implications – none

Financial implications – none

Resource implications – none

Legal implications – none

Risk implications – none

Equalities implications – none

Climate implications – none

Security implications – none

Conclusion

12. This report presents the revenue outturn position for 2024/25 for the Natural Environment Board for Members to note.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 - Movement between 2024/25 Original Budget and 2024/25 Final Budget
- Appendix 2 – Natural Environment Division – Summary Revenue Outturn – 2024/25

Clem Harcourt

Finance Business Partner (Natural Environment)

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Appendix 1 - Movement between 2024/25 Original Budget and 2024/25 Final Budget

Natural Environment Board	£000
Original Budget (All Risks)	2,487
Original Net Local Risk Budget (Executive Director Environment & City Surveyor)	3,753
Executive Director Environment	
Contingency funding for Natural Environment Charities Review for associated Natural Environment staffing and consultancy costs	116
Net budget uplift for centrally funded apprentices	34
Central funding for July 2024 pay award and contribution pay	27
Budget uplift for film liaison staff costs at City Gardens	4
Contribution from City Gardens local risk budget to Finsbury Circus Reinstatement capital project	(61)
Funding provided from Natural Environment Directorate for 150 th anniversary celebrations at West Ham Park	(35)
City Surveyor	
Re-phasing of projects falling under the Cyclical Works Programme at Bunhill Fields and City Gardens	201
Final Net Local Risk Budget	4,039
Central Risk	
Original Central Risk Budget (Executive Director Environment)	20
Carry forward of unspent Transformation Fund budget to support IT Transformation at City Gardens	2
Final Central Risk Budget	22
Recharges	
Original Recharges Budget	(1,286)
Removal of Learning recharges due to cost of Learning Team no longer being recharged to Natural Environment charities	475
Additional recharges from Environment Department Directorate	202
Increased costs of Natural Environment Directorate recharged to other sections of Natural Environment Division	(180)
Reduced recharges from corporate departments following review of central support recharges	(95)

Decrease in recharges from Cleansing Management section to City Gardens	(19)
Final Recharges Budget	(903)
Final Budget (All Risks)	3,158

Appendix 2

2024/25 Revenue Outturn Summary for Natural Environment Division

Summary of Natural Environment Division	Original Budget £000	Final Budget £000	Revenue Outturn £000	(Better)/ Worse £000	Para
Local Risk					
Executive Director, Environment					
Natural Environment Board	3,447	3,532	3,648	116	1
West Ham Park	636	719	718	(1)	
Epping Forest	3,557	3,585	3,585	0	
The Commons	1,728	1,838	1,785	(53)	2
Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queen's Park	4,332	4,637	4,583	(54)	3
	13,700	14,311	14,319	8	
City Surveyor					
Natural Environment Board	306	507	576	69	4
West Ham Park	116	157	280	123	5
Epping Forest	452	1,216	1,492	276	6
The Commons	446	995	1,076	81	7
Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queens Park	963	2,260	2,794	534	8
	2,283	5,135	6,218	1,083	
Total Local Risk	15,983	19,446	20,537	1,091	
Central Risk					
Natural Environment Board	20	22	12	(10)	
West Ham Park	9	9	92	83	9
Epping Forest	421	455	519	64	10
The Commons	53	55	108	53	11
Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queens Park	(2,279)	(2,279)	(970)	1,309	12
Total Central Risk	(1,776)	(1,738)	(239)	1,499	
Recharges					
Natural Environment Board	(1,286)	(903)	(793)	110	13
West Ham Park	421	403	395	(8)	
Epping Forest	1,839	2,312	2,268	(44)	
The Commons	608	627	604	(23)	
Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queens Park	2,340	2,329	2,247	(82)	14
Total Recharges	3,922	4,768	4,721	(47)	
Total Net Expenditure	18,129	22,476	25,019	2,543	

Reasons for Significant Variances

1. £116k overspend explained by additional repairs and maintenance costs incurred at the City's Open Spaces managed by the Highways Division. This was on top of increased equipment and materials purchases as well as an overspend on employment costs at City Gardens following the late notification of a staffing budget adjustment accumulated from previous years. The overspend was partly mitigated by an underspend on the Directorate with the Director's contingency budget not being fully utilised.
2. (£53k) underspend explained by additional income from filming projects at Burnham Beeches as well as increased grant income received from the Rural Payments Agency. This was in addition to an underspend on employment costs due to staff vacancies.
3. (£54k) underspend attributable to the local risk budget at Hampstead Heath. This was partly explained by an underspend on staffing costs largely due to a vacancy for the Head of Business Development post which was not recruited during 2024/25.
4. £69k overspend on budgets managed by the City Surveyor primarily explained by rephasing of projects falling under the Cyclical Works Programme (CWP). This included additional expenditure incurred on wall repairs at Bunhill Fields and works taking place at St. Bride Churchyard during 2024/25.
5. £123k overspend largely due to a £95k adverse variance on CWP projects at West Ham Park due to the rephasing of projects. This included works at Atcost Barn to carry out roof repairs and the replacement of windows and bollards.
6. £276k adverse variance on budgets overseen by the City Surveyor at Epping Forest largely explained by the re-phasing of CWP projects with additional expenditure incurred on a range of projects including the High Beech Visitors Study Centre diesel pipeline, works at The Grotto and window replacements at residential lodges.
7. £81k overspend at The Commons explained by the increased cost of the corporate building, repairs and maintenance contract at West Wickham and Coulsdon Commons as well as additional cleaning costs incurred by all Commons charities. The overspend was partly offset by the rephasing of CWP projects at both Ashted Common and Coulsdon Common.
8. £534k adverse variance explained by the rephasing of various CWP projects including works at the Queen's Park Bothy to carry out repairs and replacement to the fencing and boilers, phase 2 of the photovoltaic installation at Hampstead Heath, drainage overhaul and works at Hampstead Heath and works to improve the shower and kitchen facilities at Kenwood Ladies Pond. The overspend also included additional costs incurred on the corporate building repairs and maintenance contract as a result of extra spend required for various works at Queen's Park.

9. £83k overspend on central risk expenditure at West Ham Park attributable to depreciation expenses on the playground following the completion of the capital project in 2023/24. This was in addition to increased external audit fees incurred on the audit of the 2023/24 West Ham Park charity accounts.
10. £64k overspend on central risk budgets at Epping Forest explained by additional depreciation expenses incurred following increased capital expenditure in the previous financial year. This was on top of an increase in charity audit fees being incurred.
11. £53k overspend largely attributable to additional audit fees being incurred by The Commons charities with additional time required auditing the previous year's accounts of the Commons charities.
12. £1.309m adverse variance primarily relates to reduced investment income compared to budget at Hampstead Heath. This was due to the budget for 2024/25 being calculated based on a set formula calculating the maximum contribution available to transfer to the Hampstead Heath Trust Fund as laid out in the London Government Reorganisation Order 1989. The budget for 2025/26 has been reviewed and is based on a realistic budget target that can be achieved through investment returns by considering whether a shortfall adjustment is needed to the maximum contribution achieved by the Hampstead Heath Trust. Additionally, the central risk overspend was caused by increased depreciation incurred following the completion of the athletic track resurfacing and swimming facility improvement capital projects at Hampstead Heath as well as increased fees incurred on the audit of the previous year's charity accounts.
13. £110k adverse variance largely explained by an underspend on the Natural Environment Directorate's budget resulting in reduced income from recharges to other sections of the Natural Environment Division.
14. (£82k) favourable variance attributable to reduced recharges from the Natural Environment Directorate with an underspend on the Directorate leading to the recharges incurred by the charities being less than budgeted.

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City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee(s): Natural Environment Board	Dated: 23/10/2025
Subject: Operational Finance Progress Report - Quarter 1 (June 2025) 2025/26 – Natural Environment Division	Public report: For Information
This proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes• provides statutory duties	Providing Excellent Services Flourishing Public Spaces
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	£0
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of:	Chamberlain
Report author:	Clem Harcourt, Chamberlain's Department

Summary

This report provides an update on the operational finance position for Quarter 1 for 2025/26 for the Natural Environment Division's (including City Gardens) revenue budget to date to the end of June 2025 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(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the content of this report and its appendices.

Main Report

Background

1. For additional context, 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 2025/26.
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, income and favourable variances are represented by brackets, whereas figures without brackets indicate expenditure or adverse variances. Please note that this is a departure from the convention used in previous reports and has been adopted across the Financial Service Division.

Revenue Operating Budget – 2025/26

5. The budget for the Natural Environment Division (including City Gardens) for 2025/26 amounts to £27.423m net expenditure. Actual net expenditure as at June 2025 amounted to £5.123m with a current forecast outturn for 2025/26 of £27.829m net expenditure. This amounts to a projected net overspend for 2025/26 of £406k, equivalent to 1.48% of the total net expenditure budget.
6. A summary of the revenue budget position for 2025/26 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 – 2025/26

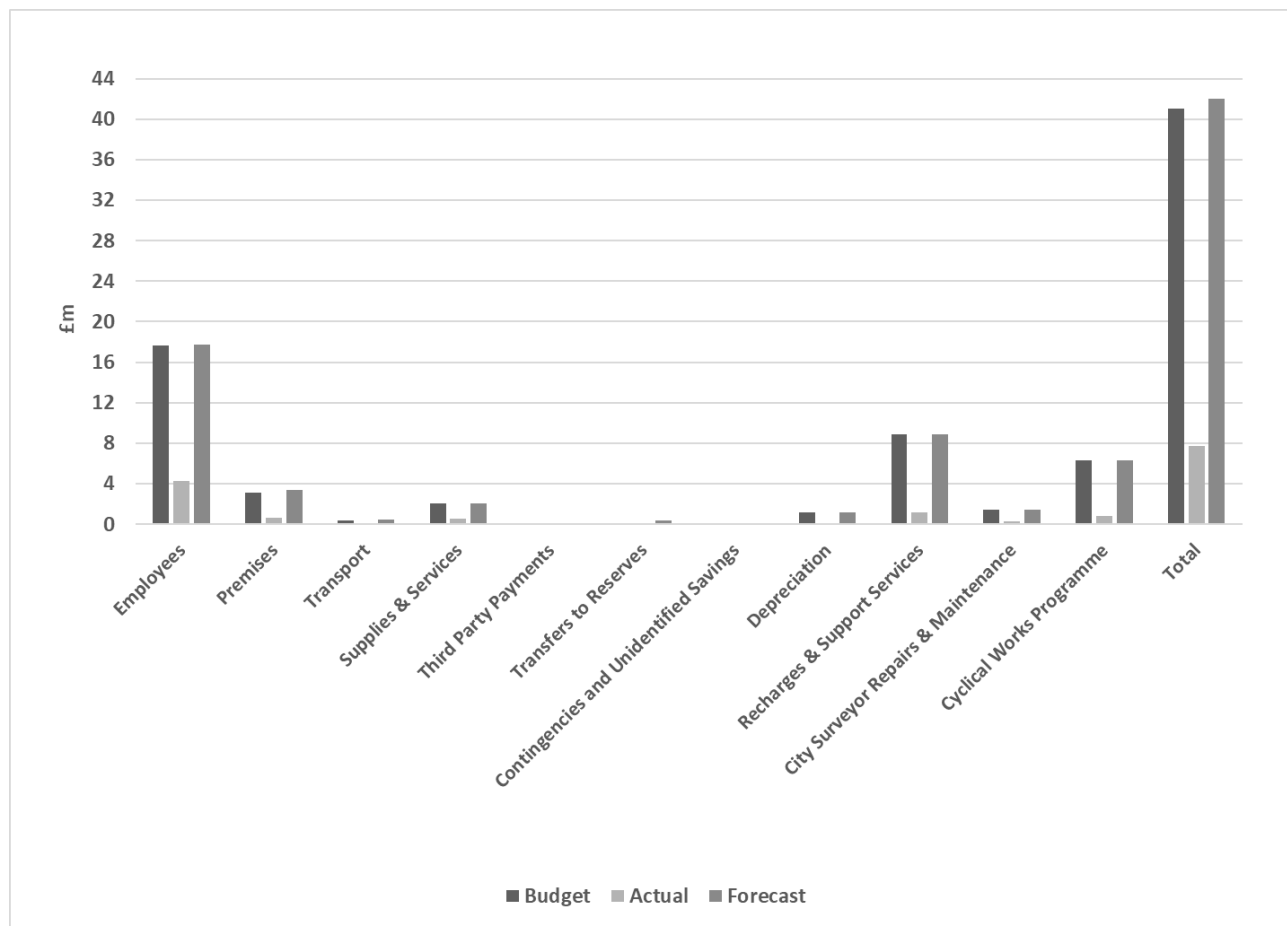
	Budget £'000s	Actual – Jun 2025 £'000s	Forecast Outturn £'000s	Budget Variance £'000s	Variance %
Gross Expenditure	41,314	7,925	41,953	639	1.55
Gross Income	(13,891)	(2,802)	(14,124)	(233)	(1.68)
Net Expenditure	27,423	5,123	27,829	406	1.48

7. As can be seen from the table above, the Natural Environment Division and City Gardens are currently forecasting a total net overspend of £406k compared with the total net expenditure budget for 2025/26. The budgetary position for the Environment Department as a whole will be kept under review for the remainder of the current financial year to ensure that the Executive Director Environment remains within her local risk resources for 2025/26.
8. The primary reasons for the projected overspend are set out below:
 - £199k projected net overspend for The Monument. This is attributable to income from admissions having not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels. Please note that the Natural Environment Division are currently exploring future options to address the existing budget shortfall with discussions ongoing regarding the potential transfer of The Monument to another department.
 - £180k forecasted overspend at City Gardens largely explained by an overspend on employment budgets following a staffing budget adjustment accumulated from previous years.
 - £135k overspend on budgets managed by the Highways Division relating to the cyclical cleaning, safety checks and maintenance of irrigation sites and ornamental fountains at the City's Open Spaces.
9. The projected overspend for 2025/26 is partly mitigated by a (£138k) underspend currently forecast at Hampstead Heath which can be explained by additional income generated from filming as well as savings in employment costs from vacant posts.

Expenditure

10. As at June 2025, total gross expenditure for the Natural Environment Division amounted to £7.925m. This represents 19.18% of the division's total gross expenditure budget for 2025/26 of £41.314m.
11. For 2025/26, the Natural Environment Division are currently forecasting total gross expenditure of £41.953m amounting to an overspend of £639k (1.55%) compared with the gross expenditure budget for 2025/26 of £41.314m.
12. Graph 1 below provides a summary of the different categories of expenditure incurred by the Natural Environment Division to June 2025 along with current forecasts for 2025/26.

Graph 1 – Expenditure Categories – Natural Environment Division – 2025/26



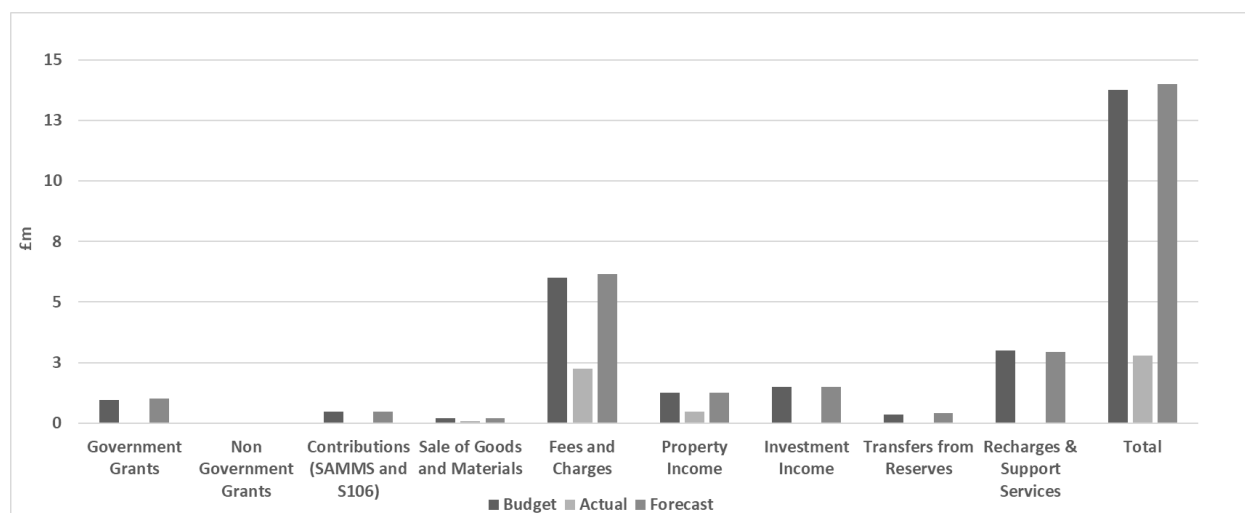
Income

13. As at June 2025, total gross income for the Natural Environment Division and City Gardens amounted to (£2.802m). This represents 20.17% of the division's total gross income budget for 2025/26 of (£13.891m).

14. For 2025/26, the Natural Environment Division are currently forecasting total gross income of (£14.124m), amounting to an increase in gross income of (£233k), 1.68%, compared with the latest gross income budget of (£13.891m).

15. Graph 2 below provides a summary of the different categories of income received to June 2025 along with current forecasts for 2025/26.

Graph 2 – Income Categories – Natural Environment Division – 2025/26



Capital Projects

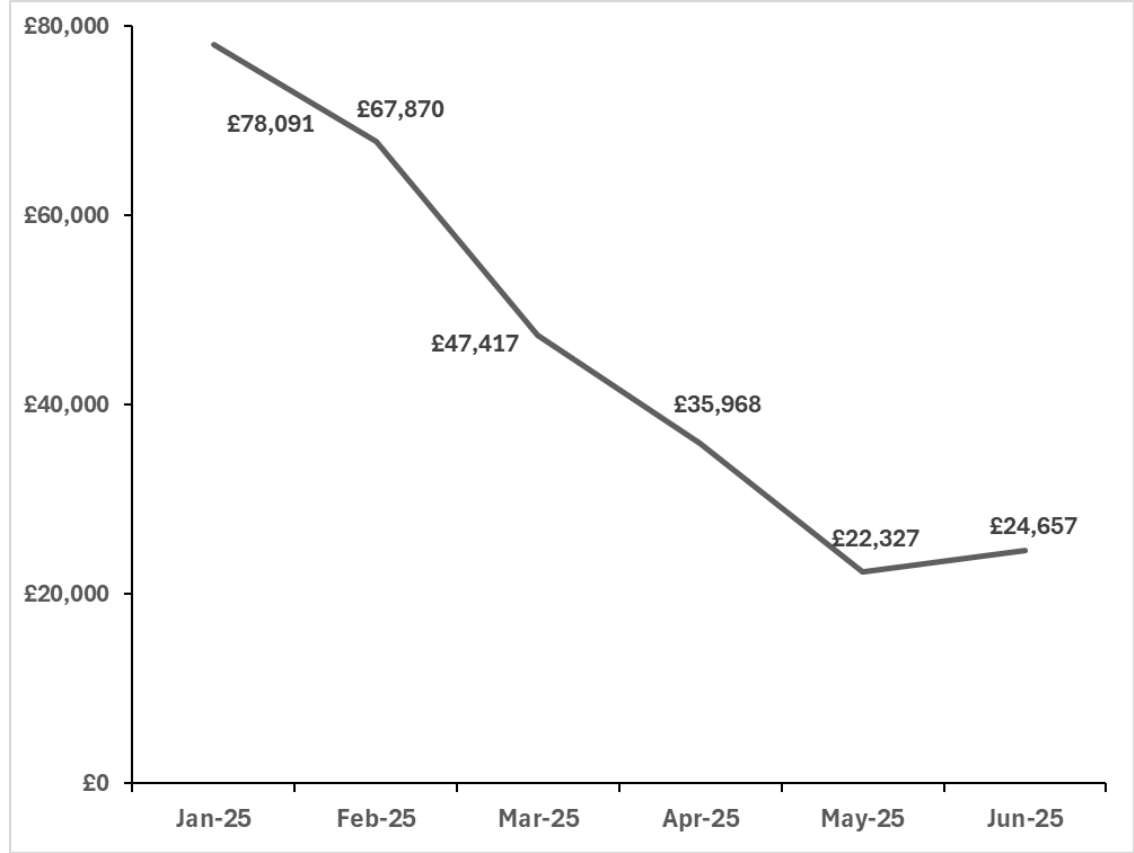
16. Appendix 2 outlines the current list of live capital projects in progress against their currently approved budget. It should be noted that the “current approved budget” is the amount currently agreed by Committee to progress the project to either the next project gateway or until Officers request further release of capital funds to progress the scheme and may not equal the total estimated cost of the project to finalisation.
17. Out of a current approved budget of £16.089m, £11.508m has been spent or committed to date, leaving a remaining budget of £4.581m to progress the various projects to the next project gateway, release of further capital funds or completion.
18. Members should also note that for 2026/27 budget setting, a capital bidding exercise is being undertaken with proposed bids currently being reviewed. This consists of a pot of £10m available for new projects within City Fund and £5m for projects within City’s Estate which are expected to be delivered during 2026/27. Please note that the 2026/27 capital bidding process includes a focus on schemes with the potential to generate revenue savings through reduced operating costs or additional income.

Outstanding Debts

19. At the end of June 2025, total outstanding debts for the Natural Environment Division was £290,762. 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 £24,657 in June 2025, a reduction of £53,434 (68.42%) over the previous six-month period. The reduction in debts over this period can largely be explained by a £22k invoice being written off at Epping Forest in relation to the Chingford Festival. This is in addition to reduced debt levels for property debts at Hampstead Heath.

Graph 3 – Outstanding Debts Over 120 Days – January to June 2025



20. Table 2 below also provides a breakdown of outstanding debts over 120 days according to each section of the division.

Table 2 – Natural Environment Outstanding Debts Over 120 Days – June 2025

Section	Outstanding Debts Over 120 Days	% of Total Debt Outstanding Over 120 Days
Burnham Beeches	£5,483	22.24
City Gardens	£220	0.89
Epping Forest	£6,601	26.77
Hampstead Heath	£10,658	43.23
Highgate Wood	£437	1.77
Learning Team	£1,287	5.22
West Wickham & Coulsdon Commons	(£29)	(0.12)
Total Outstanding Debts Over 120 Days	£24,657	100.00%

21. As can be seen from the table above, debts over 120 days include £11k owed from debtors at Hampstead Heath. This predominantly relates to amounts owed from utility providers with these debts currently being chased.
22. Meanwhile, outstanding debts over 120 days of £7k at Epping Forest and £5k at Burnham Beeches largely consist of historical wayleave debts which are currently being reviewed. Please also note that provisions for these debts are currently held in the event that there is a requirement for these debts to be written off.
23. Members should also note that a separate report relating to outstanding debt arrears for the Natural Environment Division to June 2025 is being presented in the non-public section of your Board's October meeting.

Charity Funds (Restricted, Unrestricted, Designated and Endowments)

24. 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 2025/26 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.
25. A summary of the current balances held by each Natural Environment charity for each type of reserve fund is shown below in Table 3:

Table 3 – Natural Environment Charities Reserve Funds Summary – June 2025

	Restricted	Unrestricted	Designated	Endowments	Total
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
Ashtead Common	£411	£0	£22	£0	£433
Burnham Beeches	£1,545	£3	£953	£0	£2,501
Epping Forest	£1,836	£572	£7,676	£0	£10,084
Hampstead Heath (inc. Hampstead Heath Trust)	£80	£11	£22,493	£40,459	£63,043
Highgate Wood and Queen's Park	£0	£200	£297	£0	£497
Keats House	£137	£156	£44	£0	£337
West Ham Park	£0	£0	£800	£0	£800
West Wickham and Coulsdon Commons	£54	£4	£672	£0	£730
Total	£4,063	£946	£32,957	£40,459	£78,425

26. 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.

27. It should also be noted that the external audit of the 2024/25 accounts for the 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

28. The existing 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 Cyclical Works Programme (CWP) carried out over 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.

29. Members should note that for 2025/26, both Epping Forest and West Ham Park have moved to a grant funded model with all other Natural Environment charities except for Keats House becoming grant funded from 2026/27. It is assumed that each charity will receive a grant for its operational (local risk) activity with other elements of the charity's budgets continuing to be deficit funded for the time being. Further to the scheduled All-Member briefing to discuss grant-funding progress and principles, a request for recommendation of approval of the principles will be presented to the relevant committees from November 2025 alongside reports requesting recommendation for approval of the 2026/27 budget estimates.

30. 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 projected for 2025/26. 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 4 for 2024/25 are currently provisional as the external audit has not yet been completed.

Table 4 – Contributions from City's Estate – 2021/22 to 2025/26

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25 (Prov.)	2025/26 (Est.)
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
Ashted Common	471	524	609	730	944
Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common	896	1,051	949	1,138	1,338
Epping Forest	4,527	4,879	6,573	8,400	10,452
Hampstead Heath	5,356	4,842	8,591	6,236	6,285
Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Kilburn	1,033	1,255	1,533	2,601	2,129
Keats House	292	394	324	572	388
West Ham Park	1,250	1,933	1,234	1,414	2,285
West Wickham Common and Spring Park Wood, Coulsdon and Other Commons	1,046	1,249	1,010	1,770	2,046
Total Contribution from City's Estate	14,871	16,127	20,823	22,861	25,867

31. As seen from the table above, there was an increase for 2024/25 in the total contribution from City's Estate to the Natural Environment charities. This amounted to additional contributions totalling £2.038m (9.79%) compared with the previous financial year. This increase can be attributed to increased expenditure on CWP projects across all charities to meet the backlog of works for projects falling under the CWP. This was on top of contributions to fund increased expenditure such as additional employment costs following cost of living pay rises to staff. Please note that the reduced contribution provided to Hampstead Heath compared with 2023/24 can be largely explained by one-off funding being provided to the charity in 2023/24 for capital expenditure incurred on the Parliament Hill Athletics Track Resurfacing project.

32. Table 4 also illustrates the increased contribution projected to be provided from City's Estate for 2025/26. Total contributions to the Natural Environment charities are forecast to increase by £3.006m (13.15%) compared with the provisional total contribution from City's Estate for 2024/25. This increase is explained by additional expenditure on works falling under CWP projects managed by the City Surveyor as part of the backlog of works as well as inflationary increases projected to be incurred on other expenditure headings. The increase is also explained by extra capital expenditure forecast for Epping Forest in 2025/26 relating to projects including the Baldwins & Birch Hall Park Ponds project.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Strategic implications – none

Financial implications – none

Resource implications – none

Legal implications – none

Risk implications – none

Equalities implications – none

Climate implications – none

Security implications – none

Conclusion

33. This report provides an update on the operational finance position for Quarter 1 for 2025/26 for the Natural Environment Division (including City Gardens) on a range of financial related matters to the end of June 2025.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Natural Environment Division and City Gardens Revenue Budget – 2025/26

Appendix 2 – Natural Environment Capital Projects 2025/26 – Quarter 1

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

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Natural Environment Division and City Gardens Revenue Budget - 2025/26 - Quarter 1

APPENDIX 1

	Gross Expenditure				Gross Income				Net Expenditure			
	Budget	Actual	Forecast		Budget	Actual	Forecast		Budget	Actual	Forecast	Projected Variance
	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s		£'000s	£'000s	£'000s		£'000s	£'000s	£'000s	£'000s
City Fund												
City Gardens	2,941	749	3,258		(842)	23	(844)		2,099	772	2,414	315
Total City Fund	2,941	749	3,258		(842)	23	(844)		2,099	772	2,414	315
City's Estate												
Natural Environment Directorate	2,626	413	2,567		(2,626)	(149)	(2,567)		0	264	0	0
Learning Team	702	156	706		(173)	(19)	(173)		529	136	533	4
Bunhill Fields	236	60	236		0	0	0		236	60	236	0
Epping Forest	11,877	1,932	11,907		(3,081)	(718)	(3,091)		8,796	1,214	8,816	20
Burnham Beeches	1,775	382	1,915		(449)	(140)	(577)		1,326	241	1,338	12
Stoke Common	53	5	54		(25)	(1)	(26)		28	4	28	0
West Wickham and Coulsdon Commons	2,247	419	2,307		(181)	(45)	(241)		2,066	374	2,066	0
Ashtead Common	1,000	237	1,001		(63)	(3)	(63)		937	235	938	1
Hampstead Heath	11,825	2,415	11,778		(5,349)	(1,432)	(5,440)		6,476	982	6,338	(138)
Highgate Wood	1,062	252	1,058		(86)	(28)	(86)		976	225	972	(4)
Queen's Park	1,306	254	1,304		(143)	(61)	(143)		1,163	193	1,161	(2)
West Ham Park	2,784	349	2,783		(373)	(104)	(373)		2,411	246	2,410	(1)
Keats House	511	123	511		(135)	(22)	(135)		376	102	376	0
The Monument	369	180	568		(365)	(104)	(365)		4	77	203	199
Total City's Estate	38,373	7,177	38,695		(13,049)	(2,825)	(13,280)		25,324	4,352	25,415	91
Total Natural Environment Division and City Gardens	41,314	7,925	41,953		(13,891)	(2,802)	(14,124)		27,423	5,123	27,829	406

Notes

1. Projected overspend explained by additional costs incurred by the Highways Division on cyclical cleaning, safety checks and maintenance of irrigation sites and ornamental fountains at the City's Open Spaces. This is in addition to a forecasted overspend at City Gardens following a staffing budget adjustment accumulated from previous years.
2. Forecasted underspend at Hampstead Heath explained by one-off income for filming received in addition to savings on employment costs as a result of staff vacancies.
3. Projected net overspend explained by income levels having not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels which has resulted in a budget shortfall of approximately £200k for The Monument for 2025/26.

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Natural Environment Capital Projects - 2025/26 - Quarter 1

Capital Projects by Division of Service	Total Estimated Cost of Project	Current Approved Budget	Prior Year Actual Spend	In Year Actual Expenditure	In Year Committed Expenditure	Current Approved Budget Unspent
	£'s	£'s	£'s	£'s	£'s	£'s
<u>City Gardens</u>						
Finsbury Circus Reinstatement	5,783,229	6,073,729	5,027,464	264,729	445,482	336,054
St Botolph Ball Court Improvements	101,000	130,000	85,744	0	0	44,256
St Mary At Hill Churchyard	460,000	470,622	136,023	0	0	334,599
Tower Hill Play Area Replacement Project	41,000	36,000	25,793	0	0	10,208
	6,385,229	6,710,351	5,275,025	264,729	445,482	725,116
<u>Epping Forest and Commons</u>						
Epping Forest Various Sites - BEMS Upgrade Phase 2	221,000	138,978	20,000	0	0	118,978
Wanstead Park Ponds Project	912,000	614,500	172,265	0	0	442,235
Baldwins & Birch Hall Park Ponds	1,576,000	502,600	300,784	0	1,543	200,273
Climate Action Strategy - Carbon Removals Phase 2	302,000	520,000	239,547	0	0	280,453
Climate Action Strategy - Carbon Removals Phase 3	431,216	750,000	209,416	74,170	147,630	318,784
Climate Action Strategy - Carbon Removals Phase 4	298,400	298,400	0	0	46,499	251,901
Deer Control - Year 5	83,000	83,000	0	0	9,708	73,292
Great Gregories Yard - Future Proofing Building	402,056	408,744	402,056	0	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	596,000	162,000
Great Gregories Farm - Electrical Housing Replacement (Cyclical Works Programme)	54,410	60,000	43,068	0	11,341	5,590
Wanstead Flats - Landscaping Jubilee Pond (Cyclical Works Programme)	145,000	145,000	0	0	0	145,000
The Warren - Carbon Reduction Measures (Climate Action Strategy)	462,612	462,612	0	61,673	28,330	372,609
The Grotto Restoration (Cyclical Works Programme)	600,000	600,000	0	2,450	492,837	104,713
City Commons - Entry Board Replacement	160,000	160,000	10,300	0	132,217	17,483
City Commons - Livestock Fencing Replacement	92,000	92,000	34,146	0	0	57,854
	7,029,693	6,125,834	1,431,582	138,293	1,466,105	3,089,853
<u>Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queens Park</u>						
Hampstead Heath Swimming Facilities - Safety, Access & Security Impr.	1,010,654	1,010,654	944,453	(19,506)	72,181	13,526
Parliament Hill Lido Photovoltaic Panels (Climate Action Strategy)	293,530	293,530	136,839	900	0	155,791
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	55,000	0
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	144,181	0	4,319	3,500
	1,733,184	1,733,184	1,225,472	(18,606)	131,500	394,817
<u>West Ham Park</u>						
West Ham Park Playground	921,540	1,007,519	921,540	0	0	85,979
West Ham Park Nursery	337,035	337,035	226,774	0	0	110,261
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
	1,373,575	1,459,554	1,148,314	0	0	311,240
<u>Keats House</u>						
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
<u>Natural Environment Total</u>	16,581,681	16,088,923	9,080,393	384,416	2,043,087	4,581,027

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Charity Funds (Restricted, Unrestricted and Designated) - Quarter 1 2025/26

	Opening Balance 2025/26	Income	Expenditure	Gains, (Losses) & Transfers	Current Balance 2025/26
	£'s	£'s	£'s	£'s	£'s
<u>Epping Forest</u>					
Restricted Funds:					
Campaign Donations	1,060				1,060
Countryside Stewardship Scheme	595,883		6,627		589,256
Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS)	1,299,316		53,609		1,245,707
	1,896,259	0	60,236	0	1,836,023
Unrestricted Funds:					
Unrestricted Funds	572,468	15			572,483
	572,468	15	0	0	572,483
Designated (Unrestricted Fund):					
Tangible Fixed Assets (Land & Buildings, Infrastructure, Vehicle & Plant, and Equipment)	5,588,752				5,588,752
Heritage Assets	376,029				376,029
Epping Forest Fund Reserve (Capital Fund)	1,314,206				1,314,206
Ancient Trees Maintenance Fund	15,000				15,000
Golf Course Machinery Fund	105,178				105,178
Knighton Wood Maintenance	5,801				5,801
Future Green Infrastructure fund	3,911				3,911
Cattle Purchase Fund (Grazing Account)	143,763	23,627			167,390
Wanstead Park/ Flats future Projects fund	100,000				100,000
	7,652,640	23,627	0	0	7,676,267
Total Epping Forest	10,121,367	23,642	60,236	0	10,084,773
<u>Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common</u>					
Restricted Funds:					
Legacy Income - Pond Maintenance	60,014				60,014
Campaign Donations	9,738	55			9,683
Section 106 Contributions	164,765		13,345		151,420
Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS)	1,135,072		10,631		1,124,441
Countryside Stewardship Scheme	199,404				199,404
	1,568,992	55	23,975	0	1,544,962
Unrestricted Funds:					
Unrestricted Funds	3,306				3,306
	3,306	0	0	0	3,306
Designated (Unrestricted Fund):					
Stoke Common	140,627				140,627
Tangible Fixed Assets (Land & Buildings, Infrastructure, Vehicles & Plant and Equipment)	812,441				812,441
	953,068	0	0	0	953,068
Total Burnham Beeches	2,525,366	55	23,975	0	2,501,336
<u>West Wickham Common and Spring Park Wood, Coulsdon and Other Commons</u>					
Restricted Funds:					
Campaign Donations	2,560	50			2,610
Countryside Stewardship Scheme	51,452				51,452
	54,012	50	0	0	54,062
Unrestricted Funds:					
Unrestricted Funds	3,547	340			3,887
	3,547	340	0	0	3,887
Designated (Unrestricted Fund):					
Tangible Fixed Assets (Land & Buildings, Infrastructure, Vehicles & Plant and Equipment)	672,319				672,319
	672,319	0	0	0	672,319
Total West Wickham Common and Spring Park Wood, Coulsdon and Other Commons	729,878	390	0	0	730,268
<u>Ashted Common</u>					
Restricted Funds:					
Countryside Stewardship Scheme	411,394				411,394
	411,394	0	0	0	411,394
Designated (Unrestricted Fund):					
Ancient Trees Reserve	2,936	70			3,006
Tangible Fixed Assets (Assets Under Construction)	18,845				18,845
	21,781	70	0	0	21,851
Total Ashted Common	433,175	70	0	0	433,245
Total Epping Forest and Commons Committee	13,809,786	24,157	84,212	0	13,749,622

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 2024/25 charity accounts has not yet been completed and the above opening balances shown for each reserve fund are subject to revision.

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

Restricted 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 model means that no such minimum can be identified, as at year end the difference between income and expenditure is currently 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 1 - 2025/26

	Opening Balance 2025/26 £'s	Income £'s	Expenditure £'s	Gains, (Losses) & Transfers £'s	Current Balance 2025/26 £'s
Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee					
<u>Hampstead Heath</u>					
Restricted Funds:					
Campaign Donations	41,431	630			42,061
Parliament Hill Outdoor Gym	2,233				2,233
Installation of Non-Turf Pitches	35,969				35,969
	79,633	630	0	0	80,263
Unrestricted Funds:					
General Funds	11,180				11,180
Designated (Unrestricted Fund):					
Tangible Fixed Assets (Buildings, Infrastructure & Equipment)	22,489,222				22,489,222
Capital Fund	3,331				3,331
	22,492,553	0	0	0	22,492,553
Total Hampstead Heath	22,583,366	630	0	0	22,583,996
<u>Hampstead Heath Trust Fund</u>					
Permanent Endowment	38,667,859				38,667,859
Expendable Endowment	874,362				874,362
Unrestricted Funds:					
General Funds	916,451				916,451
Total Hampstead Heath Trust Fund	40,458,672	0	0	0	40,458,672
<u>Highgate Wood and Queen's Park</u>					
Unrestricted Funds:					
General Funds	200,134				200,134
Designated (Unrestricted Fund):					
Tangible Fixed Assets (Land, Buildings and Infrastructure)	233,816				233,816
Water Play Feature Project	62,696				62,696
Total Highgate Wood and Queen's Park	496,646	0	0	0	496,646
Total Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee	63,538,684	630	0	0	63,539,314
<u>West Ham Park Committee</u>					
Unrestricted Funds:					
General Funds	0	0			0
Designated (Unrestricted Fund):					
Tangible Fixed Assets (Equipment)	799,893				799,893
Total West Ham Park	799,893	0	0	0	799,893
Total West Ham Park Committee	799,893	0	0	0	799,893
<u>Culture, Heritage & Libraries Committee (Keats House)</u>					
Restricted Funds:					
Heritage Assets - Keats Love Letter & Watercolour	101,423				101,423
Grant Funding	35,541				35,541
Campaign Donations	0	10			10
	136,964	10	0	0	136,974
Unrestricted Funds:					
General Funds	156,193	29			156,222
Designated (Unrestricted Fund):					
Tangible Fixed Assets (Plant & Equipment)	43,754				43,754
Total Keats House	336,911	39	0	0	336,950
Total Culture, Heritage & Libraries Committee (Keats House)	336,911	39	0	0	336,950

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 2024/25 charity accounts has not yet been completed and the above opening balances shown for each reserve fund are subject to revision.

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

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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 – For Information	Dated: 23/10/2025
Subject: Enjoying Green Spaces and the Natural Environment – Annual Report 2024/25 and analysis of fund's impact over the last five years	Public
This proposal delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes:	Leading Sustainable Environment Diverse Engaged Communities Vibrant Thriving Destination
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: Simon Latham, Interim Managing Director of City Bridge Foundation	For Information
Report author: Sheena Etches, Funding & Charity Management Lead	

Summary

The Central Grants Programme provides a portfolio of four funding programmes. The Enjoying Green Spaces and the Natural Environment (EGS) Funding Programme opened in 2016 and forms part of the Central Grants Programme (CGP). The EGS is managed on behalf of the Natural Environment Division (NE) by the Central Funding and Charity Management Team (CFCMT), formerly the Central Grants Unit. EGS has one funding round each year. This report provides an overview of projects funded through the EGS in the 2024/25 financial year alongside a comprehensive analysis of the grants awarded by the EGS over the last five years illustrating the contribution of the EGS to delivering both NE key strategies and City of London's Corporate Plan strategic outcomes.

Recommendations

Members are asked:

1. To note the allocation of grants for 2024-25 approved under delegated authority (as at **Appendix 2**).
2. To note the key findings of the analysis of EGS funding programme over the last five years 2020/21 to 2024/25 (as at **Appendix 3**).

Main Report

Background

1. The Enjoying Green Spaces & the Natural Environment Fund (EGS) is one of a portfolio of four open grant funding programmes that form the City of London Corporation's (CoLC's) Central Grants Programme (CGP). The EGS opened in 2016 and the fund was reviewed in 2024 with this Committee agreeing changes to the EGS sub-themes/criteria and value of maximum grant at its meeting in May 2024.
2. The EGS funds projects where the majority of impact will be on the City of London Corporation's managed open spaces (Ashted Common, Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common, Epping Forest, Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood, Queen's Park, The Coudsdon Commons, The West Wickham Commons, West Ham Park) and Bunhill Fields Burial Ground.
3. The minimum grant that an organisation can apply for is £2,000 and the maximum grant is £15,000. To avoid creating long term reliance on the EGS grants are awarded over a maximum of 3 years and organisations receiving grants for the same project for three years are required to have a fallow period of 12 months before reapplying to continue that work.
4. All EGS funded projects must either improve the conservation value of the chosen green spaces and/or improve our knowledge of the biodiversity of the green spaces. In addition funded projects must also meet at least one of the other three sub-themes/criteria: Connecting communities with their green spaces; Providing opportunities for children and young people to learn and have fun; Improving wellbeing through the use of green spaces. (For full details of the sub-themes see **Appendix 1**).
5. EGS has a 12-week decision turnaround allowing the fund to be responsive to immediate location needs.
6. The NE Board delegates decisions for the award of grants to the Natural Environment Director in consultation with your Chairman and Deputy Chairman.
7. A comprehensive grant management service for EGS and other City of London grant funding programmes is delivered by the CFCMT drawing on the team's expertise in the field of grant-making and in line with 'Open and Trusting' grant making practice. The CFCMT is a City of London-wide resource managing a number of other grant programmes on behalf of departments across the City of London including the Community Infrastructure Levy Neighbourhood Fund.
8. Management of the EGS process is aligned with the City's existing grant allocation process through the CFCMT. Applications to the EGS undergo a

process of due diligence, assessment and financial review by Funding Managers before sign off by a Senior CFCMT Officer. Eligible applications are then presented to the EGS Officer Panel for recommendation. The EGS Officer Panel comprises of Senior Officers from across NE Open Spaces and is chaired by the Natural Environment Director. At the EGS Officer Panel consideration is given to each proposal's alignment with the EGS criteria, outputs and outcomes, value for money in terms of social, environmental as well as financial value and equality considerations.

Enjoying Green Spaces & the Natural Environment 2024-25

9. In 2024/25 the CFCMT received 12 applications to the EGS – broadly in line with the average number of applications received over the last five years.
10. The CGP has an annual City's Estate budget of £220,000 split across three funding programmes, and additional funds specifically to deliver the Destination City Partnership Fund. In 2024/25 the EGS received an annual budget of £73,333 from the CGP to allocate to eligible applications. 7 grants were awarded totalling £73,540. A list of grants awarded and rejected can be found at **Appendix 2**.
11. Grant approval rate for 2024/25 was 58%. 25% of applications were rejected and 17% of applications were withdrawn during assessment by the applicant. (See **Appendix 3, Table 4**).
12. The average value of the grant awarded during 2024/25 was £10,506 substantially less than the funding programme maximum grant of £15,000. (See **Appendix 3, Table 1**).
13. 2024/25 was the first year that the number of multi-year grants (57% of grants awarded) exceeded the number of single year grants awarded (43%) and may reflect organisations' needs to plan further in advance.
14. In 2024/25 71% of EGS grants awarded were to small organisations with a turnover of less than £500k. (See **Appendix 3, Table 9**).

EGS Fund Analysis of Grants Awarded over the last 5 years

15. **Appendix 3** provides the first comprehensive analysis of the grants awarded by the EGS over the last five years (2020/21 to 2024/25 inclusive) illustrating the contribution of the EGS in delivering both NE key strategies and City of London's Corporate Plan strategic outcomes.
16. Over the last five years, 2020/21 to 2024/25 inclusive, the EGS has distributed £384,444 in 35 grants to 24 unique organisations. (See **Appendix 3, Table 1**).

17. Over the last five years the average value of grant awarded has remained fairly constant ranging from an yearly average of £9,538 to £12,273. (See **Appendix 3, Table 1**).
18. Over the same period (2021/22 to 2024/25) applications to the EGS have also remained fairly constant except for a dip in applications in 2022/23 with an average of c.13 applications per year. (See **Appendix 3, Table 4**). Given that EGS funds available have remained more or less constant in the years that there are more applications the approval rate drops. Average approval rate for EGS over the last 5 years is 53%.
19. Although the EGS can award grants lasting for up to three years, over the last five years over two-thirds of EGS grants awarded (69%) have been for a single year.
20. Over the last five years 7 organisations have received two or more grants each. The maximum aggregate grant from the EGS over the last five years to any single organisation was £47,968 equivalent to 12% of the total grant spend over the last 5 years and the largest number of continuation/repeat grants awarded to the same applicant was 4. (See **Appendix 3, Table 6**).
21. Organisations receiving one or more grant were awarded 53% of the total EGS funding available over the last five years. With three organisations (Tindersticks, Epping Forest Heritage Trust, Capital Kids Cricket) between them awarded almost a third (31%) of the total funds available for distribution over the last five years. To ensure wider distribution of the funds available, in May 2024 the Natural Environment Committee agreed to limit the length of continuous funding to three years after which applicants seeking funding for the same work would require a fallow period of 12 months before they can reapply.
22. Over the last 5 years 37% of all EGS grants awarded (13 grants) were for projects located in Epping Forest (£137,191). (See **Appendix 3 Table 7**). The disparity in investment across the City of London Corporation's Open Spaces through the EGS may relate to the nature of the sites, recreational value, usage and/or association with a volunteer or area specific group wishing to lead projects. Two natural environment locations received no investment over the last 5 years through the EGS – Queens Park and West Wickham Commons – with Highgate Wood benefiting from a multi-site project.
23. Over the last five years 83% of EGS grants awarded were to small organisations with an annual turnover of less than £500k. Almost two thirds (63%) of all EGS grants awarded over the last five years were to 'very small' organisations with an annual turnover of less than £100k. (See **Appendix 3 Tables 8 & 9**).
24. Over the last five years 86% of funded projects met the criteria 'connecting communities with their green spaces' (**Community Engagement Strategy**), 60% of funded projects met the criteria 'improving the conservation value of the green spaces' (**Nature Conservation Resilience Strategy**), and 46% of

funded projects met the criteria of 'improving wellbeing through the use of green spaces' (**Culture Heritage Learning Strategy & Community Engagement Strategy**). (See **Appendix 3, Table 13**).

25. The EGS also delivers against four of the six CoL Corporate Plan strategic outcomes, significantly contributing to 'Leading Sustainable Environment' with 51% of all grants increasing biodiversity and 40% of all grants delivering climate mitigation. (See **Appendix 3, Table 14**). As expected given the focused sub-themes, EGS also strongly contributes to creating 'Diverse engaged communities' with 66% of all grants awarded delivering increased community cohesion and 20% of all grants reducing social isolation.
26. The EGS grant programme mainly delivers activities and services for general beneficiaries (80% of all grants) with approximately a quarter of all grants benefitting families (26%), or children (23%), or young people (23%). Many projects target more than one main beneficiary group. (See **Appendix 3 Table 15**).

Corporate & Strategic Implications

27. **Financial implications** – EGS sits under the Central Grants Programme which is funded on an ongoing basis, all grant assessment and management costs are covered by CFCMT budget.
28. **Resource implications** – Officer time to manage the EGS and review its impact will be provided by the CFCMT as part of the Team's responsibility for the CGP's management.
29. **Legal implications** – None
30. **Strategic implications** – The delivery of the EGS for communities using and enjoying the City of London Corporation managed open spaces across London aligns with NE key strategies and to the City Corporation's own Corporate Plan and stated aims of leading sustainable environment, providing excellent services and creating diverse engaged communities
31. **Risk implications** – All EGS grants are managed and monitored by Funding Managers within the CFCMT to mitigate risks in project delivery through provision of ongoing advice and support.
32. **Climate implications** – EGS funded projects deliver against the NE's Nature Conservation Resilience Strategy actively improving the conservation value of the green spaces and improving our knowledge of the biodiversity of the green spaces.
33. **Equalities implications** – The purpose of the EGS is to fund projects and services delivered for the benefit of communities or beneficiaries across City of London Corporation managed open spaces. 86% of the projects funded connect communities with their green spaces with 66% of funded projects increasing community cohesion. The CFCMT assess and manage all grants

according to best practice, ensuring Equity, Diversity and Inclusion considerations are built into each stage of the process.

34. **Security implications** – All EGS applications are considered in consultation with the Natural Environment team to ensure the safety of the public.

Conclusion

35. The EGS contributes to the delivery of both the NE's key strategies and the City of London's Corporate Plan strategic outcomes. The EGS remains the only City of London Corporation grant funding programme open to organisations delivering projects in and for the CoLC's open spaces across London by primarily working with small local organisations.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Central Grants Programme – Enjoying Green Spaces & the Natural Environment Sub-themes/criteria
- Appendix 2 – Central Grants Programme – Enjoying Green Spaces & the Natural Environment Grants decisions 2024/25
- Appendix 3 - Central Grants Programme – Enjoying Green Spaces & the Natural Environment Fund Analysis of Grants Awarded 2020/21 to 2024/25

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Appendix 1

Enjoying Green Spaces & the Natural Environment : Sub-themes

The Enjoying Green Spaces and Natural Environment (EGS) funding programme has been separated into five sub-themes. Proposals must meet at least one of the first two sub-themes (A and/or B), and at least one of the remaining three sub-themes (C, D and/or E) as outlined below. All proposals must either improve the conservation value of the chosen green spaces and/or improve our knowledge of the biodiversity of the green spaces:

Improving the conservation value of the green spaces - Sub-theme A

The City of London Corporation is committed to supporting the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and to climate change mitigation and adaptation. The activities supported through this sub-theme should aim to improve the conservation of the City Corporation's green spaces and should be able to demonstrate positive actions and outcomes. This could be via practical work on the ground, production of plans or a combination of both.

Improving our knowledge of the biodiversity of the green spaces - Sub-theme B

The activities supported through this sub-theme should help improve our knowledge of the biodiversity of the City Corporation's green spaces. This could include survey or inventory projects or small-scale research projects on species habitats found in green spaces. They could include comparative studies using other locations/sites, but the majority of the project should be carried out on a City Corporation green space. Projects should be able to demonstrate positive actions and outcomes. In addition all proposals must also connect communities with their green spaces and/or provide opportunities for children and young people to learn and have fun and/or improve wellbeing through the use of green spaces:

Connecting communities with their green spaces - Sub-theme C

The activities supported through this sub-theme should help local communities connect with the City Corporation's green spaces and encourage respectful behaviour on those spaces. Projects should facilitate a deep sense of pride, encouraging communities to participate in and advocate for our natural assets. We particularly encourage applications for bespoke proposals from organisations with expertise and experience working with people from disadvantaged communities. The projects should demonstrate positive outcomes for these newly connected communities and should demonstrate how they will support the groups to continue to visit the green spaces.

Providing opportunities for children and young people to learn and have fun - Sub-theme D

There is growing concern that opportunities for children to learn in nature are becoming limited, impacting on child development. The projects supported through this sub-theme should help address this. They should provide opportunities for children and young people to build confidence and gain understanding while feeling safe and having fun on the Corporation's green spaces and heritage assets. We particularly encourage applications for bespoke proposals from organisations with expertise and experience working with young people struggling with education and/or employment. The proposals should demonstrate positive outcomes for these communities and should demonstrate how they will support the groups to continue to visit the green spaces.

Improving wellbeing through the use of green spaces - Sub-theme E

Good mental health lies at the heart of wellbeing and quality of life, and of effective functioning for both individuals and communities. The projects supported through this sub-theme should encourage contact with the City Corporation's green spaces as an addition to treatment options within mental health.

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Appendix 2

Enjoying Green Spaces & the Natural Environment grants decisions 2024/2025

Applicant	Description	Decision
Zoological Society of London (25764)	£13,448 over two years towards equipment and staffing costs to support the implementation of Hedgehog and wildlife monitoring, and local community engagement in Hampstead Heath and Highgate woods.	Approved
Epping Forest Heritage Trust (25950)	£10,500 across one year to support the Epping Forest Heritage Trust's Happy Loppers and Green Team volunteers, contributing towards the costs of a Conservation Officer, alongside insurance.	Approved
Oxygen (25962)	£14,980 (£7,490; £7,490) over two years for staffing, activities, publicity and monitoring costs associated with the Ashted Outdoors Adventure Programme - introducing marginalised and disadvantaged young people to the benefits of nature on Ashted Common.	Approved
Tinder Sticks CIC (25967)	£8,957 over twelve months for staff time, training and equipment for 'Wander Women': creating a positive connection with West Ham Park for vulnerable local women, building outdoor confidence and improving well-being.	Approved
Highams Park Community CIC (26021)	£2,500 over six months to improve the appearance and biodiversity of the north end of Highams Park Lake through planting of appropriate bog friendly plants.	Approved
Lower Mole Countryside Trust (25889)	£14,995 over 3 years to manage habitat, purchase species monitoring equipment and recruit volunteers to help save the nationally threatened Hazel Dormouse on Ashted Common National Nature Reserve.	Approved
The Conservation Volunteers (25812)	£8,200 (£4,000; £4,200) across two years to Boosting Biodiversity – Croydon TCV supporting Rangers to maintain and improve City Commons.	Approved
Faiths Forum for London (25437)	£14,850 over 9 months to support the costs of staffing, venue hire, equipment, and promotional materials for a "Biodiversity Bug School."	Rejected
Heath Hands (25776)	£15,000 towards Young Hedgerow Heroes to enable children to boost biodiversity and improve climate resilience on Hampstead Heath through practical conservation work.	Rejected
The Good Gym (26001)	£13,661 over one year towards staffing and marketing costs associated with delivering 70 environmental activities in City of London green spaces.	Rejected

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Appendix 3

City of London Corporation: Central Grants Programme Analysis of Enjoying Green Spaces and the Natural Environment Fund grants awarded 2020/22 to 2024/25

Key Findings

This paper provides the first comprehensive analysis of the grants awarded by the Enjoying Green Spaces & the Natural Environment Fund (EGS) over the last five years illustrating the EGS's contribution to delivering both the Natural Environment Division's key strategies and the City of London's Corporate Plan strategic outcomes. Notable findings of the grant analysis include:

- Over the last five years, 2020/21 to 2024/25 inclusive, the EGS has distributed £384,444 in 35 grants to 24 unique organisations.
- The average value of EGS grant awarded over the last five years was £10,984 - substantially less than the maximum value of grant available which was reduced to £15,000 in May 2024.
- Similarly, although grants can be awarded for up to 3 years, 69% of EGS grants awarded over the last 5 years have been for only one-year, reflecting the demand on EGS for low value short-term grant funding.
- Application rates to EGS are low and steady with c.13 applications each year.
- CFCMT pre-application advice take up for EGS is low compared to other funding programmes. However, this may relate to potential applicants approaching Natural Environment Officers, with whom they have an established relationship, rather than CFCMT Officers for advice on application development.
- Approval rate for the EGS over the last five years has been an average of 53% which is substantially higher than the 'Stronger Communities Fund' and 'Inspiring London Through Culture Fund'.
- 7 organisations received two or more grants each representing 53% of the total EGS funding available over the last five years. This issue was addressed in 2024 through the introduction of a 12 month fallow period for organisations who had receive three years of funding for the same project.
- Over the last 5 years 37% of all EGS grants awarded (13 grants) were for projects located in Eppling Forest (£137,191 investment) whereas Queens Park and West Wickham Commons received no EGS investment over the same period.
- Over the last five years 83% of EGS grants awarded were to small organisations with an annual turnover of less than £500k with almost two thirds (63%) of all grants awarded to 'very small' organisations with an annual turnover of less than £100k.
- 12% of EGS grants awarded over the last five years have been to organisations/ groups that were user-led.
- 80% of EGS funded activities over the last 5 years were for general beneficiaries, 26% benefitted families, 23% benefitted children under the age of 11, and 23% benefitted young people aged 11-25 years.
- The EGS fund delivers against priorities within four Natural Environment Division key strategies: Access Recreation Strategy; Community Engagement Strategy; Nature Conservation Resilience Strategy; Culture, Heritage, Learning Strategy.
- The EGS also delivers against four of the six CoL Corporate Plan strategic outcomes significantly contributing to 'Leading Sustainable Environment' with 51% of all grants increasing biodiversity and 40% of all grants delivering climate mitigation.

City of London Corporation: Central Grants Programme

Analysis of Enjoying Green Spaces and the Natural Environment Fund grants awarded 2020/22 to 2024/25

Background

1. This paper provides a comprehensive analysis of the grants awarded by the 'Central Grants Programme: Enjoying Green Spaces & the Natural Environment Fund' over the last five years of awards 2020/21 to 2024/25 inclusive to illustrate the impact of the fund and its contribution to delivering both the Natural Environment Division's key strategies and the City of London's Corporate Plan strategic outcomes.
2. The paper analyses the impact and learning from 35 Enjoying Green Spaces & the Natural Environment Fund' (EGS) grants awarded over 60 months (April 2020 to March 2025 inclusive) by addressing the key learning questions identified for the programme (see **Appendix A**).
3. The EGS is one of a portfolio of four open grant funding programmes that form the City of London Corporation's Central Grants Programme. The EGS has been operating since 2016.
4. EGS is an annual funding programme which opens for applications once each year in the late summer/autumn with grants awarded in time for activities to start by March.
5. The EGS funding programme was reviewed in 2024 leading to some minor alterations to the fund's policy and criteria. In May 2024 the Natural Environment Committee approved updates to the fund criteria and reduced the maximum grant from £20,000 to £15,000. The number of sub-themes/criteria for EGS was increased from four to five providing some greater specificity under the '*Connecting communities with their green spaces*' sub-theme/criteria and adding a new sub-theme/criteria '*Providing opportunities for children and young people to learn and have fun*'. These policy updates better align the fund against the Natural Environment Division's four key strategies: Access Recreation Strategy; Community Engagement Strategy; Nature Conservation Resilience Strategy; Culture, Heritage, Learning Strategy.
6. All EGS funded projects must either improve the conservation value of the chosen green spaces and/or improve our knowledge of the biodiversity of the green spaces. In addition funded projects must also meet at least one of the other three sub-themes/criteria: Connecting communities with their green spaces; Providing opportunities for children and young people to learn and have fun; Improving wellbeing through the use of green spaces. (For full details of the sub-themes see **Appendix B**).
7. The EGS funds projects where the majority of impact will be on the City of London Corporation's managed open spaces (Ashted Common, Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common, Epping Forest, Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood, Queen's Park, The Coulsdon Commons, The West Wickham Commons, West Ham Park) and Bunhill Fields Burial Ground.
8. These open spaces, spread across London and the Home Counties, provide rare and ancient habitats for a range of endangered plants and animals and capture 16,400 thousand tonnes of carbon a year. They attract 25m visitors annually – almost double

the number of visitors to Premiership football matches and five times the number of visitors to the Grand Canyon.

9. The minimum grant that an organisation can apply for is £2,000 and the maximum grant is £15,000. To avoid creating long term reliance on the EGS grants are awarded over a maximum of 3 years and organisations receiving grants for the same project for three years are required to have a fallow period of 12 months before reapplying to continue that work. The refurbishment of buildings/capitals works was excluded from funding from 2024/25 onwards.
10. Funding for EGS comes from the City's Estate with a budget agreed each year c.£73,333.
11. The City of London managed open spaces are governed by nine charities for which the City of London Corporation is the sole trustee. A review of the National Environment Charities long-term sustainability began in 2022 to give these charities greater flexibility to operate, generate income, build reserves where possible, invest in conservation, and enhance services. The review will assess appropriate new and enhanced ways for the natural environment charities to generate their own revenue, including fundraising from external sources.
12. In line with embedding EEDI within funding best practice, the CFCMT offers pre-application advice to all EGS potential applicants helping to support organisations develop their applications and make contact with relevant CoL Natural Environment Officers prior to application. The programme's management is reviewed against IVAR's Open and Trusting Grant-Making for Public Agencies with light touch grant reporting in line with Open and Trusting grant-making principles.

Value and distribution of grants over time

13. Over the last five years 2020/21 to 2024/25 inclusive the EGS has distributed £384,444 in 35 grants. Grants awarded have ranged from £2,500 to £14,988. (See **Table 1**).
14. The average value of grant awarded over the last five years was £10,984. The annual value of the fund has remained more or less static over the last five years with an average of 7 funded projects each year.

Table 1			
Financial Year	Number of grants awarded	Value of grants awarded in year	Average value of grant awarded
2020/21	7	£83,568	£11,938
2021/22	8	£76,300	£9,538
2022/23	7	£77,401	£11,057
2023/24	6	£73,635	£12,273
2024/25	7	£73,540	£10,506
Total	35	£384,444	Av £10,984

15. EGS grant funding has primary been awarded for the delivery of projects (84% of total spend) rather than capital projects (16% of total spend) over the last five years. (See **Table 2**).
16. Over the last five years the value of grant funding towards capital expenditure has steadily decreased, and from 2024/25 onwards '*Refurbishment of buildings/capital works*' has not been eligible for EGS funding. (See **Table 2**).

Table 2		
Financial Year	Value of capital grant expenditure	Value of revenue grant expenditure
2020/21	£32,153	£51,415
2021/22	£22,324	£53,976
2022/23	£5,000	£72,401
2003/24	£914	£72,721
2024/25	£0	£73,540
Total	£60,391	£324,053

17. Although the EGS can award grants lasting for up to three years, over the last five years over two-thirds of EGS grants awarded (69%) have been for a single year. (See **Table 3**).
18. 2024/25 was the first year that the number of multi-year grants exceeded the number of single year grants awarded and may reflect organisations' needs to plan further in advance. (See **Table 3**).
19. Of the eleven 2/2+year grants, three grants were awarded for 3 years, one grant was awarded for 2.5 years and 7 grants were awarded for 2 years (20% of all grants awarded over the 5 years).

Table 3				
Financial Year	Number of 1 year grants	% 1 year grants	Number of 2 year or longer grants	% 2 year or longer grants
2020/21	6	86%	1	14%
2021/22	5	63%	3	37%
2022/23	5	71%	2	29%
2003/24	5	83%	1	17%
2024/25	3	43%	4	57%
Total	24		11	

Demand for Enjoying Green Spaces & the Natural Environment funding

20. Over the last 5 years there have been a total of 66 applications to the EGS of which on average 35% were rejected, 12% were withdrawn, and 53% were approved. (See **Table 4**).
21. Over the last 5 years (2001/21 to 2024/25) application rate to the EGS has hovered with an average of c.13 applications per year. Given that EGS funds available have remained more or less constant in the years that there are more applications the approval rate drops.

Table 4					
Financial Year	Number of apps submitted	Number of Grants awarded/ funded	Number of apps rejected	Number of apps withdrawn	Approval rate
2020/21	12	7	3	2	58%
2021/22	17	8	9	0	47%
2022/23	9	7	2	0	78%

2023/24	16	6	6	4	38%
2024/25	12	7	3	2	58%
Total	66	53%	35%	12%	Av. 53%

22. In line with high quality funding practice CFCMT offers 1:1 tailored pre-application advice calls to all potential applicants. This practice ensures that potential applicants are provided with information, advice and introductions to Natural Environment Officers to help develop their projects prior to submission. It allows the CFCMT to ensure that those who are furthest from accessing funding are given the support they individually need by removing structural barriers within the funding process. Pre-application calls also enable the team to establish relational grant-making practice from the initial contact with a potential applicant and identify and mitigate common issues experienced by applicants. Most importantly, pre-application advice provides early identification of ineligible applicants and projects, thereby preventing organisations wasting precious time on working up full applications and allowing CFCMT Officers to spend more time on assessing potentially successful applications.
23. Monitoring of pre-application advice began in late 2023. In 2024/25 only 4 organisations requested EGS pre-application advice one of whom then submitted an application (the applicant was successful). Applicants to EGS are well known to the Natural Environment Division, often having worked closely with Officers responsible for specific open spaces over a number of years. Applicants therefore tend to develop their projects and ask for advice directly from these Officers rather than the CFCMT.

Continuation/Repeat Funding

24. Over the five year period (2020/21 to 2024/25 inclusive) 24 unique organisations were supported through the award of EGS grant funding of which 71% of successful applicants were awarded one grant each. (See **Table 5**).

Table 5	
Number of grants awarded over 5 years	Number of organisations
1	17
2	4
3	2
4	1
Total	24

25. 7 organisations had two or more grants each. The maximum aggregate value of grant from the EGS over the last five years to any single organisation was £47,968 equivalent to 12% of the total grant spend over the last 5 years and the largest number of continuation/repeat grants awarded to the same applicant was 4. (See **Table 6**).
26. Organisations receiving one or more grants were awarded 53% of the total funding available over the last five years. With three organisations (Tindersticks, Epping Forest Heritage Trust, Capital Kids Cricket) between them awarded almost a third (31%) of the total funds available for distribution over the last five years.

Table 6			
Organisation	Number of grants awarded over 5 years	Value of grants awarded over 5 years	% of total grant spend over 5 years
Tindersticks CIC	4	£47,968	12%
Epping Forest Heritage Trust	3	£39,253	10%
Capital Kids Cricket	3	£33,879	9%
Downlands Trust	2	£27,396	7%
Lower Mole Countryside Trust	2	£24,955	6%
Friends of City Gardens	2	£24,920	6%
Highams Park Community CIC	2	£12,500	3%
			53%

27. To ensure the wider distribution of funds, in May 2024 the Natural Environment Board agreed to limit the length of continuous funding to three years after which applicants seeking funding for the same work would require a fallow period of 12 months before they can reapply.

Locations specifically benefiting from EGS grant funding

28. Over the last 5 years 37% of all EGS grants awarded (13 grants) were for projects located in Epping Forest (£137,191). (See **Table 7**). The disparity in investment across the City of London Corporation's Open Spaces through the EGS may relate to the nature of the sites, recreational value, usage and/or association with a volunteer or area specific group wishing to lead projects.
29. Two natural environment locations received no investment over the last 5 years through the EGS – Queens Park and West Wickham Commons – with Highgate Wood benefiting from a multi-site project.
30. In line with the EGS review recommendations, from May 2024 onwards City Gardens with the exception of Bunhill Fields Burial Ground are no longer eligible for EGS funding with relevant proposals directed to the Community Infrastructure Levy Neighbourhood Fund for support.

Table 7				
Location	Number of grants awarded over 5 years	% of grants awarded	Value of grants awarded over 5 years	% value of grants awarded over 5 years
Epping Forest	13	37%	£137,191	36%
Mixed combination	5	14%	£62,244	16%
Hampstead Heath	5	14%	£56,211	15%
Ashted Common	3	9%	£39,935	10%
West Ham Park	4	11%	£34,091	9%
CoL Gardens/ Bunhill Fields Burial Ground	2	6%	£24,920	6%
The Coulsdon Commons	2	6%	£20,152	5%
Burnham Beeches and Stoke Common	1	3%	£9,700	3%
Highgate Wood	0	0%	£0	0%
Queen's Park	0	0%	£0	0%
The West Wickham Commons	0	0%	£0	0%
Total	35		£384,444	

Enjoying Green Spaces & the Natural Environment Fund grantee organisation by type – turnover, user-led, sector

31. Over the last five years 83% of EGS grants awarded were to small organisations with an annual turnover of less than £500k. Almost two thirds (63%) of all EGS grants awarded over the last five years were to 'very small' organisations with an annual turnover of less than £100k. (See **Tables 8 & 9**).

Table 8		
Annual Turnover of grantee	Number of grants	% of grants
£5m+	3	8%
£1m to £4,999,999	2	6%
£500K to £999,999	1	3%
£100K to £499,999	7	20%
< £100K	22	63%
Total	35	

32. Over the last five years the EGS has consistently directed approximately three-quarters of its grants to small organisations with a turnover of less than £500k. (See **Table 9**).

Table 9			
Financial Year	Number of grants awarded to small orgs turnover less than £500k	% grants awarded in the year to small orgs turnover less than £500k	Total number of grants awarded
2020/21	6	86%	7
2021/22	6	75%	8
2022/23	7	100%	7
2023/24	5	83%	6
2024/25	5	71%	7
Total	29	Av 83%	35

33. Over the last 5 years over two-thirds of EGS grants (69%) were awarded to applicants that were either Constituted Voluntary Organisations (20%) or UK registered charities (49%). (See **Table 10**).

Table 10							
Organisation Type	Number of grants	% of grants	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
UK Registered Charity	17	49%	4	4	3	3	3
Constituted voluntary organisation	7	20%	2	3	1	1	0
CIC	6	17%	0	1	2	1	2
Charitable Company	5	14%	1	0	1	1	2
Total	35	100%	7	8	7	6	7

34. 12% of grants awarded over the last five years from EGS have been to organisations/ groups that were user-led representing a £37,600 investment (10% of total investment). (See **Table 11**).

Table 11					
Type of user led organisation	Number of grants	% of grants	Total value of grants awarded	% of total EGS spend	Average value of grant
BAME user led	1	3%	£14,500	4%	£14,500
Other user led	3	9%	£23,100	6%	£3,850
Not user led	31	88%	£346,844	90%	£5,594
	35		£384,444		

35. As would be expected from the EGS grant criteria, 66% of grants awarded over the last 5 years were to organisations from the Environment sector (£255,019 of total investment), with a further 11% of grants awarded to organisations in the Voluntary & Community Sector and 8% of grants awarded to organisations in the sports sector. (See **Table 12**).

Table 12				
Grantee Organisation Sector	No of grants	% of grants	Value of grants awarded	% value of grants awarded
Environment	23	66%	£255,019	66%
Voluntary & Community	4	11%	£34,166	9%
Sports	3	8%	£33,879	8%
Youth Provision	1	3%	£14,980	4%
Health	1	3%	£14,500	4%
Heritage	1	3%	£14,000	4%
Culture Arts	1	3%	£9,900	3%
Other	1	3%	£8,000	2%
Total	35		£384,444	

Meeting EGS Sub-themes/criteria

36. The EGS has five sub-themes which operate as the criteria for the fund. To be eligible for funding each application must meet at least one of sub-themes A or B plus at least one of sub-themes C, D or E:
- Sub-theme A - Improving the conservation value of the green spaces
 - Sub-theme B - Improving our knowledge of the biodiversity of the green spaces
 - Sub-theme C - Connecting communities with their green spaces
 - Sub-theme D - Providing opportunities for children and young people to learn and have fun
 - Sub-theme E - Improving wellbeing through the use of green spaces
37. Over the last five years 86% of funded projects met the criteria 'connecting communities with their green spaces', 60% of funded projects met the criteria 'improving the conservation value of the green spaces', and 46% of funded projects met the criteria of 'improving wellbeing through the use of green spaces'. (See **Table 13**).
38. The Natural Environment Division's four key strategies were each met by at least a third of the funded projects. (See **Table 13**).

Table 13				
EGS Sub-theme & strategies met over the last 5 years	Total Number of grants	% of total grants awarded	Number of 2024/25 grants	% of 2024/25 grants
Connecting communities with their green spaces – Community Engagement Strategy	30	86%	6	86%
Improving the conservation value of the green spaces – Nature Conservation Resilience Strategy	21	60%	7	100%
Improving wellbeing through the use of green spaces – Culture Heritage Learning Strategy & Community Engagement Strategy	16	46%	4	57%
Improving our knowledge of the biodiversity of the green spaces – Nature Conservation Resilience Strategy	12	34%	2	29%
Providing opportunities for children and young people to learn and have fun – Access recreation Strategy	12	34%	2	29%

Delivering against City of London Corporate Plan Strategic Outcomes

39. The EGS delivers against four of the six CoL's Corporate Plan strategic outcomes, significantly contributing to 'Leading Sustainable Environment' with 51% of all grants increasing biodiversity and 40% of all grants delivering climate mitigation. (See **Table 14**).
40. As expected given the focused sub-themes, EGS also strongly contributes to the CoL's Corporate Plan strategic outcome of creating 'Diverse engaged communities' with 66% of all grants awarded delivering increased community cohesion and 20% of all grants reducing social isolation.
41. EGS also strongly contributes to the CoL's Corporate Plan strategic outcome 'Providing excellent services' with 46% of all grants contributing to improving mental or physical health.

Table 14		
Main grant purpose (outcomes)/ Corporate Plan Strategic Outcome	Number of grants	% of grants
Increased Community Cohesion - ' Diverse engaged communities '	23	66%
Increased Biodiversity - ' Leading Sustainable Environment '	18	51%
Improved mental or physical health - ' Providing excellent services '	16	46%
Climate mitigation - ' Leading Sustainable Environment '	14	40%
Reduced Social Isolation - ' Diverse engaged communities '	7	20%
Improved Public Realm – ' Flourishing Public Spaces '	4	11%

Grant beneficiaries

42. The EGS grant programme mainly delivers activities and services for general beneficiaries (80% of all grants) with approximately a quarter of all grants benefitting families (26%), or children (23%), or young people (23%). Many projects target more than one main beneficiary group. (See **Table 15**).

Table 15		
Main grant beneficiary group/s	Number of grants	% of grants
General beneficiaries/ no specific target groups	28	80%
Families	9	26%
Children < 11yr	8	23%
Young People/Youth 11-25yr	8	23%
People with learning disabilities	3	9%
People from minoritised ethnic groups	3	9%
People living in poverty	2	6%
Older people	1	3%
People with physical disabilities	1	3%
LGBTQ+	1	3%
Refugees and Asylum seekers	1	3%

Recommendations

43. This paper provides a comprehensive analysis of the grants awarded by the 'Central Grants Programme: Enjoying Green Spaces & the Natural Environment Fund' over the last five years of awards 2020/21 to 2024/25 inclusive and evidences the EGS fund's contribution to delivering both the Natural Environment Division's four key strategies and the City of London's Corporate Plan strategic outcomes.
44. To further strengthen the EGS and its impact it is recommended that:
- Analysis of the fund is undertaken annually to track trends in funding.
 - Statistics from the EGS analysis are incorporated into assessment report recommendations to provide context and arguments for future investment in specific open spaces where there has been historically low EGS investment, for example Queens Park and West Wickham Commons.
 - Officers across the Natural Environment Division support in the identification of potential applicant organisations and the development of potential projects for funding drawing on their expert local and environmental knowledge.

Appendix A

Enjoying Green Spaces & the Natural Environment Funding Programme

Key information and learning questions
What is the total EGS grant allocation/year? Total invested over last 5 years?
How many EGS grants have been awarded/year? Total number of grants awarded?
What is the spread of grants in terms of value & number? How has this changed over time?
What is the demand for EGS funding (total number of applications) and how has this changed over time?
What is the approval rate for EGS grants and how has this changed over time?
What is the percentage of continuation grants/repeat funding?
Which open spaces are receiving EGS investment?
Are there any investment cold spots?
How are EGS grants spread across turnover (size) of grantee?
How are the EGS grants spread across organisation type (constitution)?
To what extent is EGS supporting user-led organisations?
What sectors are EGS grantees working in?
To what extent have different EGS sub-themes been met through EGS funding?
What are the main outcomes of EGS funded projects? Which CoL Corporate Plan strategic outcomes does EGS contribute to delivering?
Which Natural Environment Division Key Strategies does EGS contribute to delivering?
Which groups of people benefit from EGS funding?

Appendix B

Enjoying Green Spaces & the Natural Environment : Sub-themes

The Enjoying Green Spaces and Natural Environment (EGS) funding programme has been separated into five sub-themes. Proposals must meet at least one of the first two sub-themes (A and/or B), and at least one of the remaining three sub-themes (C, D and/or E) as outlined below. All proposals must either improve the conservation value of the chosen green spaces and/or improve our knowledge of the biodiversity of the green spaces:

Improving the conservation value of the green spaces - Sub-theme A

The City of London Corporation is committed to supporting the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and to climate change mitigation and adaptation. The activities supported through this sub-theme should aim to improve the conservation of the City Corporation's green spaces and should be able to demonstrate positive actions and outcomes. This could be via practical work on the ground, production of plans or a combination of both.

Improving our knowledge of the biodiversity of the green spaces - Sub-theme B

The activities supported through this sub-theme should help improve our knowledge of the biodiversity of the City Corporation's green spaces. This could include survey or inventory projects or small-scale research projects on species habitats found in green spaces. They could include comparative studies using other locations/sites, but the majority of the project should be carried out on a City Corporation green space. Projects should be able to demonstrate positive actions and outcomes. In addition all proposals must also connect communities with their green spaces and/or provide opportunities for children and young people to learn and have fun and/or improve wellbeing through the use of green spaces:

Connecting communities with their green spaces - Sub-theme C

The activities supported through this sub-theme should help local communities connect with the City Corporation's green spaces and encourage respectful behaviour on those spaces. Projects should facilitate a deep sense of pride, encouraging communities to participate in and advocate for our natural assets. We particularly encourage applications for bespoke proposals from organisations with expertise and experience working with people from disadvantaged communities. The projects should demonstrate positive outcomes for these newly connected communities and should demonstrate how they will support the groups to continue to visit the green spaces.

Providing opportunities for children and young people to learn and have fun - Sub-theme D

There is growing concern that opportunities for children to learn in nature are becoming limited, impacting on child development. The projects supported through this sub-theme should help address this. They should provide opportunities for children and young people to build confidence and gain understanding while feeling safe and having fun on the Corporation's green spaces and heritage assets. We particularly encourage applications for bespoke proposals from organisations with expertise and experience working with young people struggling with education and/or employment. The proposals should demonstrate positive outcomes for these communities and should demonstrate how they will support the groups to continue to visit the green spaces.

Improving wellbeing through the use of green spaces - Sub-theme E

Good mental health lies at the heart of wellbeing and quality of life, and of effective functioning for both individuals and communities. The projects supported through this sub-theme should encourage contact with the City Corporation's green spaces as an addition to treatment options within mental health.

City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee(s): Streets and Walkways Sub Committee– For Decision Projects and Procurement Sub Committee– For Information Natural Environment Board – For Information	Dated: 16 September 2025 14 October 2025 23 October 2025
Subject: Cool Streets and Greening – programme update	Public report: For Decision
This proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes • provides statutory duties • provides business enabling functions 	Corporate Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leading sustainable environment - Flourishing public spaces - Vibrant thriving destination
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	N/A
Report of: Executive Director, Environment Department	Katie Stewart
Report authors: Melanie Charalambous and Ben Bishop, Environment Department	

Summary

This report provides an update on the delivery of the Cool Streets and Greening programme (CSG), which is structured around five phases. This programme is one of the ways that we are meeting the aim of the Climate Action Strategy (CAS) to ensure that our public spaces and infrastructure are resilient to the impacts of climate change and creating a greener and more pleasant City.

The five phases of the programme are as follows:

- Phase One - Pilot projects to test the suitability of climate resilience measures in the City environment.

- Phase Two - Developed projects to adapt existing schemes to include climate resilience measures.
- Phase Three - City greening and biodiversity including re-landscaping of new sites, re-planting of existing gardens and street tree planting.
- Phase Four - Sustainable drainage projects (SuDS).
- Phase Five - Green and Blue Links (extending green corridors and SuDS)

The programme also contains a number of related workstreams including monitoring, mapping of infrastructure, and guidance to support implementation of resilient measures. Since the programme inception in April 2021, the following progress has been made:

- 30 projects have been completed to date.
- Development of three catalogues to help provide designers with guidance on resilience for materials, planting and measures.

A further 22 projects are planned to be implemented over the next 2 years, varying in scale from replanting of existing gardens with more climate resilient plants to the complete re-landscaping of streets and spaces within the public realm. The programme has also been shortlisted for an award under the public space category of the New London Architecture Awards.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- Note the content of this programme update.
- Note the extension of the Cool Streets and Greening programme timeframes by 12 months to March 2027. As agreed by the CAS Square Mile Programme Board.
- Note the additional projects being proposed to be delivered in Phase Five through the relevant gateway approval processes, detailed in Appendix 3.

Members of the Streets and Walkways Sub-Committee are asked to:

- i. Note that completed project underspends will be reallocated to other projects within the Cool Streets and Greening programme.
- ii. Agree that an additional £110K is allocated to the Fann Street project, and £70K is allocated to the St Peter Westcheap project, funded from the programme underspend, outlined in Appendix 1.
- iii. Agree a budget of £100k to be released to develop the designs for Phase Five projects to reach the next gateway, funded from the programme underspend, as set out in Table 2.

Main report

Background

1. The Climate Action Strategy (CAS) was adopted by the Court of Common Council on 8th October 2020 with a key ambition to increase resilience in our public spaces and infrastructure. The Cool Streets and Greening programme which seeks to delivery this increased resilience was initially approved by committees in April 2021 with a total budget of £6.8 million funded through On Street Parking Reserve.
2. Officers developed the projects within the programme in close collaboration through the CAS Square Mile Programme Board and extensive stakeholder engagement.
3. The primary focus of the programme is the piloting of different climate resilient interventions within the public realm. With the intention that the lessons learnt from this process will be used in future programmes and business as usual approaches.
4. Initially the programme was divided into four phases (1:Pilot, 2:Developed, 3:Greening and Biodiversity, and 4:Sustainable Drainage).
5. The Cool Streets and Greening programme was originally intended to be a four-year programme (March 2021-March 2025), this was extended by 12 months in 2024 to March 2026.
6. As part of wider agreements of the CAS Square Mile Programme Board it has been agreed to extend the timeframe by 12 months up to March 2027. This is to enable: a fifth delivery phase, extend data collection, delivery of the full construction programme, and to embed lessons learnt.

Current Position

Progress to date on Phases 1-4

7. To date 30 projects have been completed, as well as four tranches of street tree planting and ongoing monitoring across the Square Mile.
8. These projects have been delivered efficiently, and several have had cost savings. Some of the complex and multi-stakeholder projects have been subject to delay, however, these have been managed and provide valuable lessons to the remaining programme.
9. The delivery of the programme is divided into phases with details set out below, (including the new fifth phase):

Phase One (Pilot projects) – to ensure momentum and to get results on the ground as soon as possible, initial pilot projects were developed and schemes already underway were amended to incorporate climate resilience measures.

Phase Two (Developed projects) – The second phase integrated resilience measures into existing schemes at an earlier stage of development. This was to ensure value for money by jointly funding projects.

Phase Three (City greening and biodiversity) – The third phase included sites where climate resilience measures would be most beneficial and to test strategic measures including creating green corridors. This phase includes re-landscaping, climate resilient planting schemes and City-wide tree planting.

Phase Four (Sustainable drainage) – The fourth phase identified sites specifically for incorporation of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), where rainwater from the immediate catchment could be redirected into newly created raingardens reducing and slowing the flow into the sewer system, whilst providing more greenery in the public realm.

Phase Five (Green & blue links) – The fifth phase includes sites specifically identified to extend the programme impact, by match funding wider projects to ensure maximum benefit for the programme. It focuses on delivering more 'green-links' to extend green corridors and more 'blue-links' continuing the roll out of SuDS as a surface water management approach.

10. 'Replanting for Resilience' (part of Phase 3) projects cover 14 City Gardens. These projects are progressing well and so far works have been completed under budget. A total of £400,000 was allocated to this project. With 10 sites completed, there are four remaining including larger sites such as St Dunstan's in the East and Grants Quay. It is proposed that additional sites are replanted to maximise the benefits of the project and these extra sites will be set out in the next programme update report in 2026.
11. The tree planting project (part of Phase 3) aims to investigate and deliver street trees throughout the Square Mile. This has been completed in tranches over the span of the programme. To date a total of four tranches have been delivered including 64 trees. The remaining budget, is to be utilised to deliver further trees and support the delivery of tree planting at King William Street this coming planting season.
12. Appendix 2 provides a detailed update on all the current projects in the programme.

Lessons learnt from completed Phase 1- 4 projects 2022 – 2025

13. As part of the on-going assessment of the projects implemented through CSG, projects have been monitored and evaluated to build an evidence-based approach. To date 19 projects have been reviewed to assess the positive outcomes, wider benefits, identify improvements and the lessons to take away. This work will continue to be developed to provide a full report on the lessons learnt for the conclusion of the programme.

Positive outcomes:

- Innovative approaches to drought resistant planting design have proven successful, such as the use of alternative mulches in sunnier locations including crushed brick, sand and gravel.
- Successful trialling of new plant species within projects that are providing a range of benefits to biodiversity and climate resilience.
- Stakeholder engagement and partnerships have supported the delivery of complex schemes.
- Officers have developed designs for raingardens that best suit the unique City environment and this ensures that designs are consistent and efficient.
- The programme has also been shortlisted for an award under the public space category of the New London Architecture Awards.

Update on other programme elements:

14. The Cool Streets and Greening programme included from the onset a number of supplementary workstreams to enable the main aims of the programme and also provide strategic direction and policy guidance. This included the following:
- **Natural Flood Management (NFM) pilot** – Whilst there will be limited opportunities from NFM in the Square Mile, a pilot has been developed for use in the Natural Environments to support the Carbon Removals programme.
 - **Climate Resilient Measures Catalogue Version 2** – The first version of the catalogue was developed at the beginning of the programme, and it incorporates the interventions being piloted. An updated version was completed in March 2025.
 - **Climate Resilient Planting Catalogue Version 2** – The first version of the catalogue was published in Spring 2024. It incorporates industry best practice and includes plants used in already completed replanting schemes. It will be updated before the end of the programme. An updated version was completed in March 2025.

Financial implications

15. The programme is funded from the On-Street Parking Reserve (£6.8m). A further £1m has been approved by the Square Mile Programme Board to come from existing CAS funds.
16. Several projects within the programme combine funding from other sources including S106s, S278s and external contributions delivering wider benefits and meeting multiple objectives. The primary reason for this is that CSG projects are often coordinated with other projects and in these cases the funds can be used to enhance and deliver better outcomes for climate resilience.

17. A number of completed projects have underspends. This is primarily as a result of these projects having progressed smoothly, without encountering issues on site and therefore not requiring use of costed risk provisions. It is proposed that these unspent funds are reallocated across the programme to deliver additional projects and greening opportunities (as well as associated maintenance costs).
18. Underspent projects include, Bevis Marks SuDs, completed in April 2023, Little Trinity Lane completed in April 2025 and Finsbury Circus Western Arm completed in April 2025; From the underspends identified at this stage, a total of £180k is proposed to be reallocated to provide additional funding to two projects from the programme: Fann Street, St Peter Westcheap as set out in table 1. This reallocation will cover additional greening elements as well as maintenance costs.

Table 1 – Budget adjustments and increases for existing projects

Project	Estimated project costs from latest Gateway reports	Additional CSG budget to be allocated from identified programme underspend
Fann Street	£150,000 – 230,000	£110,000
St Peter Westcheap	£180,000 – 350,000	£70,000
Total		£180,000

19. A further £100k is proposed to be allocated to cover the resources required for Phase Five projects to reach the next gateway as outlined in table 2 in the next section of this report.
20. It is proposed that future project underspends also be used to deliver additional projects and greening elements as well as maintenance costs for other remaining projects, including Temple Avenue. Details of this will be set out in future reports.

Commuted sums

21. Originally £6.8m of capital funding was approved to deliver four phases along with some investment in monitoring infrastructure. The budget for CSG must be committed by March 2027.
22. Whilst many projects have existing match funding which has secured maintenance commitments beyond implementation there are some which do not. For these, an agreement has now been reached with the Square Mile programme board to re-allocate £700k of the budget to be held as commuted sums once the programme is completed. The process of handling will be outlined in a handling note to be approved before the end of the programme.
23. A further programme report in mid 2026 will provide an update on spend to date and remaining works.

Phase Five: Blue-Green links

24. The Climate Action Strategy (CAS) has allocated a further £1m to the Cool Streets and Greening programme, extending it to March 2027, and allowing the introduction of 'Phase five'. This additional budget does not come from OSPR and has been secured through wider CAS funds.
25. Phase Five will be delivered towards the end of the programme. The overarching aim is to embed the lessons of earlier phases and expand on its successes. All projects will aim to align with funding opportunities through development and other works. This includes:
- Creechurch Place - Green-link
 - America Square - Green-link
 - Coleman Street - Blue-link
 - St Dunstan's Hill - Blue-link
 - Gough Square - Blue-link
- Details of these projects and their funding strategies are listed in Appendix 3.
26. Green links are projects that work towards expanding the Square Mile's green coverage, their primary aims are to: Introduce greening, provide biodiverse and climate resilient landscapes, and expand canopy cover; providing stepping-stones between our open spaces and green corridors.
27. Blue links are projects which focus on SuDS, to improve the management of surface water and reduce overall flood risk, through capturing, attenuating, infiltrating and utilising surface water. These aim to better link up the emerging network of rain gardens, soakaways and other SuDS features, providing a network of blue links.
28. Projects will seek to achieve the following:
- Continue to increase greening to create green corridors and links
 - Introduce more SuDS into the public realm
 - Increase biodiversity through biodiverse planting
 - Increase resilience through climate adaptive planting
 - Introduce greening in parts of the City not previously addressed by other phases of the programme
29. It is recommended that the projects listed in Appendix 3 are approved to be initiated and taken forward to the next gateway, resources required are outlined below in table 2.

Table 2: Phase 5: Resources Required to reach the next Gateway (funded from programme underspend)	
Description	Cost (£)
Env Servs Staff Costs	25,000
Open Spaces Staff Costs	15,000
P&T Staff Costs	40,000
P&T Fees	20,000
Total	100,000

Programme development and management

30. From its initiation the programme has been developed with involvement from the CAS Square Mile Programme Board, and has directly involved a cross-departmental officer delivery group including Environmental Resilience, Transport and Public Realm Projects, City Gardens and Cleansing, and Highways.
31. The CAS Square Mile Programme Board has agreed to the extension of the programme to March 2027. This has been done to enable a longer period for data collection and time to gather best practice. The extension will also enable the full delivery of the projects in the programme, and scope in new projects to scale up delivery. To enable this an additional £1 million of funding from the CAS programme has been reallocated to the Cool Streets and Greening programme.
32. The primary aim of the programme has been to trial different climate resilience measures to ascertain which could be most appropriate in the context of the Square Mile and to build capacity within the organisation to deliver these measure. At the end of the programme a number of design approaches will have been developed to enable lessons learnt to be incorporated as business as usual.

Corporate & Strategic implications

33. The Cool Streets and Greening programme contributes to three outcomes identified in the Corporate Plan 2024 -29 (leading sustainable environments, flourishing public spaces, and vibrant thriving destination). The programme includes actions to create a climate resilient City by reducing the risk of overheating and flooding, ensuring our open spaces enrich people's lives, and making the City's streets more accessible.

Legal implications

34. There are no new legal implications arising from this update.

Climate implications

35. The Cool Streets and Greening programme is one of the ways that the City Corporation is meeting the aim of the Climate Action Strategy to ensure that our buildings, public spaces and infrastructure are resilient to the impacts of climate change.

Risk implications

36. No new risks have been identified.

Conclusion

37. The Cool Streets and Greening programme is a key deliverable of the Climate Action Strategy and includes 52 schemes and workstreams to help prepare the Square Mile to become resilient to the impacts of climate change. To date, numerous projects have been completed or are underway that make the Square Mile a greener, more pleasant and more resilient place for the benefit of residents, workers and visitors.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Finance Tables

Appendix 2: Project update table

Appendix 3: Phase Five projects table

Appendix 4: Selected photos and visuals – progress report

Background Papers

Gateway 6: Little Trinity Lane

Gateway 6: Finsbury Circus Western Arm

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Appendix 1 Finance Tables

Table 1 - Programme Update

CAS: Cool Streets and Greening		Approved	Earmarked	Total
Phase	Activity	£	£	£
Development	Framework development	50,000	-	50,000
	Resilience measures catalogue	10,000	-	10,000
	Smart sensors and monitoring	85,000	-	85,000
	Data collection and analysis	20,000	-	20,000
	Opportunity mapping and data gaps	75,000	-	75,000
	Site identification and prioritisation	30,000	-	30,000
	Staff costs (public realm/highways/OS)	50,000	-	50,000
Development Total		320,000	-	320,000
Phase 1 Pilot projects to test suitability of climate resilience measures	Bevis Marks	270,000	-	270,000
	Jubilee Gardens	165,000	-	165,000
	Greening Cheapside	180,000	-	180,000
	Riverside Planters	55,000	-	55,000
Phase 1 Total		670,000	-	670,000
Phase 2 Developed projects to adapt existing schemes to include climate resilience measures.	Evaluation and Design	120,000	-	120,000
	Little Trinity Lane	-	505,000	505,000
	Temple Avenue	-	350,000	350,000
	Bank	165,000	-	165,000
	Moor Lane	110,000	-	110,000
	Finsbury Circus	177,000	-	177,000
	Barbican Podium	10,000	-	10,000
Phase 2 Total		582,000	855,000	1,437,000
Phase 3 City Greening and Biodiversity	Evaluation and Design	175,000	-	175,000
	Treeplanting	823,975	-	823,975
	Replanting	400,000	-	400,000
	London Wall/ Moorgate	442,655	345	443,000
	Finsbury Circus Western Arm	438,178	-	438,178
	Fann Street	31,000	119,000	150,000
	St Peter Westcheap	45,000	135,000	180,000
Phase 3 Total		2,355,808	254,345	2,610,153
Phase 4 Sustainable Drainage	Design to G4	185,000	-	185,000
	Evaluation and Design	175,000	-	175,000
	Ludgate Broadway	-	250,000	250,000
	St Andrew Undershaft Churchyard	-	250,000	250,000
	St Andrew Hill	200,000	-	200,000
	Bread Street (South)	120,000	-	120,000
	Knightrider Court	229,500	-	229,500
	Lloyds Avenue	-	353,347	353,347
Phase 4 Total		909,500	853,347	1,762,847
Phase 5	Development	-	100,000	100,000
	Creechurch Place	-	50,000	50,000
	America Square	-	400,000	400,000
	Coleman Street	-	40,000	40,000
	St Dunstan's Hill	-	150,000	150,000
	Gough Square	-	160,000	160,000
	Maintenance	-	100,000	100,000
Phase 5 Total		-	1,000,000	1,000,000
Grand Total		4,837,308	2,962,692	7,800,000

Table 2 - Completed Projects

CAS: Cool Streets and Greening Underspent Projects		Approved *	Spend *	Balance
Project	Description	£	£	£
Finsbury Circus Western Arm	(Crossrail Moorgate Urban Integration)	934,746	785,923	148,823
Little Trinity Lane	(Mansion House Station Public Realm Improvements)	840,000	756,065	83,935
Bevis Marks	(City Cluster Bevis Marks - SUDS)	387,000	312,614	74,386
Total		2,161,746	1,854,602	307,144

*includes maintenance

Table 3 - Budget Increases

CAS: Cool Streets and Greening Revised Budgets to the Next Gateway		Current Approval	Adjustments	Revised Budget
Project	Comments	£	£	£
Phase 5 - Evaluation and Design	Approved under this report	-	100,000	100,000
Fann Street - 16100524	Separate Gateway 5 reports to be submitted	31,000	110,000	141,000
St Peter Westcheap - 16100525		45,000	70,000	115,000
Total		76,000	280,000	356,000

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Appendix 2: Summary of project progress Phase 1 - 4

Phase	Project and brief description	Update
One (Pilot)	Climate resilient planting (Pedestrian Priority): Planting at several parklets – City-wide	Completed Apr 2021.
	Riverside Planters: An innovative 'dry garden' was planted requiring less watering	Completed Apr 2022.
	Vine Street: 5 street trees were selected for their resilience to trial their suitability for the City	Completed Apr 2022.
	Bevis Marks/Dukes Place: rain gardens and permeable paving with a climate resilient planting palette.	Completed May 2023.
	Jubilee Gardens: As part of the re-landscaping of this City Garden, increased greenery and a more diverse and resilient planting palette is being introduced.	Completed Feb 2025
	Greening Cheapside: Sustainable drainage and resilient planting has been introduced to this public space	Complete Jul 2024
Two (Developed)	Bank: As part of the wider junction works, trees, rain gardens and planters are being added to several arms of the junction	Complete Dec 2024
	Little Trinity Lane: A re-landscaping scheme to introduce more greenery and a number of sustainable drainage measures.	Complete Apr 2025
	Moor Lane: various elements are to be introduced including trees and raingardens	Design in progress.
	Finsbury Circus Garden: a major re-landscaping project that includes resilient planting and sustainable drainage	Complete Apr 2025
	Barbican Podium: shallow planting beds with a climate resilient palette.	Monitoring commenced August 2022
	Crescent: landscaping, tree planting and rain gardens as part of the creation of a new public space	Removed from programme
	Temple Avenue: Trees and planters to be introduced as part of the enhancement of the southern end of the street.	GW3 approved Jul 2025
Three Re-landscaping	London Wall/ Moorgate: replacement of the lawn area that is in poor condition with a more climate resilient design along with additional tree planting and route through	Completed May 2025
	Finsbury Circus Western Arm: Landscaping of the street to create a new public space.	Completed Apr 2025
	Fann Street: extension of tree planting and introduction of new beds and climate resilience measures	Design in progress, works due to commence 2025 subject to approval of Gateway 5 report.
	St Peter Westcheap: re-landscaping and measures to protect the existing tree	Design in progress, works due to commence early 2026 subject to

		approval of Church faculty and Gateway 5 report.
Three (Tree planting)	Season 2022-23	Completed, 59 trial pits, 27 trees planted.
	Season 2023-24	Completed, 37 trial pits, 12 trees planted.
	Season 2024-25	Completed, 39 trial pits, 21 trees planted
	Season 2025-26	91 sites identified to date, 6 successful radar surveys – will include King William Street tree planting (11 trees).
Three (Replanting)	John Carpenter Street	Completed Feb 2024.
	St Mary Aldermanbury	Completed Sep 2023.
	All Hallows on the Wall	Completed Oct 2023.
	Whittington Gardens	Completed Dec 2023.
	St Dunstan's on the Hill	Completed Dec 2023.
	Queen Street Place	Completed Dec 2023.
	Angel Lane	Completed Dec 2023.
	St Olave Silver Street	Completed Apr 2025.
	St Dunstan's in the East Churchyard	Site survey complete, design yet to commence
	Grants Quay	Design yet to commence
	Old Waterman's Walk	Design yet to commence
	St Anne and St Agnes Churchyard	Completed Mar 2025
	St Mary Staining	Completed Mar 2025.
	St Botolph's without Bishopsgate	Design yet to commence
Four (Sustainable drainage)	Ludgate Broadway: raingarden, trees, seating and widened pavement alongside accessibility improvements	Design in progress, works due to commence early 2026 subject to approval of Gateway 5 report.
	Bread Street (South): raingarden and seating	Design in progress, works due to commence late 2025
	Knight rider Court: raingarden, widened pavement and seating. Relocation of disabled parking bays	Design in progress, works due to commence late 2025

	St Andrew Hill: raingarden, trees, and widened pavement	Design in progress, works due to commence late 2025
	Lloyds Avenue: raingardens, trees, and seating	Design in progress, works due to commence early 2026 subject to approval of Gateway 5 report.
	St Andrew Undershaft Churchyard: Re-landscaping and sustainable drainage including capturing rainwater from church roof	Works commenced July 2025. Completion due November 2025

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Appendix 3: Proposed Phase Five projects

Project	Description	Next steps and timeframe	Match funding & source (£)	CSG contribution (£)	Total est. cost (£)
Creechurch Place <i>Green-link</i>	Introduction of greening in the plaza outside of 1 Creechurch Place.	Gateway: 1/2 Autumn 2025 Sep 2025 – Mar 27	Est. 500,000 External contribution	50,000	500,000 – 550,000
America Square <i>Green-link</i>	Closure of carriageway to create new area of public realm with extensive greening, to be progressed once Fenchurch Healthy Streets plan approved..	Gateway: 1/2 December 2025 Sep 2025 – Mar 27	300,000 – 400,000 Source: S106, S278 and external contributions.	400,000	700,000 – 800,000
Coleman Street <i>Blue-link</i>	Introduction of SuDS and redesign of the public realm, through introducing permeable paving to support and enhance existing trees.	Gateway 1/2 Late 2025 Sep 2025 – Dec 26	S106 and external contributions TBC.	40,000	40,000
St Dunstan's Hill <i>Blue-link</i>	Relandscaping project to deliver SuDS tree pits through reallocation of carriageway and creation of new public realm, to be progressed once Fenchurch Healthy Streets plan approved.	Gateway 1/2 Jan 2026 Jan 2026 – Mar 27	S106 and external contributions.	150,000	150,000
Gough Square <i>Blue-link</i>	Introduction of SuDs, new planting, and adjustments to extend the existing footway, if	Gateway 3/4 late 2025	S106 and external contributions.	£160,000	£160,000

	feasible, and the enhancement of the public realm.	Sep 2025 – Mar 27			
Costs to get to next gateway			-	100,000	100,000
Maintenance			-	100,000	100,000
Total			£800,000 – 900,000	1,000,000	1,750,000 – 1,900,000

Cool Streets and Greening

Progress Report



Executive Summary:

The City of London Corporation is the governing body of the Square Mile, dedicated to a vibrant and thriving City, supporting a diverse and sustainable London. The Cool Streets and Greening (CSG) Programme is a flagship initiative of the City of London Corporation, approved in April 2021 to deliver on the ambitions of the Climate Action Strategy (CAS).

With a total investment of £7.8 million, the programme is transforming the Square Mile's streets and public spaces to address the growing risks of climate change, such as overheating, flooding, and biodiversity loss; while enhancing the quality and resilience of the urban environment.

The programme is delivering **50 projects** across five phases. To date completed projects have led to the enhancement of **17,110m² of public space**, equivalent to **66 tennis courts**, and the assessment of over **450 locations for tree planting**.

- £7.8 million invested across five phases
- A total of 50 projects
- 17,110m² of public space enhanced to date – equivalent to 66 tennis courts

These interventions include drought-tolerant planting, climate-resilient trees, rain gardens, and permeable paving, all contributing to cooler, greener, and more accessible public spaces.

The programme is underpinned by an interdisciplinary, collaborative, cross-departmental approach and supported by leading experts from a range of fields. The programme not only mitigates climate risks but embeds long-term resilience, sustainability, and inclusivity into the fabric of the Square Mile, ensuring it remains a thriving place for generations to come.



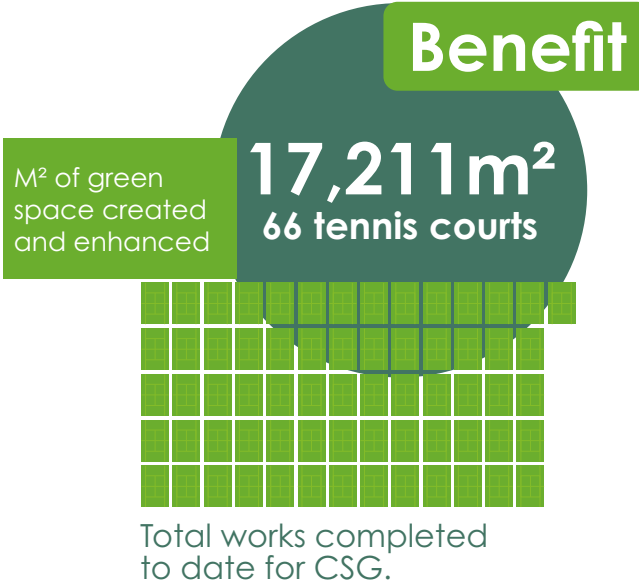
Key Statistics:

The CSG programme supports the City Corporation's ambition for **inclusive and sustainable growth**. In 2024 alone, **120 individuals** participated in related activities, contributing a total of **1,320 hours** through **biodiversity surveys, educational sessions, and guided walks**.

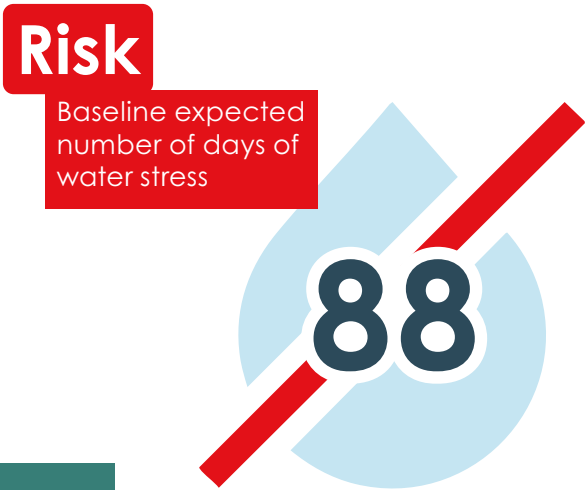
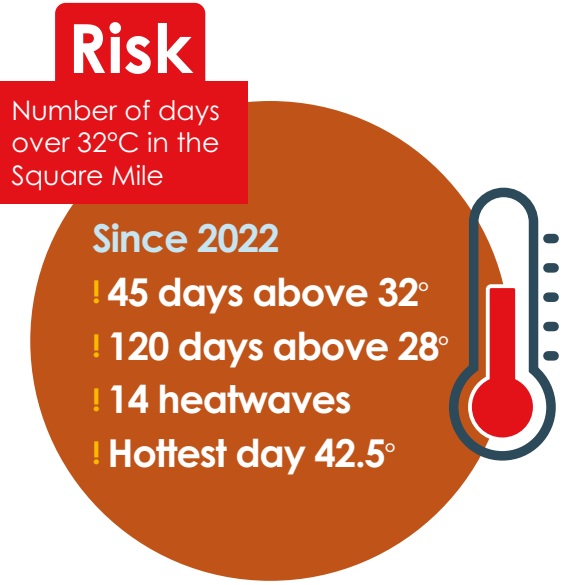


These efforts are helping to embed climate resilience into the City Corporation's operations and foster a sense of community ownership.

To monitor the effectiveness of interventions, the City is using an **integrated climate sensor network**. This data is being used to model environmental impacts and inform future planning, ensuring that the programme remains adaptive and evidence-led.



- Integrated climate sensor network deployed
- 120 individuals engaged in 2024





Cool Street and Greening Projects Map: Selection of 20 of the 50 projects from the programme helping to create greener and more resilient Square Mile.

KEY:

- Area-wide Tree Planting
- 1. New Change Garden
- 2. St Mary Aldermanbury
- 3. Little Trinity Lane
- 4. Bevis Marks SuDS
- 5. Jubilee Gardens
- 6. Riverside beds
- 7. Fann Street
- 8. Knightrider Court
- 9. St Andrews Undershaft
- 10. Finsbury Circus and Western Arm
- 11. Temple Avenue
- 12. St Andrew's Hill
- 13. Bread Street
- 14. Ludgate Broadway
- 15. Bank
- 16. Moorgate London Wall
- 17. Vine Street
- 18. St Peter Westcheap
- 19. St Dunstan's in the East
- 20. Whittington Gardens

Overview:

Cool Streets and Greening aims to transform the Square Mile's streets and public spaces, making them resilient and attractive, and ensuring the future wellbeing of the City community.

Climate projections for the City of London indicate a future of hotter, drier summers, warmer, wetter winters, and more frequent extreme weather events, and sea level rise.

These changes present six key climate resilience risks. The programme is actively addressing these risks by implementing

measures that increase shading and cooling, support urban biodiversity, introduce drought-tolerant planting, and create flood-resilient infrastructure.

£7.8m is being invested into five phases of the programme, comprising a total of 50 projects. Each phase targets climate change impacts to reduce urban heat,

alleviating flood risk, and increase biodiversity; providing more resilient, greener and pleasant public spaces.

Acceleration of tree planting has grown the urban forest canopy for future generations and extensive mapping has enabled the prioritisation of opportunities to create cooler and greener pedestrian routes.

The aim is to connect the cooler routes to others beyond the borough boundary. Linking into wider frameworks such as the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and All London Green Grid.

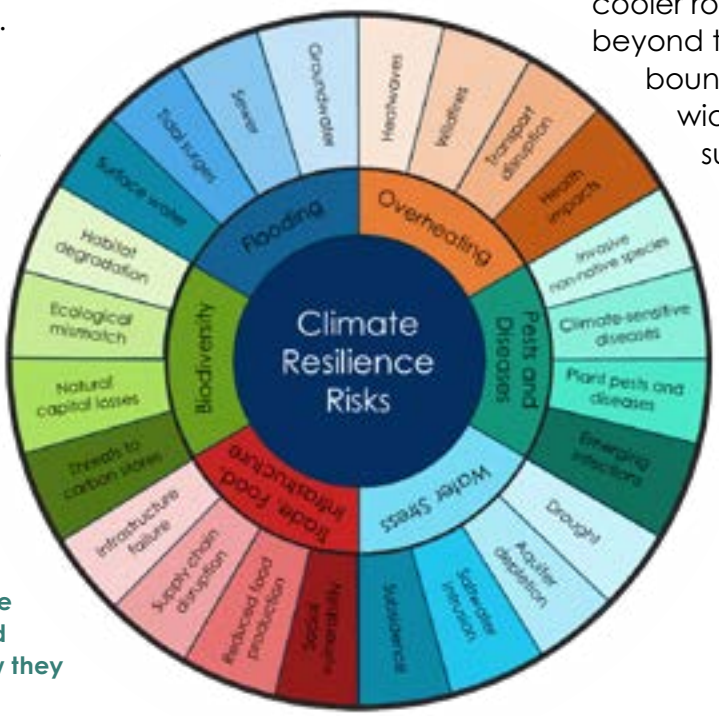


Figure 1: The climate resilience risks wheel shows the six different risks that could impact the City Corporation and Square Mile and how they could occur.



Tree Planting-Houndsditch: Acceleration of tree planting was made possible through the Cubic Mile project, working in partnership with the British Geological Survey (BGS) enabled us to take a subsurface approach to planning new street trees, navigating below-ground constraints.



New Change Garden: Working together with Cheapside Business Alliance, Hoare Bank and Landsec, New Change was designed with circularity and resilience in mind, re-purposing felled plane trees and river wall granite into benches; enhancing the existing trees retaining shade and using permeable paving for surface water management.

Design: Scott Whitby Studio



Progress to date:

Projects to date include greening and re-landscaping streets and public spaces, trialling “xeriscape” drought-resistant planting, introducing new species of climate and disease-resistant trees and plants, and the addition of rain gardens and permeable paving. These measures provide greener, shaded walking routes and an enhanced public realm, as well as adding seasonal interest and improving biodiversity.

To date, the programme has prioritised and investigated over 450 locations for tree planting and led to the enhancement and creation of 17,110m² of public space across the Square Mile, the equivalent of 66 tennis courts.

The projects have incorporated trials and pilots in order to test the best approach for greening and cooling the City. The aim is to use the outcomes and learning to transition to business as usual, ensuring best practice for future public space projects, including updated policy, design guides and toolkits.

A collaborative project team comprising of officers from the Transport & Public Realm, Highways, City Gardens, and Environmental Resilience ensures a joined-up approach to project delivery. These partnerships allow projects to access additional funding opportunities, provide multiple benefits, and enable shared learning from innovations.

Benefit

Number of hours of biodiversity volunteer activities

3150
Hours



Number of people supporting biodiversity and climate resilience initiatives through volunteering

Wider benefits include more opportunities for active travel and improving accessibility in the public realm.

Each project is designed to take account of site context and constraints, including movement, sunlight, depth, utilities and townscape. The project team have appointed innovative architecture, urban design and landscape experts to design the spaces. These include Studio Weave architects, Tom Massey, Scott Whitby Studio, Growth Industry, Project Centre and LDA. This ensures the highest quality outcomes for the public spaces.

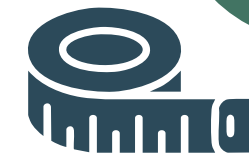


Jubilee Gardens: A hidden oasis in the heart of the City. Planting uses a reclaimed crushed brick mulch to improve moisture retention.

Benefit

Number of resilience measures

56
resilience measures piloted to date



St Mary Aldermanbury:

Replanting for Resilience! St Mary Aldermanbury offers a range of nectar rich planting for pollinators, enhancing biodiversity and ecological resilience. The project was implemented in partnership with Westminster College in Missouri which is now home to the site's original church.



Completed projects



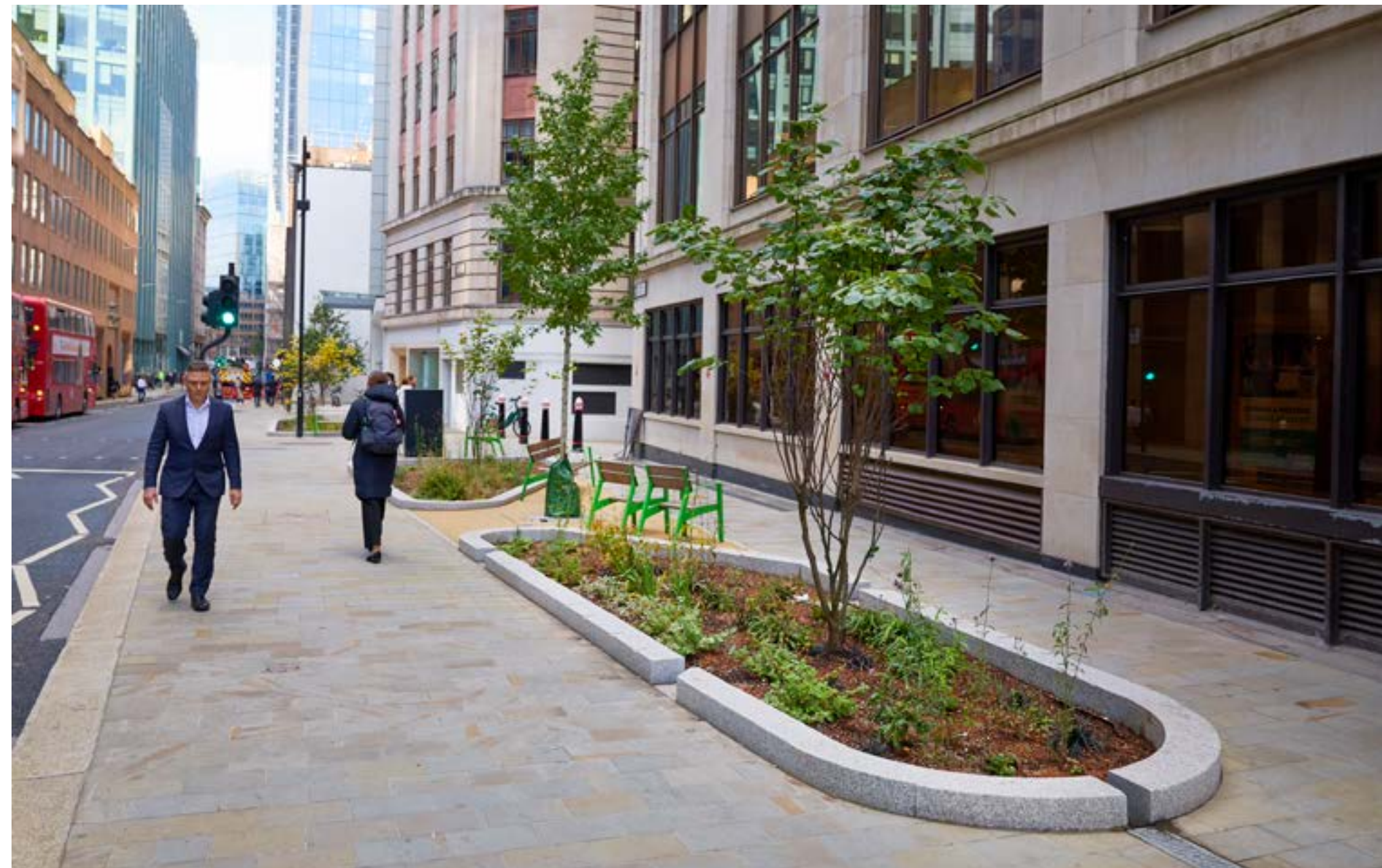
Finsbury Circus Gardens: Cool Streets and Greening provided match funding to enhance the resilience of the Finsbury Circus project, the City's largest public park and garden.

Design Studio Weave



Little Trinity Lane: Flood resilience at Little Trinity Lane, which captures surface water running down Garlick Hill storing it in the beds to irrigate plants.

Design: Growth Industry



Bevis Marks SuDS: Future proofing our streets to flooding. Rain gardens in the east of the City capture and store surface water, interconnected with permeable paving and featuring ZINCO, a medium used for its lightweight and hydraulic efficiencies.

Design City of London Corporation



Jubilee Gardens: Offering respite from heatwaves and access to nature, Jubilee Gardens has been completely re-landscaped to maximise trees and plants for biodiversity.

Design: Studio Weave and Tom Massey



Riverside beds: An innovative approach to planting design the riverside beds were re-designed with future climate in mind. Utilising 'xeriscape' principles drought tolerant species were planted into a range of soils and mulches including sand and crushed brick. The project was delivered in partnership with local schools, who also assist with ongoing monitoring.

Design City of London Corporation



Bank Junction Junction: Rain gardens designed to capture surface water from the footway and the carriageway installed along Queen Victoria Street.

Design: City of London Corporation



Finsbury Circus Western Arm: A new series of beds created on what was previously a road creating a green link into Finsbury Circus Garden and a new area of public realm.

Design: Studio Weave and Tom Massey



London Wall Moorgate: A redesign of existing public space which enhances biodiversity, creating a new and inviting public realm outside of Moorgate station.

Design: LDA



New Change Garden: A redesign of the landscape surrounding mature beech trees in the shadow of St Pauls along the City's retail district, the garden uses permeable paving to manage surface water promoting sustainability and resilience.

Design: Scott Whitby Studio

Future projects



Fann Street: Bringing nature closer to people is at the core of the Fann Street project, which has engaged the local community to co-design the scheme and leverage support for its implementation, with the aim of creating steppingstones to enhance biodiversity and connectivity.

Design: Scott Whitby Studio



Knightrider Court: Innovating SuDS in the City using Hydrorock systems to help store more surface water, whilst offering new public realm with access to cafés in the shadow of St Paul's.

Design: City of London Corporation



St Andrew Undershaft Churchyard: Integrating future-proof design with historic architecture, St Andrews Undershaft churchyard captures rainwater from the church's roof to store it in new planting beds. The scheme features permeable paving, more greenery, increased seating and offers a revitalised space for public enjoyment and biodiversity.

Design: Growth Industry

Contacts

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City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committees: Streets and Walkway Sub Committee - <i>for decision</i> Projects and Procurement Sub Committee - <i>for information</i> Natural Environment Board – <i>for information</i>	Dates: 16 September 2025 14 October 2025 23 October 2025
Subject: Moorgate Crossrail Station Links: Finsbury Circus Western Arm Unique Project Identifier: 12186	Gateway 6: Outcome Report Regular
Report of: Director of the Built Environment Report Author: Maria Curro, Policy and Projects, City Operations	For Decision
PUBLIC	

Summary

1. Status update	Project Description: <u>Summary</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Moorgate Crossrail Station Links (MCSL) project, seeks to improve the environment for people walking and cycling along Moorgate and surrounding areas. • The Finsbury Circus Western Arm scheme (Phase 2 A) forms part of the wider MCSL works, with the aim to enhance the public realm and introduce new greening along the arm. • The Finsbury Circus Western Arm scheme is also a core project of the Cool Streets and Greening programme and, therefore, utilises some of this funding to deliver the greening elements. • This report relates to the Finsbury Circus Western Arm relandscaping scheme only, as a stand-alone project. • A Gateway 3/4 report was approved by Committees in January 2023. A Gateway 5 report was approved in March 2024, under Delegated Authority.
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v.April 2019

	<p><u>Finsbury Circus Western Arm Relandscaping Project Overview</u></p> <p>In 2019, Finsbury Circus Western Arm was closed to motorised traffic with the intent to create a public space once the Crossrail hoarding was removed. An enhancement proposal for Finsbury Circus Western Arm was put on hold in January 2022 due to the erection of hoarding/pit lane within the project area to accommodate the refurbishment works at 84 Moorgate. A positive outcome of this delay has been involvement of the Cool Streets and Greening Programme, leading to the preparation of a more ambitious soft landscaping design for the Western Arm.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The relandscaping project has delivered an attractive and enhanced high-quality public space at the Western Arm, leading to Finsbury Circus Gardens. • The project has introduced new greenery, with the introduction of trees and planting beds. • Green infrastructure included within the project will significantly increase the local biodiversity within the area and will help to deliver connected corridors for biodiversity. • The project has built-in climate resilient measures, supporting the City's Climate Action Strategy and Biodiversity Action Plan. <p>RAG Status: Green (Amber at last report to Committee)</p> <p>Risk Status: Low (Low at last report to committee)</p> <p>Costed Risk Provision Utilised: £19,000</p> <p>Final Outturn Cost: £785,923</p>
<p>2. Next steps and requested decisions</p>	<p>Requested Decisions:</p> <p>Members of the Streets and Walkways Sub Committee are asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note and approve the content of this outcome report. 2. Authorise the Chamberlain's department to return unspent project funds to the Cool Streets and Greening Programme to be reallocated to other projects within the programme (subject to the verification of the final account). 3. Agree to close the Finsbury Circus Western Arm project, Phase 2 A of the wider MCSL project.

3. Key conclusions	<p>The project achieved the following measures of success:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To create more space for people to stop and rest, by introducing additional seating throughout the project area • To increase the amount of greening within the Square Mile, by introducing trees and greening throughout the arm and to compliment the Finsbury Circus Gardens • To increase the amount of the climate resilient planting throughout the City, by introducing tree and planting species that require minimal maintenance and are climate resilient • To improve opportunities and corridors for biodiversity and deliver in the outcomes of the City's Biodiversity Action Plan <p>Key learning and recommendations for the project include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying key design and construction risks early and mitigating these risks, including the London Underground tunnel, located directly beneath the western arm • Identifying key stakeholders to ensure that risks are identified and addressed within a timely manner. Project stakeholders included: London Underground and local businesses/occupiers, as well as several City departments including City Structures and City Highways • Early and ongoing engagement with stakeholders throughout the lifecycle of the project, to ensure opportunities are realised and risk is managed
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Main Report

Design & Delivery Review

4. Design into delivery	<p>The City's Highways Team and Structure Team worked closely with the TfL Underground to understand and review the designs of the western arm, including location, proposed infrastructure, acceptable infrastructure load (i.e. soil weight), planting type, etc. Directly beneath the western arm is an underground subway tunnel.</p> <p>Design adjustments were made when required and it was agreed by TfL that the final design for the western arm was appropriate, as</p>
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v.April 2019

	the infrastructure and planting does not interfere with the operation and safety of the London Underground tunnel.
5. Options appraisal	<p>Several initial design options were explored and in working closely with TfL Underground during the design process, it was identified that a reduction in planters was required due to the infrastructure load.</p> <p>The final design option was determined the most suitable for the western arm. Reasons for this included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • layout that provides opportunity for enhanced green infrastructure, planting and seating; • layout that ensures no disruption to underground utilities and the London Underground tunnel • layout that ensures people walking and wheeling can travel comfortably through the site. <p>At the end of the construction, minor changes were made to the placement of benches to ensure they were positioned to account for walking routes and minor adjustments to the planter positions as a result of utilities. During the construction phase of the project, 12 cycle racks were removed and all have been reintegrated within the project area.</p> <p>The design for the western arm allows for the project objectives to be met, including enhancing biodiversity across the City, introducing greening and planting, as well as providing spaces for people to dwell and rest. Appendix 2 outlines the project objectives in more detail.</p>
6. Procurement route	<p>Standard City procurement routes were used, including the use of the Transportation and Public Realm framework for landscape architecture consultancy services.</p> <p>The City's Highways Team undertook the design of the western arm, and the City's term contractor, FM Conway, was used to deliver the project.</p>
7. Skills base	The Project Team had the skills, knowledge and experience to manage and deliver the project.
8. Stakeholders	<p>Local stakeholders, such as neighbouring buildings and businesses, were engaged throughout the lifecycle of the project and updated at key project milestones. TfL Underground were engaged throughout the design process to ensure the suitability of the design, due to the tunnel beneath the western arm.</p> <p>Ward Members were briefed at key project milestones, through project briefing notes.</p>

	<p>An online consultation for the scheme was undertaken by Commonplace as part of the wider area Healthy Streets Plan, held between November to December 2023. The majority of respondents were in favour of the project, citing enhanced green space, the addition of greenery which will enhance biodiversity within the area, and the introduction of seating within the space as a priority.</p>
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Variation Review

<p>9. Assessment of project against key milestones</p>	<p>A traffic order to prevent motor vehicles using the western arm to exit Finsbury Circus onto Moorgate was implemented in 2019, with the intent to utilise this reclaimed carriageway space to create a new public space linking to the planned refurbished Finsbury Circus Gardens.</p> <p>A 5-year programme delay on progressing the public space was incurred. Initially due to the delays by Crossrail in vacating the western arm. This was promptly, followed by hoarding to facilitate an adjacent development (84 Moorgate) using the area as a pit lane until August 2024.</p> <p>As such, an enhancement proposal for Finsbury Circus Western Arm was put on hold in January 2022. A positive outcome of this delay has been involvement of the Cool Streets and Greening Programme, leading to the preparation of a more ambitious soft landscaping proposal for the Western Arm. Other positives include the extended timeframe to engage with TfL Underground and local businesses.</p> <p>The highway works were completed within a five-month schedule, with ongoing communication with local stakeholders updating them on project progress.</p>
<p>10. Assessment of project against Scope</p>	<p>The landscaping project met all the objectives listed in Appendix 2. A brief summary of achieved objectives are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attractive and enhanced high-quality public space, leading to the Finsbury Circus Gardens • Introduction of new greening, including several trees and planting beds to enhance local biodiversity, as well as seating and benches • Work to implement and deliver the outcomes of the City's Biodiversity Action Plan
<p>11. Risks and issues</p>	<p>At the initiation of the project, it was identified that the central project risk was the London Underground tunnel, located beneath the western arm. In identifying this issue early on within the project</p>

	<p>lifecycle and design process, provided the Project Team the opportunity to mitigate the risk by closely working the City's Structure Team and London Underground in design feasibility.</p> <p>Other risks and issues identified included the use of the western arm as a pit lane to accommodate the development at 84 Moorgate and the delays associated with the Crossrail compensation.</p>
12. Transition to BAU	<p>The project is now complete and has been passed over to the City's Highways Maintenance Team and City Gardens to manage. The scheme was designed and built to the City's specifications and approvals, and the City will claim the required commuted maintenance sum at the time of the final account verification.</p>

Value Review

13. Budget

<i>Estimated Outturn Cost (G2)</i>	At the Gateway 2 stage of the project, there was no consideration of any relandscaping at the Finsbury Circus Western Arm. Relandscaping proposals were considered at the Gateway 3/4 of the wider Moorgate Crossrail Station Links project, following confirmation of funding for the landscaping from the Cool Streets and Greening programme.	
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	<i>At Authority to Start work (G5)</i>	<i>Final Outturn Cost</i>
<i>Fees</i>	49,045	46,033
<i>Staff Costs</i>	140,955	86,528
<i>Works*</i>	510,464	498,080
<i>Maintenance**</i>	155,282	155,282
<i>Costed Risk Provision</i>	98,000	
<i>Costed Risk Provision Drawdown</i>		-19,000
<i>Total</i>	953,746	785,923

The Final Account for this project has not been verified.

The final outturn cost further includes project maintenance post-project completion.

14. Investment	Not applicable.
15. Assessment of project against SMART objectives	<p>The Finsbury Circus Western Arm relandscaping project achieved its SMART objectives of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create more space for people to stop and rest, supporting the objectives of the Transport Strategy • Increase greening within the Square Mile, through an enhanced space within the western arm • Increase the amount of the climate resilient planting throughout the City, by introducing green infrastructure and planting species that are appropriate for the local environment • Improve opportunities and corridors for biodiversity and deliver the outcomes of the City's Biodiversity Action Plan, by planting tree and plant species that are biodiverse <p>Within the project area, 11 new benches were introduced providing space for 60 people to sit. Nine new trees and 134 sq.m of planting.</p>
16. Key benefits realised	<p>The relandscaping project implemented measures that improve the public realm and the experience of walking, wheel and spending time on the street; and introduce greening that increased local biodiversity.</p> <p>In 2019, Finsbury Circus Western Arm was closed to motorised traffic with the intent to create a public space. This change allowed for maximum space within the western arm to be utilised for the relandscaping project.</p>

Lessons Learned and Recommendations

17. Positive reflections	<p>The project was subject to a 5-year programme delay to ongoing Crossrail works and delays in vacating the western arm. This was followed by further delays due to the western arm being used a pit lane for the development of 84 Moorgate. A positive outcome of this delay has been involvement of the Cool Streets and Greening Programme, leading to the preparation of a more ambitious soft landscaping proposal for the Western Arm. This has resulted in a diverse array of planting, which has increased the biodiversity and local environment at the western arm.</p> <p>Throughout the project, the project team collaborated early within the project lifecycle and effectively with TfL Underground and City's Structure Team when developing proposed design options for the western arm. Regular</p>
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	<p>communications and engagement have resulted in a final design that meets the project objectives.</p> <p>The City Highways Team effectively managed the construction programme and proactively addressed any construction issues, including working with City Gardens to ensure appropriate tree planting depth taking into consideration the underground tunnel structure.</p> <p>The new public space at the western arm was opened in May 2025 already appears to be well liked and used.</p>
18.Improvement reflections	<p>The key lesson identified is the importance to work closer with local/adjacent developers to better understand their planned needs for use of the public highway during their construction. 84 Moorgate was constrained with options for facilitating their refurbishment, but there has been a delay to the public of the delivery of a new public space. There were cost increases incurred by the project because it was delayed, which were not directly attributable to the actions of the project. The project was not able to recover the costs from the developer at 84 Moorgate.</p> <p>Planned enhancement schemes need to be better highlighted to colleagues dealing with construction logistic plans, so that earlier visibility of issues of conflict for space can be identified.</p>
19.Sharing best practice	Dissemination of information through team and project staff briefings has taken place.
20.AOB	None

Appendices

Appendix 1	Project coversheet
Appendix 2	Project objectives
Appendix 3	Final project costs
Appendix 4	Before and after photos

Contact

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Project Coversheet

[1] Ownership & Status

UPI: 12186

Core Project Name: Finsbury Circus Western Arm

Programme Affiliation (if applicable): Moorgate Crossrail Station Links (MCSL) project

Project Manager: Maria Curro

Definition of need: The competition of the Finsbury Circus Western Arm relandscaping project.

Key measures of success:

- To improve the Square Mile's Urban Greening Factor
- To Increase the amount of climate resilient planting in the City
- To improve opportunities and corridors for biodiversity and deliver on the outcomes of the City's Biodiversity Action Plan

Expected timeframe for the project delivery: N/A. Construction is complete.

Key Milestones:

- Finalise detailed designs and cost estimates – Fall 2023
- Undertake local stakeholder engagement – Fall 2023/Winter 2024
- Prepare G5 report – Winter 2024
- Finalise construction information - Winter 2024
- Scheme implementation – Spring/Summer 2024
- Gateway 6 will be submitted Fall 2024
- Project completion – Summer 2025

Are we on track for completing the project against the expected timeframe for project delivery? N/A. Construction is complete.

Has this project generated public or media impact and response which the City of London has needed to manage or is managing?
No.

[2] Finance and Costed Risk

Headline Financial, Scope and Design Changes:

'Project Proposal' G2 report: Moorgate Crossrail Station Links project (as approved by SWC and PSC 2/11/13)

Scope/Design Change and Impact: Previously combined with the Phase 1 work and, therefore, difficult to disaggregate.

'Options Appraisal and Design' G3 report: Under Urgency Report (as approved by SWC and PSC 2/19/14)

- Total Estimated Cost (excluding risk): £2m - £3.5m
- Resources to reach next Gateway (excluding risk): £20,513
- Spend to date: £380,000
- Costed Risk Against the Project: None
- CRP Requested: None
- CRP Drawn Down: None
- Estimated Programme Dates: 2018 (for Crossrail station completion)

Scope/Design Change and Impact: no change

'Options Appraisal and Design' G4 report: Issues Report (as approved by PSC 10/07/19 and SWC 22/07/19)

- Total Estimated Cost (excluding risk): £3.6m (Phase 1 and 2)
- Resources to reach next Gateway (excluding risk): £182,952 (Phase 2)
- Spend to date: £1,092,026 (Phase 1)
- Costed Risk Against the Project: None
- CRP Requested: None
- CRP Drawn Down: None
- Estimated Programme Dates: 2020/early-2021 (for Crossrail station completion)

Scope/Design Change and Impact: Members approved the revised approach to meeting overall project objectives, including agreement to the identified way forward at the Moorgate/Ropemaker Street junction and to agree to allow for further exploration of pedestrian enhancements along the Moorgate corridor and at the Moorgate/London Wall junction.

'Authority to start Work' G5 report – Finsbury Circus Western Arm

- Total Estimated Cost (excluding risk): £3.1m - £6.3m (specific to MCSL project)
- Resources to reach next Gateway (excluding risk): £756,746
- Spend to date: NA
- Costed Risk Against the Project: £98,000
- CRP Requested: NA
- CRP Drawn Down: NA
- Estimated Programme Dates: 2023/2024

Scope/Design Change and Impact: 5-year programme delay as a result of the extensive design considerations, such as Crossrail infrastructure beneath the western arm, to ensure the project is delivered on budget and to stated milestones and have been amended as a result.

Total anticipated on-going commitment post-delivery [£]: £5,282 cleansing maintenance and **£150,000** costs included within capital project costs **Programme Affiliation [£]:** Moorgate Crossrail Station Links project

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Appendix 2: Finsbury Circus Western Arm Re-Landscaping Project Objectives

Project Objective	Additional Information	Climate Action Strategy	Transport Strategy	Corporate Plan 2024 – 2029
Attractive and enhanced high-quality public space, leading to the Finsbury Circus Gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High quality materials were used when designing the Western Arm, including paving, planters, etc. The raised carriageway has provided the opportunity to create an enhanced space and maximised the opportunity for the introduction of greening, tree planting, seating, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase quality of provision of green space within the Square Mile and wider City Corporation spaces Introduce climate-resilient and adaptive landscaping in planned works 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outcome 1: The Square Mile's streets are great places to walk, wheel and spend time Outcome 3: The Square Mile is accessible to all Outcome 6: The Square Mile's air and streets are cleaner and quieter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leading Sustainable Environment Vibrant Thriving Destination Flourishing Public Spaces
Introduction of new greening, including several trees and planting beds, as well as seating and benches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 134 sq. m of new greening introduced within the space. Nine new multi-stemmed trees introduced within the space. Seven new planting beds introduced, with a diverse array of planting and other greening. 11 new benches, several including 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase quality of provision of green space within the Square Mile and wider City Corporation spaces Introduce climate-resilient and adaptive landscaping in planned works Increasing tree cover by creating tree avenues Naturalising hardsurfaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outcome 1: The Square Mile's streets are great places to walk, wheel and spend time Outcome 6: The Square Mile's air and streets are cleaner and quieter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leading Sustainable Environment Vibrant Thriving Destination Flourishing Public Spaces

	armrests, positioned across the project area, while maintaining appropriate access for those who walk and wheel.			
Introduction of green infrastructure and planting species that enhance local biodiversity, as well as built-in climate resilient measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planting and greening included within the project, include a diverse array of species which are climate resilient. Trees included within the project are climate resilient. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase quality of provision of green space within the Square Mile and wider City Corporation spaces Introduce climate-resilient and adaptive landscaping in planned works Climate resilient planting for biodiversity Creating steppingstones for biodiversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outcome 1: The Square Mile's streets are great places to walk, wheel and spend time Outcome 6: The Square Mile's air and streets are cleaner and quieter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leading Sustainable Environment Flourishing Public Spaces
Work to implement and deliver the outcomes of the City's Biodiversity Action Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction of new planting and trees, and the diversity of these species, improve the local biodiversity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More and better spaces for people and nature, including urban biodiversity Creating steppingstones for biodiversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outcome 1: The Square Mile's streets are great places to walk, wheel and spend time Outcome 6: The Square Mile's air and streets are cleaner and quieter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leading Sustainable Environment Flourishing Public Spaces

Appendix 3: Final Project Costs

Table 1: Expenditure to date: MCSL Finsbury Circus Ph2A - 16100414			
Description	Approved Budget (£)	Expenditure (£)	Balance (£)
ENV Servs Staff Costs	72,655	44,216	28,439
Open Spaces Staff Costs	10,300	6,013	4,287
P&T Staff Costs	58,000	36,298	21,702
P&T Fees	49,045	46,033	3,012
Open Spaces Works	69,765	58,656	11,109
Works	440,699	439,425	1,274
Cost Risk Provision	98,000	-	98,000
Drawdown	- 19,000	-	-19,000
Open Spaces Maintenance*	150,000	150,000	-
Cleansing Maintenance*	5,282	5,282	-
TOTAL	934,746	785,923	148,823
*Retained for future maintenance			

Table 2: Funding Allocation	
Funding Source	Current Funding Allocation (£)
S106	148,568
Crossrail	348,000
OSPR	438,178
TOTAL	934,746

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Appendix 4: Finsbury Circus Western Arm Relandscaping Before & After Photos



Finsbury Circus Western Arm: Before (looking west toward Moorgate, Google 2024)



Finsbury Circus Western Arm: After (looking west toward Moorgate, 2025)



Finsbury Circus Western Arm: Before (looking east toward Finsbury Gardens, Studio Weave, 2025)



Finsbury Circus Western Arm: After (looking east towards Finsbury Gardens, 2025)

City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee: Natural Environment Board	Dated: 23 Oct 2025
Subject: City Gardens Tree Annual Update	Public report: For Information
This proposal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes • provides statutory duties • provides business enabling functions 	Dynamic Economic Growth Leading Sustainable Environment Providing Excellent Services Flourishing Public Spaces
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of:	Katie Stewart
Report author:	Jake Tibbetts

Summary

This is the first annual report on the state of the City's Urban Forest, the aim of which is to give members a clear understanding of the health, condition and management of the trees by the City of London Corporation within the square mile as well as to outline aims and objectives for the next year.

City Gardens is responsible for managing a complex and diverse urban forest across the City of London, with approximately 1,187 trees under its care. This includes the 1,565 trees within the City boundary and a further 116 at Bunhill Fields, Islington and 6 in Southwark. The management of this tree stock ensures that the City fulfils its statutory duties as a landowner, whilst maximising the wide-ranging environmental, social, and economic benefits trees provide.

Data indicates that the service continues to perform strongly. Tree health remains high, with 70% of trees classified as being in good condition. Establishment rates for new plantings are also impressive at around 90%. In 2024–25, 79 new trees were planted and 11 removed, a net growth in tree numbers of 68.

The main challenge remains the limited space for new planting in the City's dense urban fabric, where underground utilities and built infrastructure significantly constrain opportunities. However, City Gardens is responding proactively, trialling innovative planting techniques, embedding climate resilience in new species selection, and pursuing new mechanisms for external funding and sponsorship.

The coming years present opportunities to consolidate progress by launching a City Tree Fund, adopting canopy cover as a performance measure, and increasing planting through highway redesigns and public realm improvements.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. As a landowner, the City of London Corporation has a legal duty of care under both criminal and civil law to ensure trees do not present unacceptable risks to the public. The National Tree Safety Group's guidance, *Common Sense Risk Management of Trees*, sets out the principles by which this duty should be discharged. City Gardens adopts these principles, maintaining a robust Tree Risk Management Plan and delivering a systematic programme of inspections and maintenance.
2. Beyond risk management, trees are essential to the City's wider environmental and social objectives. They:
 - Mitigate the impacts of climate change by reducing heat, improving air quality, and managing surface water.
 - Enhance public spaces by providing shade, seasonal interest, and biodiversity.
 - Contribute to the City's Climate Action Strategy and its commitment to climate resilience and net zero.
 - Support wellbeing for residents, workers, and visitors by creating more liveable and attractive environments.

3. The inspection regime in place is designed to balance risk management with operational efficiency:
 - **Four-year cycle:** Each quadrant of the City is inspected once every four years.
 - **Annual inspections:** All mature trees (final third of life expectancy) and those with identified defects are inspected annually.
 - **Targeted inspections:** London plane trees are visually assessed three times per year for Massaria disease.
 - **Methodology:** Visual Tree Assessment (VTA) is the standard technique, with external specialists commissioned for advanced diagnostics (e.g. sonic tomography, load tests) where required.
4. This system ensures that safety risks are minimised, legal duties are met, and long-term tree health is sustained.

Current Position

5. City Gardens manages approximately 1,800 trees, distributed across a variety of locations within and outside the City of London. This includes the 1,700 trees within the City boundary, located in gardens, on highways, within housing estates, in churchyards, at schools, and on private land. Outside the City, responsibility extends to Bunhill Fields burial ground in Islington (107 trees) and Rennie Gardens in Southwark (9 trees).
6. This stock represents not only a statutory responsibility but also a key part of the City's urban infrastructure, contributing to climate resilience, public realm quality, and the achievement of wider corporate objectives such as the Climate Action Strategy.

Tree Health and Condition

7. The most recent assessment (2024–25) categorises the City's tree population as follows:
 - **Good condition:** 1,189 trees (70%)
 - **Fair condition:** 473 trees (28%)
 - **Poor condition:** 34 trees (2%)
8. This profile demonstrates that the vast majority of the City's trees are in a healthy and sustainable state, with only a very small proportion requiring urgent attention. The 2% categorised as in poor health and are subject to closer monitoring and where necessary, remedial works or removal to mitigate potential risk presented by declining trees.
9. The relatively high proportion of trees in good condition is reflective of both the structured inspection regime and the success of the aftercare programme

for newly planted trees. It also highlights the benefits of diversifying species and adopting a proactive approach to climate resilience.

10. The table below shows the total number of trees for each ward and their assessed condition

Ward	Condition				
	Tree No	Good	Fair	Poor	Dead
Aldersgate	230	130	95	4	1
Aldgate	56	47	8	1	0
Bassishaw	111	73	37	1	0
Billingsgate	34	13	19	2	0
Bishopsgate	61	48	7	2	0
Bread Street	167	136	28	3	0
Bridge	16	6	9	1	0
Broad Street	14	8	6	0	0
Candlewick	0	0	0	0	0
Castle Baynard	122	85	33	3	1
Cheap	33	27	6	0	0
Coleman Street	50	39	8	1	0
Cordwainer	26	20	6	0	0
Cornhill	14	12	2	0	0
Cripplegate	159	74	63	10	0
Dowgate	33	22	11	0	0
Farringdon Within	91	81	10	0	0
Farringdon Without	84	57	27	0	0
Langbourn	14	9	5	0	0
Lime Street	1	0	1	0	0
Portoken	60	40	20	0	0
Queenhithe	37	32	5	0	0
Tower	101	75	24	2	0
Vintry	46	30	14	1	1
Walbrook	5	4	1	0	0

Planting and Removals

11. Between April 2024 and April 2025, City Gardens planted 79 new trees and removed 11.

12. Trends over the last three years indicate consistent progress:

- **2022–23:** 47 trees planted (31 linked to the Cool Streets and Greening programme). 12 trees removed, net increase of 35 trees.

- **2023–24:** 38 planted (12 linked to Cool Streets and Greening). 17 trees removed, net increase of 26 trees.
 - **2024–25:** 79 planted (21 linked to Cool Streets and Greening). 10 trees removed, net increase of 69 trees.
13. This demonstrates that not only is tree planting being sustained but that tree numbers have increased year-on-year.
14. Tree removals are kept to a minimum, restricted to those trees that are in poor condition, pose a safety risk, or are required to be removed due to development.

Species Diversity

15. Diversity is a cornerstone of urban forest resilience. City Gardens continues to benchmark its tree stock against the 10-20-30 rule (no more than 10% of one species, 20% of one genus, 30% of one family (Santamour 1990)).
16. Current values:
- **Species:** London plane (*Platanus x acerifolia*) represents 11.18% of the total, slightly above the recommended threshold. No other species approaches this level. Importantly, City Gardens has already adopted a policy of not planting new London planes, instead selecting large-canopy alternatives such as silver lime, zelkovas, climate-resilient maples, and disease-tolerant elms.
 - **Genus:** *Platanus* accounts for 11.66%. Other genera are distributed more evenly (*Tilia* 10.46%, *Prunus* 8.01%, *Acer* 7.35%, *Betula* 7.05%), ensuring no single genus dominates and stay within the 20% threshold.
 - **Family:** Betulaceae (16.57%) and Rosaceae (16.21%) are the largest families represented, but both remain well within the 30% threshold.
17. This distribution shows that the City's urban forest is **broadly in line with best-practice diversity guidance**, supporting resilience against pests, diseases, and climate-related pressures.

Achievements (2023–25)

18. Over the past two years, the City Gardens team have taken a number of steps to improve the management of the City's trees and ensure that the future Urban Forest is sustainable, diverse and healthy. These are detailed below.

Governance and Systems

- **Planning SLA Established (2025):** This service that was previously provided informally, has been clarified and ensures that City Gardens is adequately resourced to be able to provide this statutory planning function.

- **Tree Inspections In-House (2024):** Ceased outsourcing tree inspections to consultants, now undertaken by City Gardens Project Officer.

Capacity and Funding

- **Woodland Creation Accelerator Fund (2023):** Secured funding to recruit an Arboricultural Projects Officer, enhancing delivery capacity for tree planting and monitoring, in 2025 this post was made permanent, funded through an SLA with planning, by bringing inspections back in house and income from project work.
- **Improved Procurement Practices:** Nursery tagging and pre-delivery inspections introduced, ensuring higher quality and accountability in supply chains.

Innovation and Planting

- **New Species and Techniques Trialled:** Climate-resilient species introduced, supported by trials of soil cells and structural soils to expand planting viability.
- **High Establishment Success Rate:** Over 90% of new plantings survive beyond initial three year establishment, reflecting effective aftercare regimes.

Analysis of current position

19. As part of this annual report a SWOT analysis has been undertaken to understand the City's current position and inform a way forward.

Strengths in the Current Position

- **Tree Health:** High proportion of trees in good condition, demonstrating effective management.
- **Establishment Success:** Newly planted trees achieve around a **90% survival rate**, due to robust aftercare including structured watering regimes.
- **Climate-Resilient Planting:** Recent plantings focus on species identified through research and partnership work with Kew, TDAG, and LTOA as suitable for future climate scenarios.
- **Partnerships and Influence:** City Gardens plays a proactive role in the **London Urban Forest Partnership**, aligning local action with London-wide goals such as enhancing resilience and increasing canopy cover.
- **Efficiency:** Inspections have been brought fully back in-house, resulting in quicker turnaround times and better integration of inspection findings with maintenance programmes.

Weaknesses and Constraints

20. Despite strong progress, there are structural limitations to the current position:

- **Space Availability:** The City's built form and density significantly restrict new planting opportunities. Gardens are already well established, and streets are often unsuitable due to narrow pavements or proximity to buildings.
- **Underground Congestion:** Utilities, tunnels, and basements beneath the footpaths present major obstacles, often eliminating otherwise suitable planting sites. Over the past four years, officers have assessed around 75% of the paved highway network, with many potential sites ruled out after radar scanning or trial excavations.
- **Finite Capacity:** It is projected that by the end of the 2026–27 financial year, all available capacity for planting within the existing pavement network will have been identified and planted. Beyond this point, new planting will depend on opportunities created by redevelopment schemes, pavement widening, or public realm transformations.

Opportunities Emerging in the Current Position

21. While space is a key constraint, City Gardens is actively pursuing opportunities to expand planting potential:
- **Innovative Planting Methods:** Trials of structural soils, soil cells, and sand-based systems have the potential to increase soil volume and enhance rooting conditions, thereby improving overall tree health and resilience.
 - **Canopy Mapping:** Moving beyond raw tree numbers, canopy cover mapping is being developed to provide a more accurate measure of urban forest health and sustainability.
 - **New Public Realm Schemes:** Projects such as Finsbury Circus Western Arm and Greyfriars Square are providing entirely new planting locations by re-purposing highways for green space.
 - **Tree Sponsorship and Funding:** Consideration of the feasibility and viability of establishing of a **City Tree Fund** which could allow businesses, developers and the public to contribute financially to tree planting and improvements in the urban forest.

Threats to the Current Position

- **Pests and Diseases:** Global trade and climate change are increasing the risk of new tree pests and pathogens arriving in London.
- **Climate Change:** More extreme weather events (heatwaves, droughts, storms) threaten tree health and longevity.
- **Development Pressures:** Construction activity can lead to tree loss, soil compaction, and root damage, requiring ongoing vigilance and strong planning controls.

Proposals

22. Maintain Current Approach

- Continue with cyclical inspections, replacement planting, and species diversification.
- Strength: Low risk and resource demand.
- Limitation: Little scope for significant canopy growth.

23. Expand Use of Innovative Planting Techniques

- Trial structural soils, soil cells, and sand-based planting in collaboration with engineers.
- Provides trees with increased rooting volume and long-term viability in hostile urban conditions.
- Requires increased upfront cost but delivers greater canopy growth potential.

24. Integrate New Monitoring Technologies

- Deploy sensors to track tree growth, water stress, and health indicators in real time.
- Enables early interventions, reduces risk, and supports evidence-led management.
- Can be linked to canopy cover mapping to provide a fuller picture of performance.

25. Investigate External Funding Mechanisms (City Tree Fund)

- Investigate sponsorship, public and private contributions.
- Provide a mechanism for developers to offset greening deficits or compensate for necessary removals.
- Unlock significant new resources for tree planting and the enhancement of the urban forest.

Actions

26. Short-Term (2024–26)

- Deliver the final phase of the highway footpath tree planting programme.
- Trial structural soils, soil cells, and alternative planting substrates.
- Expand the range of climate-resilient species planted.
- Publish annual report on tree establishment rates and species performance.

- Embed the new Planning SLA to ensure arboricultural considerations are integral to development decisions.
- Explore assess options for the establishment of an Urban Tree Fund and present viable options to committee late 2026.

27. Medium-Term (2026–30)

- Identify and deliver new planting through major public realm projects and pavement-widening schemes.
- Introduce IT-based monitoring and canopy cover mapping.
- Review and update the Tree Risk Management Plan to reflect emerging climate and pest risks.

28. Long-Term (2030 onwards)

- Increase canopy cover across the City, with a shift in focus from tree numbers to area of cover.
- Establish the City as a leader in urban forestry innovation, particularly in managing trees in highly constrained environments.
- Ensure tree planting and management continues to contribute directly to the Climate Action Strategy.

Corporate & Strategic

Financial implications

29. The ongoing management of the City's urban forest requires sustained investment in inspections, maintenance, planting, and aftercare regimes. While efficiencies have been achieved through bringing inspections in-house and improving procurement practices, future ambitions such as trialling structural soils, adopting new monitoring technologies, and expanding canopy cover will increase upfront costs. These investments, however, will generate long-term value by reducing tree failure risks, enhancing resilience to climate change, and securing ecosystem services such as cooling and air quality improvements.

Resource implications

30. None

Legal implications

31. As a landowner, the City of London Corporation has a statutory duty of care to ensure trees under its management do not pose unacceptable risks to the public. This duty, informed by civil and criminal law, requires adherence to best practice as set out in the National Tree Safety Group's *Common Sense Risk Management of Trees*. The City Gardens service discharges this duty through a robust Tree Risk Management Plan and systematic inspection regime. The Planning department have a statutory obligation in regards to

trees which is being met through the SLA. Furthermore, ensuring compliance with emerging environmental legislation and alignment with the City's Climate Action Strategy will remain a core legal consideration.

Risk implications

32. The principal risks to the City's urban forest relate to tree safety, pests and diseases, climate change impacts, and development pressures. Failure to maintain a rigorous inspection regime could expose the City to legal liability in the event of tree-related incidents. Pests and disease, along with the potential arrival of new pathogens, present ongoing biological risks. Climate change introduces further threats through increased frequency of droughts, storms, and heatwaves, potentially undermining long-term tree health. There is also a strategic risk that limited planting space may prevent the City from achieving its canopy cover ambitions, unless mitigated through innovation, redevelopment opportunities, and external funding. Proactive monitoring, species diversification, and strategic planning are therefore essential to maintaining resilience and minimising exposure.

Equalities implications

33. Trees provide shade, improve air quality, and create more attractive environments, benefits which are particularly valuable to vulnerable groups such as older people, children, and those with underlying health conditions. Public realm improvements linked to tree planting also contribute to safer and more accessible streets for all users, including people with disabilities. Ensuring equitable distribution of new planting across the City, including areas with high footfall and limited green space, will help avoid disproportionate outcomes and maximise social value.

Climate implications

34. Trees are a critical element of the City's Climate Action Strategy, contributing to urban cooling, improved air quality, and sustainable water management. The selection of climate-resilient species and the adoption of innovative planting techniques are essential to ensure long-term viability in the face of rising temperatures, droughts, and extreme weather events. Expanding canopy cover will strengthen the City's resilience to climate change while supporting net zero targets, biodiversity, and the creation of healthier, more liveable public spaces.

Security implications – N/A

Conclusion

35. City Gardens has a strong baseline: a healthy and diverse tree population, an efficient inspection system, and a proven record of successful planting and aftercare. However, there are clear structural constraints, especially the looming limit on planting capacity within the existing street network. The future

trajectory depends on embracing innovation, external funding, and public realm redesign to expand canopy cover and secure resilience against emerging threats.

Appendices

'None'

Background Papers

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