



Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee

Date: TUESDAY, 3 DECEMBER 2024

Time: 4.15 pm

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

Members:

William Upton KC (Chair)	Caroline Haines (Ex-Officio Member)
Alderman & Sheriff Gregory	Michael Hudson
Jones KC (Deputy Chairman)	Pauline Lobo, Ramblers' Association
John Absalom	Deputy Charles Edward Lord
John Beyer	Wendy Mead OBE
Councillor Marcus Boyland, London Borough of Camden	Councillor Arjun Mittra, London Borough of Barnet
Deputy Timothy Butcher	Eamonn Mullally
John Foley	Alethea Silk
Matthew Frith, London Wildlife Trust	Victoria Stone, English Heritage
Alderman Alison Gowman CBE	
Jason Groves	

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

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Ian Thomas CBE
Town Clerk and Chief Executive

AGENDA

Part 1 - Public Agenda

1. **APOLOGIES**

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

3. **MINUTES**

To agree the public minutes and non-public summary of the meeting held on Tuesday 22 October 2024.

For Decision
(Pages 5 - 18)

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

Report of the Town Clerk.

For Decision
(Pages 19 - 22)

Hampstead Heath

5. **UPDATE TO HAMPSTEAD HEATH MANAGEMENT STRATEGY (2018-2028)**

Report of the Executive Director, Environment.

For Decision
(Pages 23 - 70)

Highgate Wood and Queen's Park

6. **UPDATE TO MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR HIGHGATE WOOD AND QUEEN'S PARK**

Report of the Executive Director, Environment.

For Decision
(Pages 71 - 152)

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

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

9. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

MOTION: The following matters relate to business under the remit of the Court of Common Council acting for the City Corporation as charity Trustee, to which Part VA and Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 public access to meetings provisions do not apply. The following items contain sensitive information which it is not in the best interests of the charity to consider in a public meeting (engaging similar considerations as under paragraphs 3 and 5 of Schedule 12A of the 1972 Act) and will be considered in non-public session.

For Decision

Part 2 - Non-Public Agenda

10. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

To agree the non-public minutes of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee held on Tuesday 22 October 2024.

For Decision
(Pages 153 - 156)

11. **RE-MARKETING OF CAFES AT HAMPSTEAD HEATH, HIGHGATE WOOD, AND QUEEN'S PARK**

Report of the Executive Director, Environment.

For Decision
(Pages 157 - 172)

12. **DONATION TO SUPPORT WILDLIFE SANCTUARY AT MODEL BOATING POND**

Report of the Executive Director, Environment.

For Decision
(Pages 173 - 178)

13. **HILL GARDEN PERGOLA UPDATE**

Report of the Executive Director, Environment.

For Information
(Pages 179 - 184)

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 WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

HAMPSTEAD HEATH, HIGHGATE WOOD AND QUEEN'S PARK COMMITTEE **Tuesday, 22 October 2024**

Minutes of the meeting of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee held at Committee Rooms, 2nd Floor, West Wing, Guildhall on Tuesday, 22 October 2024 at 4.00 pm

Present

Members:

William Upton KC (Chair)
Alderman & Sheriff Gregory Jones KC (Deputy Chairman)
John Beyer
Deputy Timothy Butcher
John Foley
Pauline Lobo
Wendy Mead OBE
Councillor Arjun Mittra
Eamonn Mullally
Alethea Silk

In attendance:

Ruby Sayed

Officers:

Clem Harcourt	- Chamberlain's Department
Simon Owen	- Chamberlain's Department
Niranjan Shanmuganathan	- Chamberlain's Department
Jack Joslin	- City Bridge Foundation
Sadaf Anwar	- Comptroller and City Solicitor's
Edward Wood	- Comptroller and City Solicitor's
John Park	- Corporate Strategy and Performance
Joanne Hill	- Environment Department
Bill LoSasso	- Environment Department
Jonathan Meares	- Environment Department
Charlotte Williams	- Environment Department
Katie Stewart	- Executive Director of Environment
Callum Southern	- Town Clerk's Department

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Alderwoman Alison Gowman, Caroline Haines and Deputy Edward Lord.

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

No declarations were made.

3. **MINUTES**

3.1 **Draft Minutes of Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee**

RESOLVED – That, the public and non-public summary of the meeting held on 10 July 2024 be agreed as a correct record.

3.2 **Draft Minutes of Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee**

Members noted the draft public minutes of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee held on 16 September 2024.

Matters Arising

The Chairman noted that the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee dinner had been moved to 3rd February 2025.

Chairman requested an update on City Surveyor's being present at meetings of the Committee. Officers indicated Surveyors' had stated they could not attend every Committee meeting but would direct them to the Committee's next meeting to attend.

A Member commented on the large amount of business for the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee and queried whether decision-making functions could be delegated to the Consultative Committee and other consultative groups. He acknowledged that this might require a change in legislation. Officers confirmed that, under the current arrangements, decisions could only be delegated to a Committee, Sub-committee or officer of the Corporation. More business could be delegated to officers, if desired, but not to the Consultative Committee and other consultative groups.

A Member considered whether the structure of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee could be looked as the charities and their respective histories were different and acknowledged that could require a change in legislation. Officers noted that while more could be delegated to officers, there was no possibility of delegating authority to the consultative groups.

The Chairman indicated the December 2024 meeting would be a good time for the Hampstead Heath Management Strategy to be reviewed. Officers indicated that could be done.

4. **APPOINTMENT OF THE MEMBER OF ENGLISH HERITAGE TO THE HAMPSTEAD HEATH, HIGHGATE WOOD & QUEEN'S PARK COMMITTEE**

The Committee considered a report which sought the appointment of a new external Member of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee, nominated by English Heritage, to represent the Kenwood lands.

RESOLVED – That, Members:

- Approved Victoria Stone, nominated by English Heritage, to be appointed as a Member of the Management Committee for the consideration of business relating to Hampstead Heath, in accordance with the London Government Reorganisation (Hampstead Heath) Order 1989.

5. **RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE**

The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director of Environment concerning the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee with assurance that risk management procedures in place within the Environment Department and its Natural Environment Division were satisfactory and meet the requirements of the Corporate Risk Management Framework and the Charities Act 2011.

During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- a) The Committee queried regarding the surveyors' backlog and the financial limit which was in place for when local staff could go ahead with repairs. Officers indicated there was a willingness to work on this from City Surveyor's and a report be written providing an update on that.
- b) The Chairman asked why City Surveyor's were not marked as action owners on repairs backlogs. Officers explained that there was a corporate risk register on asset maintenance and repairs owned by the City Surveyor's who had an oversight of the risks.
- c) A Member enquired how risks would be mitigated at the local level and how the impact of corporate risks on the charity would be considered. Officers reported that the corporate risk register was reviewed by the Audit and Risk Management Committee regularly and the chief officers risk management group also had oversight.
- d) Officers indicated that a new corporate risk management strategy had been approved with an action to improve cross-departmental working on risk management.
- e) It was discussed whether there were any assets that would require additional spend in the next five years and whether the asset conditions were known. Officers indicated there was an asset review underway across the Corporation and were working with City Surveyor's to assess the condition of assets across the board and re-prioritising the cyclical works programme.

- f) The Committee considered whether the register would illustrate the predicted spend on works for future years. Officers confirmed that the cyclical works programme should facilitate the works and City Surveyor's were working with Environment Department officers to identify works needed.

RESOLVED – That, Members confirmed, on behalf of the City Corporation as trustee, that the registers appended to this report satisfactorily set out the key risks to the charities and that appropriate systems are in place to effectively identify and mitigate risks.

6. **ASSISTANT DIRECTOR'S UPDATE REPORT - HAMPSTEAD HEATH Q2 2024-25 (JULY - SEPTEMBER)**

The Committee considered a paper which reported on key accomplishments against the four strategies of the Natural Environment Division at Hampstead Heath.

During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- a) The Chairman expressed doubts about the new reporting format and sought an explanation for the purpose behind the new style as it omitted some details and the charity's own management strategy and purposes. Officers indicated it was to simplify and streamline the report writing process while balancing with how much information the Committee needed, but noted the balance had not been struck on this occasion.
- b) A Member noted the planning consultancy work on threats to the Heath from high rises and suggested they were looking forward to working with the Superintendent on community groups' objections to the tower development at Archway.
- c) The Chairman indicated that the report did not capture significant issues discussed in the Assistant Director's Consultative Committee report on 16 September 2024 and picked them out.
- d) An update was sought on the issue of flooding and discussions with the London Boroughs of Camden and Barnet. Officers indicated that numerous site visits had been conducted and discussions were taking place; Officers assured Members that no work would take place without relevant authorisation.
- e) Officers informed the Committee that the changing rooms on the Heath extension had been disinfected twice and the results indicated this was shifting the biofilms and liberating legionella. A third disinfection had just been completed and results would be back in the next week. Officers reported that changing rooms remained closed for the foreseeable as legionella levels were still unacceptable.

- f) The Committee considered the timeline for reopening the changing rooms on the Heath extension for the rugby season. Officers indicated they were hopeful levels would fall to an acceptable level, but noted that the facility was vulnerable due to the system not being used every day and flushed.
- g) Members discussed whether advice was given to run the showers for a certain amount of time before use. Officers informed that Socotec had advised flushing weekly and noted a few tries would be needed to flush it through the system. Officers noted they were considering installing an automatic flushing system so it did not rely on staff members having to flush the system.
- h) A Member raised a question as to whether there were dead legs in the system as that was where legionella could be trapped. Officers confirmed that the engineers had been asked the same question and they could share the report with Members.
- i) The Committee sought an update on the Neighbourhood CIL bid to Barnet Council for the playground on Golders Hill Park. Officers confirmed that they were in the process of finalising scope of the project which would be reviewed by the Council in January.
- j) Officers confirmed, in response to questions, that the automatic number plate recognition system was operating without issues, that there was increased compliance with payment through the Ring Go application and that parking charge notices were being issued where appropriate.
- k) The Chairman requested an update on the ponds project. Officers confirmed that a sliding door and additional grating was being installed and were awaiting a message of completion.
- l) Officers acknowledged that there were still some people commercially walking dogs without a licence on the Heath but confirmed that 22 permits had been issued. Those with permits would be issued with an ID badge which would have to be worn during commercial dog walking to assist with enforcement.
- m) Members sought clarification on the relevant appeal arrangements under the licensing scheme. Officers confirmed that these were set out in the Schedule to the City of London Corporation (Open Spaces) Act 2018. Any person aggrieved by the refusal to grant a licence, or by the revocation of a licence, was entitled to seek a review of the decision by a committee of the Corporation comprising three Members who were magistrates. There was then a right of appeal to the magistrates' court. Officers confirmed that a standing committee had not so far been established for this purpose, but that a panel could be set up quickly if the need arose.

RECEIVED.

7. HILL GARDEN PERGOLA UPDATE

The Committee considered a report which provided an update regarding the state of the Hill Garden Pergola on Hampstead Heath and outlined options to complete the needed capital repairs, as well as cost estimates for the oak framework, supporting columns and attached balustrading on the high-level walkways.

Officers informed the Committee that they had liaised with the City Surveyor's on stabilising repairs and there was approximately £200,000 remaining in the cyclical works programme for this purpose. It was suggested that additional funding may potentially be needed the next time the programme was approved to ensure repairs continue if capital funding had not been identified.

During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- a) A Member sought information on the timescale for the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) bid. Officers indicated that it would be a multi-year timeline.
- b) An update was requested on the Head of Development & Partnerships post. Officers indicated there had been an unsuccessful recruitment attempt and the job description was being reviewed with Human Resources and they were hoping to adjust the grading if possible and go out for recruitment again. A fixed-term contract for a professional fundraiser had been considered. The Chairman supported this as recruitment would take more time again.
- c) Officers suggested that fundraising in the community needed to be done once the fundraising post had been filled permanently as a large part of attracting funding was based on relationship building.
- d) The Committee considered whether RIBA or the family of Lord Leverhulme could be involved in a charity appeal. Officers indicated they had looked at the foundation and concluded it tended to focus on biomedical projects but accepted the need explore all options.
- e) Clarity was sought on costs and whether they could be substantiated. Officers informed the Committee that a specialist heritage architect had reviewed the project cost and City Surveyor's had confirmed the predicted cost was valid.
- f) A Member suggested the report recommendation was not as fulsome as it could be as it indicated no timeline but indicated the Committee should reaffirm its commitment to restoring the Pergola as a first principle.
- g) A Member suggested that some concrete proposals on the timeline could be brought back to the December meeting of the Committee.

- h) Members queried how long restoration work would last for after it had been carried out. Officers explained they did not know, but proactive maintenance would be required in future.
- i) It was suggested by a Member that as the Pergola was likely to go on the Buildings at Risk Register, it would be worth going to the Resource Allocation Sub-Committee to request they match fund any funding that the NLHF might provide.
- j) Officers informed Members that recommendations were being considered around developing a divisional fundraising team who would explore the possibility of attracting major donors, interacting with corporates, trusts and foundations, as well as looking at money available from local authorities.
- k) The Committee discussed whether a sinking fund was permitted for charities as Members had been previously informed they were not legally permitted. Officers noted that all charities could hold reserves, but there were legal limits on how much could be held unless there was a good reason.
- l) Members sought clarification on the Options listed under Paragraph 21 of the report regarding the phasing of any repair programme. Officers noted that Option 3 was the preferred option and indicated it was critically important to recruit more staff to be able to put firm deadlines and deliverables in place.
- m) The Chairman suggested that the timeline for how long the work may take was a separate decision. Officers suggested it was a multi-million pound pursuit regardless of the phased approach taken as time would be needed to discuss hiring someone to put together an application for NLHF funding. It was indicated that a decision on the timeline could therefore be taken at a later date.
- n) The Chairman summarised that the Committee wished to reaffirm its commitment to restore the Pergola and wanted a clear timeline on how the steps set out in Option 2 at Paragraph 32 would be achieved. Officers explained that they could not provide a clear timeline on how the steps in Option Two would be achieved as they could not say with definitiveness when an application for NLHF could be submitted. However, they stated that they could provide an indicative timeline and milestones that would be worked toward.
- o) It was suggested by a Member that a decision could be taken at the meeting on Option 2 referred to in Paragraph 32. However, it would potentially be best to defer a decision until the 3 December 2024 meeting on the Options outlined in Paragraph 21 to understand the risks of each option.

RESOLVED – That, Members,

- Approved Option 2 as referred to in Paragraph 32 of the report and;
- Deferred a decision on the Options explored in Paragraph 21 of the report until the next meeting of the Committee on 3 December 2024 and;
- Reaffirmed their commitment to restore the Pergola to use.

8. **WILDLIFE MONITORING ON HAMPSTEAD HEATH**

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on monitoring undertaken, and knowledge gained, of selected Hampstead Heath fauna over the last ten years.

During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- a) It was highlighted by a Member that there was no mention of other reptiles and amphibians. Officers acknowledged there was a big focus on the grass snakes and an amphibian survey was carried out annually. Officers were also confident that there was a healthy population of hedgehogs around Golders Hill Park.
- b) A Member queried whether any measures were being employed to control the numbers of grey squirrels and the American mink. Officers believed there were no mink on the Heath following the results of a survey carried out in May 2024. They informed Members that there was no squirrel control being carried out on the Heath currently, but it had been done in the past.
- c) Officers noted that squirrel traps did not have a significant impact on the squirrel population.

RECEIVED.

9. **DRAFT HAMPSTEAD HEATH TRUSTEE'S ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

The Committee considered a draft version of the Trustee's Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024 for Hampstead Heath.

RECEIVED.

10. **OPERATIONAL FINANCE PROGRESS REPORT 2024/25 (PERIOD 5 APRIL - AUGUST) - HAMPSTEAD HEATH**

The Committee received a report which provided an update on the operational finance position as at period 5 (April – August) for the Hampstead Heath charity and set out the charity's revenue operating budget position to date and projected year-end outturn, current live capital projects and outstanding debt position. The report also provided information on the various reserve funds held and other financial information relevant to the charity.

During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- a) The Chairman asked for an explanation regarding the notable variance on investment income. Officers from the Chamberlain's Department clarified that the £988,000 deviation from the budget was attributed to strategic changes made in 2023/24 aimed at optimising risk and fostering long-term growth, plus an over-ambitious budget target set that resulted in an unachievable target to start with.
- b) Officers explained that it was, in the short-term, challenging to determine if this shortfall would be a one-time occurrence if they continued to set the budget under the current formula. Moving forward, Officers were currently reviewing the formula process used for setting the upcoming budget for 2025/26 to ensure the method used to establish budgets in the future was appropriate.
- c) For the 2024/25 current budget variance, Officers would consider the effects of the strategic adjustments made in 2023/24 and look to identify measures to mitigate the significant budget variances currently observed.
- d) A Member highlighted the investment income shortfall and queried whether this was a result of selling off investments in mining and oil stocks in the move toward a greener agenda. Officers stated that they would provide a response.
- e) Officers explained the reason for the variance was due to the budget being set incorrectly initially and a set formula was being operated which used the maximum contribution. This resulted in an over-ambitious target, rather than downturns in investment returns.

At this point, the Chairman sought approval from the Committee to continue the meeting beyond two hours from the appointed time for the start of the meeting, in accordance with Standing Order 40, and this was agreed.

RECEIVED.

11. ASSISTANT DIRECTOR'S UPDATE REPORT - HIGHGATE WOOD Q2 2024-25 (JULY - SEPTEMBER)

The Committee considered a paper which used the new format to report on key accomplishments against the four strategies of the Natural Environment Division at Highgate Wood. The Chairman noted that the same concerns applied as those discussed on the Assistant Director's report regarding Hampstead Heath.

During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- a) The Chairman requested an update on the Kiln project. Officers reported that a public event had been held to unveil the restored and rebuilt

Roman kiln and this was still on site in the information hut at Highgate Wood.

- b) A Member asked whether all of the Roman sites were displayed on a map for the public. Officers indicated that there was an interactive map produced by the Museum of London.
- c) The Committee recognised and formally acknowledged the work of Officers to maintain the Open Spaces and thanked them for their efforts.

RECEIVED.

12. **ASSISTANT DIRECTOR'S UPDATE REPORT - QUEEN'S PARK Q2 2024-25 (JULY - SEPTEMBER)**

The Committee considered a paper which used the new format to report on key accomplishments against the four strategies of the Natural Environment Division at Queen's Park. The Chairman noted that the same concerns applied as those discussed on the Assistant Director's reports regarding Hampstead Heath and Highgate Wood

The Chairman invited Ruby Sayed to address the Committee.

During the discussion, the following points were noted:

- a) Officers reported that the woodland walk had been proposed for expansion by a Residents' Association at Queen's Park and a consultation was carried out in 2023. They had committed to examining the results when considering the feasibility of expanding the woodland walk, which could lead to the loss of two holes of the pitch and putt.
- b) A report on the cafes was being prepared for the December meeting of the Committee with options for remarketing.
- c) Officers acknowledged that the paddling pool was not currently operational. A specialist's recommendations indicated that there were operational issues, capacity limitations, financial challenges and health and safety concerns.
- d) The Committee was informed that QLM had provided a quote of a one-off cost in excess of £30,000 to ensure the mechanical pump house could operate and the water quality standard could be met.
- e) Officers explained that one option was for the paddling pool to be converted to a splash pad due to the need for less maintenance, no lifeguard being required, and it being accessible for all ages and abilities.
- f) Officers estimated the repair costs alone for opening the paddling pool for the year would be around £80,000.

- g) The Chairman queried why the paddling pool at Queen's Park was more difficult to bring back into operation. Officers explained that the mechanical pump required a lot more work as disinfectant levels could not be flushed out.
- h) A Member requested the surveyors' reports be shared with the Queen's Park Consultative Group to ascertain the cost breakdown and be explored further at the November meeting of the consultative group. A report was also requested for consideration at the December meeting of the Committee.
- i) Members suggested that guidance and analysis from City Surveyor's on alternatives would be helpful.
- j) Officers indicated that they could submit a report on the paddling pool for the next Queen's Park Consultative Group meeting but would struggle to produce more reports for the next meeting of this Committee.
- k) The Chairman suggested that the issue of the paddling pool at Queen's Park could be picked up under Matters Arising in the minutes at the December meeting.
- l) The Chairman thanked Officers for the re-opening of the sandpit at Queen's Park

13. DRAFT HIGHGATE WOOD AND QUEEN'S PARK KILBURN TRUSTEE'S ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The Committee considered a draft version of the Trustee's Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024 for Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Kilburn.

RECEIVED.

14. OPERATIONAL FINANCE PROGRESS REPORT 2024/25 (PERIOD 5 APRIL - AUGUST) - HIGHGATE WOOD & QUEEN'S PARK

The Committee received a report which provided an update on the operational finance position as at period 5 (April – August) for the Highgate Wood & Queen's Park charity and set out the charity's revenue operating budget position to date and projected year-end outturn, current live capital projects and outstanding debt position. It also provided information on the various reserve funds held and other financial information relevant to the charity.

Officers issued a correction to Table 7 of the report and noted the Outturn for 2023/24 was £1.53m, not £30,000 as illustrated on the table.

RECEIVED.

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

No questions were raised relating to the work of the Committee.

16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

The Town Clerk indicated that the Informal Minutes of the 10 June 2024 meeting of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee had been included in a supplementary pack and circulated to the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee.

17. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED – That, the following matters relate to business under the remit of the Court of Common Council acting for the City Corporation as charity Trustee, to which Part VA and Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 public access to meetings provisions do not apply. The following items contain sensitive information which it is not in the best interests of the charity to consider in a public meeting (engaging similar considerations as under paragraphs 3 and 5 of Schedule 12A of the 1972 Act) and will be considered in non-public session.

18. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

18.1 Draft Non-Public Minutes of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee

RESOLVED – That, the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2024 be agreed as a correct record.

18.2 Draft Non-Public Minutes of Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee

Members noted the draft non-public minutes of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee held on 16 September 2024.

19. UPDATE ON PUBLIC SEX ENVIRONMENT ON WEST HEATH

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

20. REPORT OF PARCEL SOLD AT PUBLIC AUCTION ADJACENT TO HAMPSTEAD HEATH / GOLDERS HILL PARK

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

21. REVIEW OF LEARNING AND HERITAGE ASSETS AND ACTIVITIES

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

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

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

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

Two items of other business considered urgent were discussed whilst the public were excluded.

The meeting ended at 7.00 pm

Chairman

**Contact Officer: Callum Southern
Callum.Southern@cityoflondon.gov.uk**

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Committee: Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee	Date: 3 December 2024
Subject: Annual Review of Terms of Reference	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	N/A
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Town Clerk	For Decision
Report author: Callum Southern, Town Clerk's Department	

Summary

As part of the implementation of the 2021 Governance Review, it was agreed that the cycle and process of annually reviewing the Terms of Reference of all Committees/Boards should be revised, to provide more time for Committees to consider and discuss changes before they are submitted to the Policy and Resources Committee. This is to enable any proposed changes to be considered in time for the annual reappointment of Committees by the Court of Common Council.

Following approval at the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee, the terms of reference of the are attached as an appendix to this report for Members' consideration.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- The terms of reference of the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee, subject to any comments, be approved for submission to the Court of Common Council in April, and that any further changes required in the lead up to the Court's appointment of Committees be delegated to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman;
- Members consider whether any change is required to the frequency of the Committee's meetings.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Terms of Reference

Callum Southern

Governance Officer

E: Callum.Southern@cityoflondon.gov.uk

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MAINELLI, Mayor	RESOLVED: That the Court of Common Council holden in the Guildhall of the City of London on Thursday 25 th April 2024, doth hereby appoint the following Committee until the first meeting of the Court in April, 2025
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HAMPSTEAD HEATH, HIGHGATE WOOD & QUEEN'S PARK COMMITTEE

1. **Constitution**

A Non-Ward Committee appointed pursuant to the London Government Reorganisation (Hampstead Heath) Order 1989 consisting of not fewer than 18 Members in the following categories:-

- not fewer than 12 Members elected by the Court of Common Council, at least one of whom shall have fewer than five years' service on the Court at the time of their appointment
- the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Natural Environment Board (*ex-officio*)
- plus, for the consideration of business relating to Hampstead Heath only, at least six representatives who must not be Members of the Court of Common Council or employees of the City of London Corporation and at least six of whom are to be appointed as follows:-
 - one after consultation with the London Borough of Barnet
 - one after consultation with the London Borough of Camden
 - one after consultation with the owners of the Kenwood lands
 - three after consultation with bodies representing local, ecological, environmental or sporting interests

The Chairman of the Committee shall be elected from the City Corporation Members.

2. **Quorum**

A. For Hampstead Heath business the quorum consists of seven Members, at least one of whom must be a non-Common Council Member.

B. For Highgate Wood and Queen's Park business the quorum consists of three Members.

3. **Membership 2024/25**

- 8 (4) William Upton KC
- 9 (2) Charles Edward Lord OBE JP, Deputy *for two years*
- 7 (3) Wendy Mead OBE *for three years*
- 3 (3) Timothy Butcher, Deputy
- 3 (3) John Ross Foley
- 3 (3) Alethea Melody Silk
- 3 (3) John David Absalom
- 9 (2) Michael Hudson
- 3 (2) Jason Groves
- 7 (2) Gregory Percy Jones, KC, Alderman
- Vacancy*
- Vacancy*

Together with the *ex-officio* Members referred to in paragraph 1 above and the following representatives from outside organisations:-

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| Heath and Hampstead Society | - | John Beyer |
| English Heritage | - | Emily Hills |
| London Wildlife Trust | - | Mathew Frith |
| London Borough of Barnet | - | Councillor Arjun Mittra |
| London Borough of Camden | - | Councillor Marcus Boyland |
| Ramblers' Society | - | Pauline Lobo |

4. **Terms of Reference**

To be responsible, having regard to the overall policy laid down by the Natural Environment Board, for:-

- (a) expressing views or making recommendations to the Natural Environment Board for that Committee's allocation of grants which relate to Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood & Queen's Park.

Hampstead Heath

- (b) devising and implementing the City of London Corporation's policies and programmes of work in relation to Hampstead Heath (registered charity no. 803392) (and, in fulfilling those purposes, to have regard to any representations made to it by the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee) in accordance with the London Government Re-organisation (Hampstead Heath) Order 1989;

(c) exercising all the City of London Corporation's powers and duties relating to Hampstead Heath, including those set out in Regulation 5 of the London Government Re-organisation (Hampstead Heath) Order 1989, or in any Act or Statutory Instrument consolidating, amending or replacing the same;

Highgate Wood & Queen's Park

(d) devising and implementing the City of London Corporation's policies and programmes of work in relation to Highgate Wood and Queen's Park (registered charity no. 232986)) (and, in fulfilling those purposes, to have regard to any representations made to it by the Highgate Wood Joint Consultative Committee and the Queen's Park Joint Consultative Group) in accordance with the provisions of the Highgate Wood and Kilburn Open Spaces Act 1886;

Consultative Committees

(e) appointing such Consultative Committees and Groups as are considered necessary for the better performance of its duties including, but not limited to, a

- Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee
- Highgate Wood Joint Consultative Committee
- Queen's Park Joint Consultative Group

City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee(s): Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood, and Queen's Park Committee	Dated: 3 December 2024
Subject: Update to Hampstead Heath Management Strategy (2018-2028)	Public report: For Decision
This proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes 	-Diverse Engaged Communities -Dynamic Economic Growth -Leading Sustainable Environment -Vibrant Thriving Destination -Providing Excellent Services -Flourishing Public Spaces
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of:	Katie Stewart, Executive Director Environment
Report author:	Bill LoSasso, Assistant Director (Superintendent), North London Open Spaces

Summary

This report summarises the work done to complete the planned midterm review of the Hampstead Heath Management Strategy, which is attached in near-final form as an appendix, and seeks Committee approval to finalise the document and prepare for layout and publication.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the provided report and attached Hampstead Heath Management Strategy.

- Authorise the Superintendent, in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chair, to finalise the review to the Hampstead Heath Management Strategy (2018-2028)

Main Report

Background

1. As previously reported to this Committee, officers are updating all four management plans for the four open spaces that NLOS is responsible for (Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood, Queen's Park, and West Ham Park). Officers have retained a consultant with extensive experience in developing management plans and strategies for open spaces to support in that effort (Land Management Services).
2. As part of that effort, officers are completing the planned mid-term review of the Hampstead Heath Management Strategy (2018-2028). The review of the Strategy ensured that it remains aligned with recent strategies that have been developed across the City Corporation in recent years, including the new Corporate Plan (2024-2029), Natural Environment Strategies (2024-2029), and Climate Action Strategy (2020-2027), as well as reflected world events, newly developed best practice, and experience gained in managing the Heath under the existing management plans.
3. While these new strategies and plans provide broad direction to NLOS in managing its sites and indeed will be furthered and delivered by our work at NLOS, the Hampstead Heath Management Strategy remains the primary guiding document for the management of Hampstead Heath.

Consultation

4. The 'Hampstead Heath Management Strategy Working Group' was formed from Members of this Committee and the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee who opted in to participate in this planned review of the Strategy. All members of both committees were provided an opportunity to participate and to represent their respective committee during the process. The Working Group met two times for participatory engagement sessions with officers, Land Management Services, and this committee's chairman. In addition, members of the Working Group also provided additional written comments on circulated drafts of the Strategy while under development.
5. Additionally, the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee provided additional comments and input at its last committee meeting, as did the Hampstead Heath Sports & Wellbeing Forum, whose members participated in a participatory engagement session and also provided written comments on the draft while under development.

Finalisation of the Reviewed Strategy

6. This draft is now in near-final form, subject to final comments of officers and this Committee and formal layout of the document for publication in alignment with relevant standards. Land Management Services will provide a presentation and overview of each plan for Members at the meeting on 3 December 2024.
7. Members are asked to note the work done to date, review the near-final draft, provide any final comments, and delegate authorisation to the Superintendent in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chair to finalise the Hampstead Heath Management Strategy and prepare it for publication.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Financial implications

8. None from this Strategy. Future projects and initiatives in furtherance of the Strategy will have to be delivered in alignment with funding constraints.

Resource implications

9. Delivery of the Hampstead Heath Management Strategy (2018-2028) will have to be delivered in alignment with funding constraints.

Legal implications

10. The City Corporation is responsible for ensuring that the Hampstead Heath charity fulfils its charitable purpose, which is the "preservation of Hampstead Heath for the recreation and enjoyment of the public". Upon approval and implementation, the management plans will assist the trustee in discharging this duty in accordance with the charity's objectives.

Risk implications

11. Risks are identified, regularly reviewed, and managed through the Hampstead Heath Risk Register

Equalities implications

12. The Heath Vision describes an inclusive and safe space that brings people together, where a diversity of people, activities and perspectives are welcomed and respected. One of the four Strategic Outcomes states: "The Heath is inclusive and welcoming to a diverse range of visitors."

Climate implications

13. The Strategy was developed in consideration of the City Corporation's Climate Action Strategy.

Security implications

14. Risks are identified, regularly reviewed, and managed through the Hampstead Heath Risk Register

Conclusion

15. The Hampstead Heath Management Strategy (2018-2028) has been reviewed at its midpoint as planned, in consultation as noted herein. The Strategy is now in near-final form, and authority is sought for the Superintendent, in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chair, to finalise and publish the document.

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Hampstead Heath Management Strategy (2019-2018) following midpoint review
- Appendix 2 (via hyperlink): City of London Corporation Corporate Plan (2024-2029)
 - [Our Corporate Plan 2024-29 - City of London](#)
- Appendix 3 (via hyperlink): Natural Environment strategies (2024-2029)
 - [Natural Environment - City of London](#)
- Appendix 4 (via hyperlink): Hampstead Heath Management Strategy (2018-2028)
 - [Hampstead Heath Management Strategy](#)

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Hampstead Heath

Registered Charity



Management Strategy

The City of London protects and manages 14 green spaces in and around London.

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Foreword

Managing Hampstead Heath is all about finding a balance between the enjoyment of visitors and the conservation of the Heath. As well as finding a balance between the varied, and sometimes contradictory, needs

of different user groups, activities, experiences and impacts.

Meeting this challenge is not about changing everything we do. It is about building on the good work of the past ten years and about working together to achieve our goals. This ten-year Strategy for Hampstead Heath will guide us through this important work.

This document forms the interim review of the ten year management strategy.

The Strategy will be subject to a full revision in 2028.

Underpinning this Strategy is the Heath Vision, which sets out our shared aspirations for the future of the Heath.

This Strategy has been the result of much collaboration. It is thanks to the commitment and passion of the many people who shared their ideas, time, aspirations and love for the Heath that this Strategy has been produced. The Strategy represents the views and aspirations of the many organisations, staff and local people who love and care for the Heath. It is our Strategy which will guide the City of London Corporation and its work with the community safely into the future.

This Strategy is built on the foundation of the Hampstead Heath Management Plan Part 1 – Towards a plan for the Heath 2007-2017, together with its supporting discussion papers and policy documents. It builds on the comprehensive narrative, objectives, actions and aspirational goals that are expressed and updates them to reflect the Heath Vision and the new Management Framework.

Since the publication of the ten year strategy in 2018, the Heath has seen two significant milestones; 30 years of the City of London Corporation caring for Hampstead Heath in 2019 and 150 years since the foundation legislation, the Hampstead Heath Act 1871, which protected the Heath as a public open space.

The Covid pandemic has also changed our perception and understanding of the value of parks and open spaces to the health and well being of local people. More and more people now regularly enjoy the benefits of the Heath, which brings with it added pressure and challenges to conserve and enhance its natural fabric.

The City of London Corporation is proud to be the custodian of this remarkable open space, and to work with our partners and the wider Heath community to realise the Heath Vision.

William Upton, KC CC Chairman of Hampstead Heath,
Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee

Executive Summary

This Strategy states our commitment to realising the aspirations of the Heath Vision to protect and conserve Hampstead Heath to ensure it continues to enrich the lives of current and future generations.

The Hampstead Heath Act 1871, and London Government Reorganisation (Hampstead Heath) Order 1989, provide the primary legislation guiding the City Corporation's management of Hampstead Heath.

The Strategy aligns with the City of London Corporation's Corporate Plan (2024-29) and contributes, in particular, to achieving the corporate outcomes to contribute to flourishing open spaces, a leading sustainable environment, diverse engaged communities, and providing excellent services.

Since the issue of the Strategy in 2018, the City Corporation has also published a Climate Action Strategy (2020-2027), as well as four Natural Environment Strategies addressing Nature Conservation and Resilience, Access and Recreation, Community Engagement, and Culture Heritage and Learning. This review seeks to align the Strategy with these updated and new plans and strategies, while recognising the primacy of this Strategy in guiding management of the Heath.

The Covid pandemic highlighted the importance of open spaces to local people. This review reflects our increasing understanding of the importance of the Heath to the health and well-being of people. It also recognises the importance of the Heath as part of the emerging London-wide Local Nature Recovery Strategy and adaption to climate change, often referred to as

climate resilience.

The review was also carried out in the context of a corporate review of the challenges facing our Natural Environment Charities to be completed in 2025. A key objective of the review is to examine opportunities to enable the charities to become more financially independent and provide a more secure and sustainable funding model for the future.

The Heath Strategy sets out four strategic Outcomes and ten Priorities which will guide its management and ensure we stay on track over its ten-year span. The strategic outcomes are:

- The Heath is maintained as a flourishing green space and historic landscape by balancing visitor activities and conservation of its natural, built and cultural heritage.
- Improved quality of life for Heath users, facilitated by improved physical health and improved mental health and well-being.
- Improved social inclusion through provision of spaces, facilities and activities that are accessible to more diverse users.
- Responsible management is achieved through a culture of shared custodianship, responsibility and collaboration.

This Strategy provides our framework for managing the Heath and uses an outcomes-based approach to define the future state we aspire to achieve. Identifying measures for success will enable us to monitor progress and stay on track to realise our long-term goals,

as expressed in
the Heath Vision.

Summary of the Hampstead Heath Management Strategy 2018 -2028

THEME	We protect and conserve the Heath	The Heath enriches our lives	The Heath is inclusive and welcoming	Together we care for the Heath
CORPORATE PLAN	Leading Sustainable Environment Flourishing Public Spaces	Flourishing Public Spaces Diverse engaged Communities	Diverse engaged Communities	Providing Excellent Services Flourishing Public Spaces
NATURAL ENVIRONMENT STRATEGIES	Nature Conservation and Resilience Culture Heritage and Learning	Community Engagement Culture Heritage and Learning Access and Recreation	Access and Recreation Community Engagement	Nature Conservation and Resilience Community Engagement
OUTCOME	The Heath is maintained as a flourishing biodiverse, green space and historic landscape	Improved quality of life for Heath visitors	The Heath is inclusive and welcoming to a diverse range of visitors	Greater number and diversity of people taking care of the Heath
PRIORITY	<p>PRIORITY 1: A mosaic of natural habitats is maintained and flourishes</p> <p>PRIORITY 2: Heritage aspects and landscape character are maintained</p> <p>PRIORITY 3: A balance is maintained between visitor activities and the conservation of natural, built and heritage values</p>	<p>PRIORITY 4: Improved physical health, mental health and emotional well-being</p>	<p>PRIORITY 5: Increasing social inclusion</p> <p>PRIORITY 6: Diversity and equality</p>	<p>PRIORITY 7: Increased sense of collective ownership and personal responsibility</p> <p>PRIORITY 8: Visitor behaviour is pro-environmental</p> <p>PRIORITY 9: People treat the Heath and other visitors with respect</p> <p>PRIORITY 10: Responsible Management</p>

Heath Vision

The City Corporation welcomes and values its role as custodian of the Heath. We place great importance on its stewardship for current and future generations.

Extensive community engagement as part of the development of the Strategy in 2018 informed the Heath Vision which sets the direction for this Strategy.

The Heath Vision sets out shared community aspirations for the Heath 50 years into the future, expressed in four broad themes:

- **We protect and conserve the Heath**
- **The Heath enriches lives**
- **The Heath is inclusive and welcoming**
- **Together we care for the Heath.**

Everything we do contributes towards the realisation of the Heath Vision in the long term. The Outcomes and Priorities in this Strategy set out the focus for our efforts over the next ten years.

Achieving a balance between these four themes is critical to delivery of our vision. Since publication of this Strategy in 2018, our understanding of how the Heath contributes to health and well-being, biodiversity and nature recovery, carbon sequestration, flood risk management, and climate resilience has increased. We also have a clearer direction on how this contribution could be enhanced, providing a firm foundation to the Outcomes and Priorities set out in this Interim Review.

We protect and conserve the Heath

Our lives are enriched by this treasured and ancient landscape, a stretch of rolling countryside and wide vistas in this crowded city.

The Heath's varied landscape has been shaped by human hands over centuries and is carefully managed to conserve and enhance its unique mix of wild and natural spaces, rich mosaic of habitats, landscape and built heritage, sporting, play and visitor facilities.

Its magical ponds, trees and heathland that support diverse plants and wildlife thrive, flourish and remain resilient to changes over time.

The fringes of the Heath are protected from encroaching urbanisation with expanding green corridors linking to a wider network of open spaces to enhance biodiversity and improve the air we breathe.

The Heath is valued as a relaxing respite from urban life, a peaceful and tranquil refuge for reflection and recharging, where we can connect to nature and feel refreshed.

The Heath enriches our lives

The Heath contributes immensely to our mental, emotional and physical health and well-being, providing free access to roam in the outdoors, to pause and observe, to play, to explore, discover and learn about the natural world.

Connection with the Heath is life-enhancing and our lives are healthier and more active with opportunities for walking, informal recreation, active pursuits, swimming and sports. Our learning programme focusses on engagement and creating an emotional connection with the Heath, as well enhancing understanding and knowledge.

Experiencing the Heath's rich natural, built and cultural heritage deepens our understanding of our connection with nature, place and the past.

The Heath represents a constant through time, witnessing generations upon generations growing up and growing old, a place of cherished memories, rites of passage, the source of stories, and the family friend.

The Heath is inclusive and welcoming

The Heath is an inclusive, open access space that brings people together and fosters social cohesion. It provides access to a huge range of sports for all ages, genders and communities. It is a safe space with freedom for all to play, socialise, relax and keep active with minimal restrictions. Diverse communities are reflected in our visitors, staff and volunteers. Engagement is ongoing and perspectives, both old and new, are welcomed, shared and respected.

A diversity of activities and interest groups are welcomed. A balance for all is achieved through a culture of mutual respect, compromise and individual responsibility. The Covid pandemic placed pressures on the Heath, in particular the damage to habitats; mainly a consequence of increased visitor numbers and the need for social distancing. This interim review seeks to strike a balance between encouraging access for as many people as possible and conservation of natural and heritage assets.

Together we care for the Heath

We are all custodians of the Heath and we strive to 'tread lightly', mindful of the potential impact of our activities. We learn from each other and collaborate to find a balance, ensuring the needs of the Heath community are valued and reflected. We entrust a skilled and committed City Corporation team to lead a collaborative partnership with dedicated and valued volunteers, working with an empowered and representative Heath community. United in our passion and love for Hampstead Heath we work together to realise our shared aspirations.

The Greater London Authority (GLA) is currently preparing a London wide Local Nature Recovery Strategy. We will work with the GLA and other partners to ensure the Heath continues to contribute to nature recovery across London as part of a linked biodiversity network.

Information about Hampstead Heath

Hampstead Heath is a 275-hectare open space. The City Corporation became the custodian of Hampstead Heath in 1989, following the abolition of the Greater London Council in 1986. The Heath is a registered charity (No. 803392) and relies on substantial funding from the City Corporation, along with revenue generated through services, various grants, and donations. The City Corporation is the sole trustee of the charity. The objective of the charity is the preservation of Hampstead Heath for the recreation and enjoyment of the public.

An island of beautiful countryside, the magic of Hampstead Heath lies in its rich wildlife and extensive sports, learning, play and recreational opportunities, and in its proximity and accessibility to millions of people.

Hampstead Heath's mosaic of habitats includes woodland, grassland, scrub, remnant heath and open water, providing a valuable resource for wildlife just six kilometres from the centre of London. It is of national as well as regional importance. The City Corporation aims to maintain and extend the Heath's status as a key habitat for London's wildlife. Hampstead Heath is home to a number of priority species identified in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan, including kingfishers, grass snakes and hedgehogs.

The Heath is
275
Hectares

that's



it is just



and contains...

Biodiversity

Over 30 species of butterfly have been recorded on the Heath, with first records of White admiral in 2021 and Brown hairstreak in 2024. We created a new butterfly meadow in 2023.

We also have records for around 500 moth and 400 species of beetle.

Over 650 species of fungi have been recorded on the Heath.

26 bat boxes were in use in 2023.

20 species of damsel and dragonflies call the Heath home, with 16 breeding species recorded. These include four new species records of Willow Emerald in 2018, Hairy dragonfly in 2023, and Lesser emperor and Norfolk hawkler 2024

Over 100 bird species recorded annually, with around 50 breeding species. Breeding buzzards were recorded on the Heath in 2021, the first time in over 100 years, and breeding Kingfishers were recorded for the first time in 2024.

Natural and Built Heritage

There are 16 Registered and Listed Heritage Assets on the Heath, including the Tumulus, a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

40 distinct ponds and waterbodies are managed, and associated wetlands support a host of breeding amphibians, invertebrate and bird species.

There are 450 ancient and veteran trees across the Heath.

Our recent Natural Capital Assessment indicates that for every £1 spent on management across the Heath, there is an estimated £8.40 return in Natural Capital Benefits. This value is attributed to the contribution of the Heath to cultural services, recreation and health, air pollution regulation, amenity value and carbon sequestration.

Park Users and Activities

Since 2018, the number of swims at our Lido and three ponds has tripled from 200,000 in 2020/21 to just under 620,000 in 2023/2024

In 2018, 11,618 Volunteer Hours were delivered by Heath Hands alone. This has increased to 15,750 in 2023/24. In a typical year over 4,200 volunteer hours help to facilitate and make possible athletics events.

Visitor survey data demonstrates that there was a dramatic spike in visitor numbers in the summer of 2020 following lockdown, with numbers increasing by almost one third. Current data shows that visitor numbers are now similar to pre-Covid numbers.

In 2018, 7,762 children engaged in learning activities on the Heath. This has increased to 10,706 in 2023/24, with a further 20,345 engaged in play and 270 in Youth activities.

In a typical year there are over 40,000 participations in organised athletics, and the membership of Highgate Harriers has grown by 24% since 2018. Highgate Harriers, a registered charity, has been based at Parliament Hill Athletics Track since the running

track was first laid in 1939 and is the anchor tenant.

About this Strategy

The purpose of this Strategy is to ensure the aspirations of the **Heath Vision** are embedded in our work at all levels. This Strategy is at the forefront of a Management Framework designed to ensure effective prioritisation, implementation, learning and continuous improvement.

The first part of the Management framework is this 10-year **Strategy**. This has provided an opportunity to step back from the day-to-day running of the Heath and take a strategic and longer-term view. It is a chance to identify opportunities and challenges that might otherwise get lost amidst the pressures of managing one of the country's busiest open spaces.

The annual **Environment Department Business Plans** provide the overarching high-level plan for the Natural Environment Division.

This Departmental Plan informs the annual Natural Environment site specific **Business Plans**, which provide an overview of the key capital and management projects to be delivered annually.

The **Annual Work Programme** and other delivery-level documents, including Compartment Management Plans and the City Surveyor's Department Cyclical Work Programme, set out cyclical tasks that are planned and delivered on an annual or seasonal basis.

The Management Framework for Hampstead Heath sits within the wider City of London Corporation structure. The **Golden Thread** directly links the Outcomes in this Strategy to the City of London Corporation's Corporate Plan, the Natural Environment Strategies, and the annual Business Plans.

The Corporate Plan sets out the Strategic Outcomes to be delivered across the organisation over the period covered by the Plan and is a tool to guide thinking, planning, decision-making and evaluation across the City Corporation. The Environment Department and Natural Environment Division Strategies and Business Plans draw upon the outcomes of the Corporate Plan and provide links to show which outcomes in the Corporate Plan they are helping to achieve.

How this Strategy will be used

This Strategy sits at the head of the Management Framework to guide our thinking and decision-making, as well as helping to ensure that everything we do takes us closer to achieving the Heath Vision.

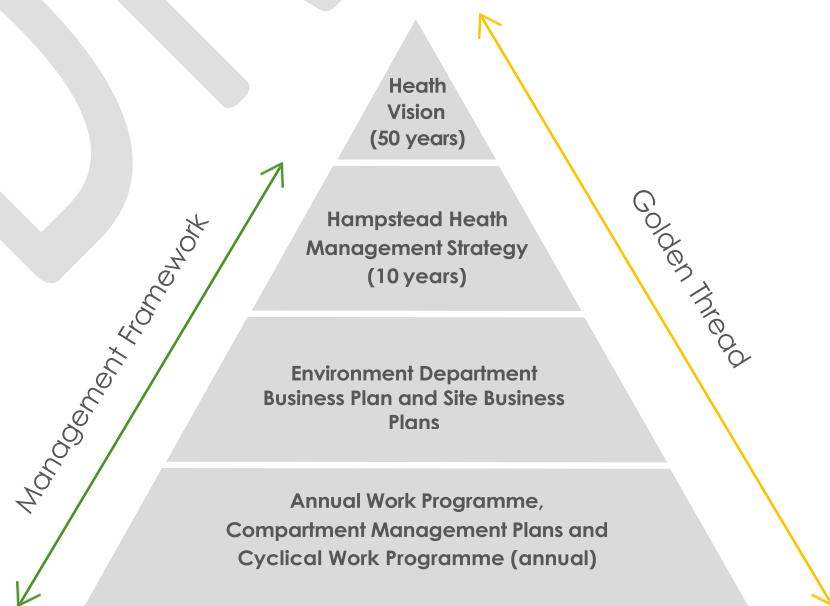
Whilst the overarching strategic direction may not change, embedding this Strategy at the top of the Management Framework will enable implementation to vary in response to change. The detailed information about how each part of this Strategy will be implemented, including priority projects, work streams, resources, policies and guidelines, is contained in the Departmental and Site Business Plans, and associated Annual Work Programmes.

The extent to which the Outcomes and Priorities in this Strategy can be realised has been and will continue to be dependent on the prioritisation

of resources and allocation of funding, and will also be responsive to the changing environmental, social and economic climate. This interim review updates these outcomes and priorities to ensure we are well placed to face these challenges over the remaining years of the Strategy.

The Strategy sets out the Priorities which will guide day-to-day decision making. There will be situations where conflicting needs and activities arise, and an assessment will need to be made about what is prioritised. All of the four Outcomes are important and must be carefully considered when deciding how to act to achieve the greatest impact.

Management Framework for Hampstead Heath



Realising the Heath Vision

Drawing on the Heath Vision, the benefits that arise from the Heath can be expressed as four Outcomes, which will shape the management of the Heath over the remaining years of this strategy and beyond. These four Outcomes continue to reflect our aspirations and priorities for the conservation and management of the Heath. Assessing our progress against these Outcomes will help us to understand how well we are progressing towards achieving the Vision.

The aspirations of the Heath Vision are shared by the community and the City Corporation and express a sense of shared stewardship and of caring for the Heath together. This Strategy sets out the City Corporation's priorities for the next ten years and our commitment, as custodian of the Heath, to realising the Vision.

We will plan our work to ensure it contributes to achieving each of the four Vision Themes and corresponding Outcomes, as set out below.

Heath Vision Theme	Strategic Outcomes
We protect and conserve the Heath 	A: The Heath is maintained as a flourishing biodiverse green space and historic landscape
The Heath enriches lives 	B: Improved quality of life for Heath visitors
The Heath is inclusive and welcoming 	C: The Heath is inclusive and welcoming to a diverse range of visitors
Together we care for the Heath 	D: Greater number and diversity of people taking care of the Heath

Achieving these Outcomes will depend on a range of enabling factors being in place, including the engagement of staff, volunteers and visitors to the Heath, as well as sufficient resources and skills to deliver activities and projects.

Where are we now?

This section of the Strategy sets out the progress that has been made since publication of the strategy in 2018 and the emerging challenges in the delivery of our vision for the Heath.

Strategic Policy Context

The Strategic and Policy Context which underpins the Hampstead Heath Management Strategy has changed.

The City of London Corporation (Open Spaces) Act 2018 was enacted in the same year as the publication of this Strategy.

In 2024, the City Corporation published its Corporate Plan for the period 2024 to 2029. The Corporate Plan is a framework containing six strategic outcomes, which will be embedded at all levels of work and will be the 'golden thread' across the organisation.



The inclusion of a specific outcome relating to Flourishing Public Spaces emphasises the importance attached to these areas to delivery of the wider strategic aims of the City Corporation.

The City Corporation's Climate Action Strategy, published in 2023, sets out climate action commitments within the Square Mile and across all the City Corporation's wider assets, including open spaces. These include

- Net zero by 2027 in the City Corporation's operations
- Net zero by 2040 across the City Corporation's full value chain
- Net zero by 2040 in the Square Mile

- Climate resilience in our buildings, public spaces and infrastructure

Among the key areas for investment, the Climate Action Strategy highlights areas which are of particular relevance to the management of open spaces:

- Enhancing carbon removal in our open spaces
- Protecting our shared natural resources
- Integrating climate considerations into all our decisions

The City Corporation's parks and open spaces are central to the delivery of net zero by 2027. They are estimated to currently remove 16,000 tonnes of CO2 per year. This is equivalent to 40% of the City Corporation's scope 1 and 2 emissions. Colleagues in the Natural Environment Division are assessing how the Heath can better contribute to carbon sequestration and climate resilience.

In 2023, the City Corporation commissioned a Baseline Natural Capital Assessment of parks and open spaces. The report demonstrates the enormous contribution the Heath makes to carbon sequestration and storage, air purification, local climate regulation and flood risk management. The report also identifies measures which could be undertaken to improve this contribution. With specific regard to the Heath, the Assessment concludes:

The overall net natural capital value of the site is £1.3 billion over 50 years, and for every £1 spent on maintaining the natural capital at the site there is a £8.4 return in benefits. This high value is driven by the cultural services, recreation and health (£34.8 million and £13.5 million annually), air pollution regulation (£2.1 million annually), the amenity value (accessibility to green space and views provided by the site (£420,000 annually)), and the ability of the site to sequester carbon (£280,000 annually)".

The four Natural Environment Strategies, released in 2024, set out the City Corporation's strategic approach to its managed open spaces, assets and activities. This is described in four strategy documents:



The Strategies describe our objectives for the natural environment and the measures by which we will assess our performance against those objectives.

This Interim Review has been prepared against the background of a Corporate Review of the Natural Environment Charities, which is anticipated to be reported on at the end of 2025. This Interim review seeks to retain the aspirations and ambition of the original ten year strategy, but recognises that the Charities Review will have implications for the governance and administration of the Heath and other City Corporation parks and open spaces. The Terms of Reference for the Charities Review recognises the substantial contribution of the Heath and other parks and open spaces to delivery of the Corporate Plan and other strategies. A key objective of the review is to look at opportunities to enable the charities to become more financially independent and provide a more secure and sustainable funding model for the future.

Our understanding of the Heath

Nobody could have foreseen the changes to our lives as a consequence of the Covid pandemic. As we emerged from lockdown we flocked to our open spaces. The Heath experienced not only a sharp increase in visitor numbers, but also changes in behaviour caused by the need for social distancing. This placed enormous pressures on the path network around the Heath and the habitats we seek to protect and manage.

We have also seen a substantial increase in activities such as cold water swimming, with numbers using our ponds and the lido almost tripling in the last five years. Since 2018, we have improved access, security and WiFi at all of our bathing ponds. The Heath continues to provide access to an enormous range of organised and informal sports and recreational activities

We have seen participation in organised athletics increase by close to 30%, in addition to the many informal joggers and other exercise activities on the Heath. Informed by the consultation with staff and members of the Heath Working Group and Consultative Committee that accompanied this interim review, this Interim Review seeks to reinforce the importance of the Heath for organised and informal sport. The renovation of the athletics track has been completed and the City Corporation is developing a Leisure Management System to streamline bookings across all its open spaces and facilities, beginning with its popular swimming facilities.

Our volunteer resource, community engagement programmes, and learning and well-being activities have gone from strength to strength in partnership with Heath Hands and the Natural Environment Division's Learning Team.

We now have a better understanding of the biodiversity value of the Heath through recent surveys, monitoring and management. This includes our ponds and wetlands, with the development of a Conservation Plan in 2021, which is now informing the management of these areas. We are also working with partners in the London Boroughs of Camden and Barnet and the Environment Agency to understand how the Heath can contribute further to flood risk mitigation in the surrounding areas.

This review also reflects the greater emphasis on 'bigger, better and joined up' wildlife rich places as part of the UK Nature Recovery Network initiative, launched in 2020, and the emerging GLA Local Natural Recovery Strategy.

We also have more accurate information on visitor numbers across the Heath, increasing our understanding of seasonal change and where visitor numbers are concentrated.

Hampstead Heath includes the English Heritage-managed property at Kenwood House, with other significant sites such as Highgate Wood and Highgate Cemetery less than 1 kilometre away. We have completed an audit of the built and cultural heritage assets across the Heath and are now developing Conservation Management Plans and priority action plans with our colleagues in the City Surveyor's Department.

The 2023 Parliament Hill Consultation attracted 382 responses in relation to six initiatives. The responses did not favour one particular project, but did emphasise the understanding of the need for balance between conserving the special qualities of the Heath, whilst supporting sports, play and recreation.

Our approach to the stewardship of the Heath continues to be endorsed through the Green Flag and Green Heritage Award schemes, and the annual feedback from these visits continues to inform our approach.

Over the next four years, we anticipate projects such as the restoration of the Hill Garden Pergola and the transition of Golders Hill Park Zoo to a collection based on UK native and introduced species come forward. We will also see the completion of our work to improve access, security and WiFi at our three bathing ponds. We will also continue our work with the London Boroughs of Camden and Barnet and the Environment Agency to explore how the Heath can contribute further to flood alleviation in the surrounding residential areas.

What we aim to achieve in the next four years

This Interim Review has been prepared in collaboration with stakeholders and partners. It reports on the progress and updates delivery of the ten strategic Priorities and the associated Commitments, which we aim to achieve over the ten years covered by the Strategy.



Theme: We protect and conserve the Heath

At the heart of the Heath Vision is a conviction that the natural qualities of the Heath are its richest asset.

The Heath must be conserved to ensure the lives of current and future generations may continue to

be enriched by it. The Heath Vision describes the Heath's varied landscape as having been shaped by

human hands over centuries. It emphasises careful management to conserve and enhance its unique mix of wild and natural spaces, rich mosaic of habitats, heritage, gardens, sporting, play and visitor facilities. Maintaining the balance between visitor access and enjoyment and the conservation of the Heath's natural assets and qualities will continue to underpin our approach. In short, to ensure its rich mosaic of habitats continues to thrive and flourish, remaining resilient to changes over time.

Outcome A :

The Heath is maintained as a flourishing biodiverse green space and historic landscape

Striking a balance between enabling access for visitors to experience the many ways that the Heath enriches lives, alongside the conservation of its natural, built and cultural heritage, hinges on an integrated and multi-faceted approach. We continue to monitor change in habitats and species across the Heath. In the first five years of this Strategy, Covid brought new challenges to the well-established and effective conservation focus of the past ten or more years. We are working to restore this balance through proactive management and educating and engaging our visitors, to build the shared sense of responsibility and collective care for the Heath.

Priority 1:

A mosaic of natural habitats is maintained and flourishes

Effective ecological management by staff working with volunteers and partners will ensure habitats are biodiverse, and that their conservation value continues to be sustained and enhanced. Combining traditional and innovative conservation activities to manage natural ecological processes is essential to maintain the mosaic of diverse habitats. This includes active control of woodland succession and the corresponding reduction in heathland and meadow that has occurred over the past century. Monitoring and proactively managing other threatening processes associated with increasing visitor numbers, invasive species, pests and diseases and the impacts of a changing climate will build resilience to future challenges. We will continue to enhance habitat connectivity by looking beyond the Heath to realise its significance as an integral part of the wider Local Nature Recovery and green space network.

We will focus on ensuring:

The extent of each broad habitat type is maintained at current levels.

Nature conservation and biodiversity value are enhanced.

Habitats are thriving and resilient to change.

Commitment

To achieve this, we will:

- Continue proactive management of natural habitats and proportionate interventions, to maintain the distribution of habitat types informed by surveys, and monitoring in collaboration with partner organisations.
- Conserve and manage habitats to enhance biodiversity, resilience and capacity to support diverse plants and wildlife.
- Explore opportunities to re-establish traditional management techniques such as conservation grazing.
- Develop a long-term plan for the protection and succession of our veteran and ancient trees. This plan is in preparation with anticipated publication in 2025.
- Enhance connectivity of areas of conservation value, both on the Heath and beyond its borders, as part of the emerging GLA Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
- Proactively monitor and manage threatening processes to mitigate their impact, including invasive species, pests and disease, pollutants and impacts of climate change.
- Continue to work with partners to improve the contribution of the Heath to flood risk management in the surrounding residential areas.

Priority 2:

Heritage aspects and landscape character are maintained

The varied and open character of the Heath landscape is a function of its underlying geology and topography, overlaid with centuries of human intervention, resulting in distinctive views and vistas, both from and towards the Heath. There is a strong social and cultural heritage associated with many parts of the Heath, such as the history of open water swimming in our ponds. The interplay between the landscape character, archaeological remnants and historical features, and the wider London context, is unique. A proactive approach to identifying and recording the Heath's heritage and archaeology will ensure the distinctive history of the Heath continues to be conserved. Co-operation among the local community and partner organisations to protect fringes from encroaching urbanisation will ensure this signature landscape character is valued and conserved. Connecting to the Heath landscape is an important aspect of mental health and well-being and enriching lives (as set out in Priority 4).

We will focus on ensuring:

Historic assets are conserved, and sensitive areas are protected from impacts.

Landscape character is maintained.

Encroachment and detrimental development are resisted.

Commitment

To achieve this, we will:

- Protect areas of high conservation value and develop conservation objectives for historic features, in order to inform their management and interpretation.
- Develop a plan to restore the Hill Garden Pergola.
- Ensure priority views and vistas of historic and cultural value are managed.
- Engage with local planning processes to monitor potential impacts of development proposals on the Heath's natural assets and qualities and where appropriate consider management approaches and appropriate mitigation.
- Proactively participate in local planning processes to resist development that would be detrimental to the landscape character, ecology and hydrology of Hampstead Heath and its environs.
- Safeguard the Heath boundary by managing wayleaves, licences and covenants and work with partners to secure strategic land acquisitions.

Priority 3:

A balance is maintained between visitor activities and the conservation of natural, built and heritage values

Our strategy is underpinned by an integrated approach working with partners and proactively engaging with visitors and user groups to manage the potential impacts of their activities, and protecting sensitive sites and values from adverse impacts. The Covid pandemic and subsequent increase in footfall placed unprecedented pressures on the Heath. It is anticipated that planned residential and urban renewal projects in the surrounding Boroughs will also increase visitor numbers. There is also increased demand for events and activities, which while providing benefits to visitors and potential income generation may have consequent adverse effects on the natural and built heritage features which attract so many visitors to the Heath. The legislative and statutory powers, including those under the Open Spaces Act 2018, will be used to guide and regulate organised and commercial activities. We will also continue to work with visitors to ensure there is greater understanding of the pressures on the Heath to promote a collective responsibility for its care, and to aid our ability to maintain a flourishing natural space despite the increasing pressures from a growing population. Our plans to progressively move our Zoo collection towards native UK and introduced species and their relationship with the Heath will provide opportunities to illustrate these processes.

We will focus on ensuring:

Levels of organised activity are supported but also managed and controlled.

Visitor and other impacts are mitigated, and sensitive areas and values are protected.

A collaborative approach to monitoring activity levels, impacts and the effectiveness of mitigation.

Commitment

To achieve this, we will:

- Establish a system of management zones across the Heath that sets out conservation objectives and defines areas or sites containing values that may be vulnerable to impacts, by developing the current system of Compartment Management Plans.
- Develop and implement policies set out in this management Strategy to guide the effective management of organised activities.
- Proactively engage with visitors and interest groups to develop a culture of collective care for the Heath.
- Embed monitoring, insight and continuous improvement into the design and delivery of visitor services.
- Improve our information, interpretation and signage about conservation and management through discreet interventions across the Heath and through visitor engagement activities.
- Continue to monitor events and activities in line with the agreed events policy and their impact on the Heath to maintain a balance between conservation and activities and to

control the impact of events on the natural and built heritage value of the Heath.

- Enforce the Commercial Dog Licensing Requirements and Dog Walking Code of Conduct, and the Heath By Laws.
- Move towards a more sustainable Soo collection which reflects wildlife in Britain and current and historic relationships with the Heath.



Theme: The Heath enriches lives

The Heath contributes immensely to our mental, emotional and physical health and well-being, providing free access to roam in the outdoors, to pause and observe, play, explore, discover and learn about the natural world. It is also a major destination for outdoor sports and recreation, supporting active, healthy lifestyles. Experiencing its rich natural, built and cultural heritage is life-enhancing, contributing to improved mental, emotional and physical health and well-being.

Outcome B : Improved quality of life for Heath visitors

Quality of life for visitors to the Heath is enhanced through improvements to physical health, mental well-being and reduced social isolation, outcomes that are mutually supportive. Many aspects of well-being are achieved by maintaining a variety of experiences and activities, which appeal to a range of people; both formal and organised sporting pursuits and informal or passive recreation. We have seen substantial increases in those engaged in swimming, athletics and other organised and informal sports. The sense of space, wildness and heritage of the Heath encourages adventure, relaxation and connection with other visitors. Reducing social isolation, increasing diversity and promoting social inclusion are key elements of improving mental health and emotional well-being, and are addressed in the following section (Outcome C).

The benefits of maintaining a variety of opportunities for sports, physical and other activities to enhance health and well-being need to be balanced with impacts on the ecology, heritage and tranquillity of the Heath. Consequently, monitoring the level, type and impact of these activities is important, as set out in Priority 3.

Priority 4:

Improved physical health, mental health and emotional well-being

We will focus on ensuring:

The range and quality of experiences and opportunities on Hampstead Heath encourages increased participation in outdoor recreational activities and sports on the Heath.

An increased connection to nature and seasonality, heritage and place.

The Heath provides access to an extraordinary range of sports, both organised and informal. For many, it is the combination of the activity, be it walking, jogging, cycling, team sports or swimming, with the outdoor environment which contributes to the attraction of the Heath for sport and recreation and the associated benefits to physical, mental health and emotional well being.

Commitment

To achieve this, we will:

- Ensure sports and recreational facilities undergo regular review and are refurbished and maintained in partnership with the City Surveyor's Department.
- Work with local partners, including users groups and the London Boroughs of Camden and Barnet and national bodies such as Sport England, to sustain a range of experiences, activities and sports that offer broad appeal to a wide range of people and maintain the quality of our sports facilities and the range of sports offered.
- Support the many clubs, organisations and user groups, most of which rely heavily on volunteers, to ensure increased participation and remove barriers to engagement in sports and recreation.
- Embed our goal to increase active outdoor participation into everything we do, (for example, in the design of facilities, services and activities, including the events programme, learning programme, nature conservation, volunteering, operational services, information and communication).
- Improve access and opportunities to engage in sport through introduction of a central Leisure Management System for bookings and information for sports and other activities.
- Continue to develop and expand our Learning, Heritage and Volunteer programmes, emphasising the importance of an emotional connection with the Heath and the benefits to health and well-being which come from spending time with nature, as well as enhancing knowledge and understanding.
- Sustain and enhance access for a diverse range of users to enjoy peaceful and tranquil experiences on the Heath, and to connect with nature, heritage and place, ensuring barriers to participation are identified and minimised



Theme: The Heath is inclusive and welcoming

The Heath Vision describes an inclusive and safe space that brings people together, where a diversity of people, activities and perspectives are welcomed and respected.

Outcome C:

The Heath is inclusive and welcoming to a diverse range of visitors

Priority 5:

Increasing social inclusion

Social inclusion depends on increasing the diversity of Heath visitors, and also on people interacting with each other. This is likely to flow from people feeling informed and confident about visiting and participating in activities on the Heath. Combined with a sense that the Heath is welcoming, this will lead to people feeling safe on the Heath and foster a sense of belonging. Communication, education and outreach, working with a range of partners, schools and local organisations, will mean more people have the knowledge and confidence to visit the Heath.

To increase the contribution the Heath makes to social inclusion, we will focus on ensuring:

People feel welcome and safe.

People know about the Heath, what is on offer and how to take part.

A greater range of people feel confident about visiting the Heath.

Commitment

To achieve this, we will:

- Develop information, communication and engagement activities to optimise accessibility for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.
- Collaborate with partners to ensure visitor information addresses perceived barriers to visiting the Heath
- Improve access to information on the Heath and online about opportunities to engage in volunteering or other activities.
- Encourage staff, volunteers and partners to be 'ambassadors' who are visible, ready to assist, and share their knowledge and love of the Heath.
- Ensure facilities and activities are welcoming, accessible to all, affordable and promote inclusion.

Priority 6:

Diversity and equality

As well as ensuring activities appeal to a broad range of people, the Heath needs to be physically and financially accessible to a wide range of visitors. To achieve this, we need to build our knowledge of the 'Heath community' – to understand who does and does not visit the Heath, and why. This insight will enable us to identify barriers, both real and perceived, and then develop ways to address these, optimising opportunities for the Heath to enrich the lives of a diverse and changing community.

We will focus on:

Creating accessible environments for a more diverse range of visitors by removing barriers that may exist for different groups who experience more exclusion or disadvantage than others.

Commitment

To achieve this, we will:

- Proactively seek insights into the needs of Heath visitors, including the barriers affecting different groups.
- Ensure visitor facilities and the range of Heath experiences are accessible and relevant to a diverse range of users.
- Monitor visitor needs to ensure Heath services and activities are financially inclusive.
- Use visitor survey information and other data, such as volunteer surveys and data on the use of facilities and activities, to inform our management and to explore opportunities to remove barriers and encourage visitors from underrepresented groups and areas.
- Ensure our learning and volunteering programmes continue to promote outreach across communities with opportunities for engagement for all.
- Continue to work with user groups to ensure facilities and our offer is affordable and attracts users across the social demographic.



Theme: Together we care for the Heath

The Heath Vision describes a place where everyone is a custodian of the Heath and strives to 'tread lightly', mindful of the potential impact of their activities. A site where the City Corporation leads a collaborative partnership with dedicated and valued volunteers, working with an empowered and representative Heath community. A place where people learn from each other and collaborate to find a balance, ensuring the needs of the Heath community are valued and reflected. United by our passion and love for Hampstead Heath, we must work together to realise our shared aspirations.

Outcome D :

Greater number and diversity of people taking care of the Heath

Priority 7:

Increased sense of collective ownership and personal responsibility

Hampstead Heath is founded on community activism and has a colourful history of public challenge and robust debate, from which strong partnerships were forged along with a sense of 'ownership'. Ensuring this 'community voice' is inclusive and remains representative of diverse stakeholders is critical to achieving the aspirations of the Heath Vision. Effective communication and improving access to information about management activities and ways to get involved is key to building a culture of shared custodianship. Volunteering is a wonderful example of how a culture of shared custodianship makes a huge impact to managing the Heath.

We will focus on:

Inclusive decision-making and collaborative working with partners to promote a collective ownership and responsibility through forums, provision of information, activities, events and diverse volunteering opportunities.

Commitment

To achieve this, we will:

- Embed transparency and effective engagement into the Management Framework

- and consultative processes, to ensure a continued dialogue with stakeholders.
- Enable participation by a diverse range of stakeholders.

- Work with partners, in particular Heath Hands, to develop diverse opportunities for volunteering, learning and community activities.
- Improve information provision and transparency to ensure the reasons behind decision making and the complexity of finding a balance are understood
- Collaborate with partners to ensure users understand the environmental sensitivity associated with activities on the Heath, and develop solutions to inform and promote behavioural change.

Priority 8:

Visitor behaviour is pro-environmental

Encouraging visitors to adopt pro-environmental attitudes towards the Heath requires outreach, together with educational activities and resources that inform people about the Heath environment and the actions that will protect it. This links closely to Priority 3, maintaining a balance between visitor activities and the conservation of natural, built and heritage assets. Success is largely dependent on visitors adopting responsible and considerate behaviours.

We will focus on:

- Improved visitor understanding of management activities and decisions.**
- Improved visitor knowledge of the Heath's environment and how to conserve it effectively.**

Commitment

To achieve this, we will:

- Deliver effective communication and engagement that ensures information is readily accessible and responsive, encouraging learning and understanding.
- Improve information available on the Heath and elsewhere through suitable and discreet interventions which do not detract from the tranquillity, character and value of the Heath.
- Build awareness and promote education about caring for the Heath into all communications and activities.
- Foster a 'tread-lightly' ethos, and partner with user and volunteer groups and local organisations to develop a culture of shared custodianship.

Priority 9:

People treat the Heath and other visitors with respect

Our staff, supported by the Hampstead Heath Constabulary, provide the public face of the Heath. In recent years (post-Covid), there has been an increase in antisocial behaviour and a lack of respect shown by a limited number of visitors towards staff and others engaged in the care of the Heath. The City Corporation has a duty to protect the welfare of staff. We will continue to work with partners to support our staff in the face of this and to engender a greater sense of responsibility amongst all those who visit the Heath.

We will focus on:

Ensuring a greater range of people feel a sense of 'everyone's Heath' – covering individuals and groups.

Commitment

To achieve this, we will:

- Model and share the aspirations of the Heath Vision for a 'Heath community' that is respectful and tolerant towards visitors, interest groups and partners.
- Engage effectively through the Hampstead Heath Constabulary, staff, volunteers and partners.
- Provide opportunities for a lasting connection with the Heath through volunteering, sponsorships, legacies and endowments.
- If necessary, work with the Metropolitan Police to ensure our staff and visitors feel safe and secure on the Heath.

Priority 10:

Responsible Management

To achieve our Outcomes, we must understand what we do well, while being open to trying new things and learning as we go. Working together as custodians of the Heath in order to pass it on to the next generation in as good, or better, condition. Continued collaboration with key partners, such as Heath Hands, and developing new partnerships is key to the success of this Strategy.

The way we work to implement this Strategy will be guided by the City Corporation's Corporate Plan and the wider policy and strategic framework, as it develops and adapts throughout the ten-year period. These ways of working can be grouped into three strands.

We will focus on:

- Effective partnerships & collaboration.**
- Environmental, financial & social responsibility.**
- Being future ready.**

Commitment

To achieve this, we will:

- Continue to build and grow positive relationships with stakeholders.
- Sustain existing partnerships and establish new connections to enable collaboration and optimise our impact.
- Strong governance, working within the legislative and policy framework, meeting our statutory obligations and upholding the Hampstead Heath byelaws.
- Ensure the health, safety and well-being of staff, volunteers and contractors, and the safeguarding of visitors.
- Create positive social and environmental value through responsible business practices.
- Provide environmental stewardship in the use of resources and associated emissions to provide a clean environment and drive down the negative effects of our own activities.
- Build resilience to natural and human threats by strengthening, protecting and adapting our infrastructure, directly and by influencing others.
- Continue to work with partner organisations to explore options for effective conservation management, such as working with the Heath & Hampstead Society on the experimental re-introduction of conservation grazing to Heath Extension, and the recent meadow enhancement in association with Heath Hands and Butterfly Conservation.

Learning and Improving

Implementation

The Management Framework has enabled a seamless transition from the 2007 Plan to the adoption of this Strategy, with priority projects identified in the Departmental and Divisional Business Plans and routine and cyclical management activities implemented via the Annual Work Programme.

The implementation of this Strategy continues to be overseen by the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee. The Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee comprises representatives from local organisations and amenity groups for the purposes of making representations to the overseeing Committee about any matter which, in the opinion of the Consultative Committee, affects or is likely to affect the Heath Lands.

Preparation of this review has been informed by a Working Group comprised of members of both committees, and in consultation with the Hampstead Heath Sports & Well-being Forum and City Corporation staff based on the Heath.

Annual updates of the Departmental and Site Business Plans will be undertaken. Resources will be allocated to priority projects informed by the Outcomes and Priorities in this Strategy and aligned with the City Corporation's business planning cycle.

The impact of the Covid pandemic demonstrates the need for us to be adaptable and learn what works, what our best contribution can be, who we can partner and collaborate with, and how we should adapt.

Whilst the Heath Vision and Priorities remain relevant, this mid-term review incorporates a number of modifications and new initiatives to be taken forward to the full review of the Strategy in 2028.

Monitoring

Monitoring and tracking progress towards achieving the Outcomes will help us to understand the impact of our work, and to share and celebrate its success.

We continue to monitor and report on progress towards the Outcomes and Priorities described in this Framework to the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee and the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queens Park Committee.

Learning and improving

Monitoring the changes or benefits that result from our activities provides insight and understanding of the effectiveness of our actions and where we can develop our work to make the biggest difference.

Evaluating effectiveness has enabled us to check our course and to make corrections in a timely manner, capturing learning and building in improvements as we go.

Communicating our impact

We prepare an annual Business Plan and Annual Work Programmes for the Heath, which set out the priorities to be focussed on each year and how these deliver against the Themes and Outcomes described in the City Corporation Strategies and in this Management Strategy.

List of appendices

1. Map of the Heath
2. Legislative Framework
3. Developing this Strategy - a timeline
4. Transitioning from the 2007 Plan to this Strategy

Links

- [Natural Environment Strategies \(2024-2029\)](#)
- [Corporate Plan \(2024-2029\)](#)
- [Climate Action Strategy \(2020-2027\)](#)

References

- [Hampstead Heath Management Strategy 2018-2028](#)
- [A Public Consultation on Improvements to the Parliament Hill Fields Area in July 2023](#)
- [2021 Conservation Plan for Ponds and Wetlands](#)
- [2007 Hampstead Heath Management Plan](#)
- [Community Consultation for the Heath Vision Report](#)
- [Outcomes framework and measurement table Report](#)

Appendix 1:

Map of the Heath

PONDS

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 Swan Pond | 10 Hampstead No 1 Pond |
| 2 Leg of Mutton Pond | 11 Wood Pond |
| 3 Lily Pond | 12 Thousand Pound Pond |
| 4 Seven Sisters Ponds | 13 Stock Pond |
| 5 Whitestone Pond | 14 Kenwood Ladies' Bathing Pond |
| 6 Vale of Health Pond | 15 Bird Sanctuary Pond |
| 7 Viaduct Pond | 16 Model Boating Pond |
| 8 Mixed Bathing Pond (No 3) | 17 Highgate Men's Bathing Pond |
| 9 Hampstead No 2 Pond | 18 Highgate No1 Pond |

MAP KEY

- | | | | |
|--|-----------------------|--|------------------------------|
| | Car park | | Gate |
| | Refreshments | | Made footpaths |
| | Toilet | | Unmade footpaths |
| | Recycling point | | Shared cycle/pedestrian path |
| | Office and Staff yard | | Horse rides |
| | Bowling green | | Horse rides (permit only) |
| | Cricket pitch | | English Heritage area |
| | Football pitch | | Dogs on lead |
| | Rugby pitch | | Dogs prohibited |
| | Tennis courts | | Woodland and scrub |
| | Play facilities | | Hedgerow |
| | Croquet | | Outstanding views |
| | Dogs on lead | | Bus Stop |
| | Dogs prohibited | | Railway station |
| | | | Tube station |
| | | | Swimming area |
| | | | Fishing area (see notices) |



Appendix 2:

Legislative Framework

The City of London Corporation has powers and duties under various Acts of Parliament to manage and protect Hampstead Heath as an open space, primarily transferred to them by the London Government Reorganisation (Hampstead Heath) Order 1989.

The foundation legislation is the Hampstead Heath Act 1871. Under this Act the City of London Corporation:

- Subject to the provisions of the Act, must forever keep the Heath open, unenclosed, and unbuilt on (subject to certain exceptions), protect the Heath and preserve it as an open space and prevent, resist and abate encroachments (section 12).
- Must not sell, lease, grant, or in manner dispose of any part of the Heath (section 13).
- Must not cut turf or dig gravel etc. or fell or cut gorse, heather, timber or other trees, shrubs etc. on the Heath for profit (section 14).
- May drain, level and improve the Heath, as far only as in the City's judgment from time to time is required, with a view to its use for purposes of health and unrestricted exercise and recreation (section 15).
- May plant trees and shrubs on the Heath for purposes of shelter or ornament and make temporary enclosures for the protection thereof (section 15).
- Must at all times preserve, as far as

may be, the natural aspect and state of the Heath, and to that end must protect the turf, gorse, heather, timber and other trees, shrubs and brushwood (section 16).

- Must maintain and keep the original ornamental grounds in good order and condition (s.17).
- May erect and maintain ornamental buildings (subject to height restraints) as they think requisite for the accommodation of keepers, constables or other officers or for other public or useful purposes (section 18).

Sections 1,3,12-18,24,36,41-42 as amended by SI 1965/540 remain in force, the other sections having been repealed.

The Local Government Reorganisation (Hampstead Heath) Order 1989 transferred to the City of London Corporation the statutory functions formerly exercised by the GLC in relation to the Heath under a variety of legislation and set out some additional functions. The City of London Corporation's functions include:

- Provision of facilities for public recreation (Article 7 of the Ministry of Housing and Local Government Provisional Order Confirmation (Greater London Parks and Open Spaces) Act 1967).
- Grant of licences to provide facilities and letting of land and buildings for public recreation (Article 8 of above 1967 Act).

- To close parts of the Heath for the purpose of or in connection with the cultivation or preservation of vegetation in the interests of public amenity or in the interests of public safety. (Article 9 of above 1967 Act).
- Charging in respect of user of open space (Article 10 of above 1967 Act).
- Organising or conducting competitions in connection with any recreational activities for which it has power to provide facilities (Article 13 of the 1967 Act).
- Making byelaws (s.15 Open Spaces Act 1906).
- Provision of entertainments (s.145 Local Government Act 1972).
- Provision of recreational facilities and making such facilities available to persons at a charge or otherwise (s.19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976).
- Appointment of Management and Consultative Committees with statutorily defined constitutions (Articles 8 and 9 of The London Government Reorganisation (Hampstead Heath) Order 1989).
- Maintenance of a trust fund for defraying expenditure on the management and maintenance of the Heath (Articles 6 and 7 of the 1989 Order).

The City of London Corporation has acquired additional statutory powers set out in the City of London Corporation (Open Spaces) Act 2018. The 2018 legislation was promoted because much of the legislative framework relating to the open spaces managed by the City of London Corporation,

including Hampstead Heath, dates from the 19th Century. While the 19th Century legislation serves its purpose of preserving the open spaces for public recreation and enjoyment there are some respects where it is unclear or out of date which left the Corporation to exercise management powers in reliance on implied or common law powers or its position as landowner rather than on express statutory powers. The 2018 Act clarifies and supplements the City of London Corporation's management powers, giving a clear statutory basis for existing activities. It also grants new up to date management powers, including in relation to enforcement.

Section 4(1)(a) applies to the 2018 Act the key objectives and protections for Hampstead Heath in the 1871 Act, namely sections 12,14 and 16 (which provide for the preservation of Hampstead Heath as an unenclosed public open space, the prohibition of the sale of turf, gravel or other material, and the preservation of its natural aspect).

The powers in the 2018 Act relevant to Hampstead Heath are:

- Land management powers permitting the cutting, felling, lopping etc. of any trees, pollards, gorse or other material, the scraping of soil and the grazing of cattle and other animals if it appears necessary or expedient for the proper management or husbandry of the open space and its flora and fauna (section 5).
- Letting of buildings for a period not exceeding 15 years or, where there are exceptional circumstances, 21 years (section 6).

- Holding of events and provision of facilities for events having regard to an events policy prepared in consultation with the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee (section 7).
- Grant of rights for utilities (section 8).
- Entering into agreements with highway and traffic authorities (section 9).
- Making a licensing scheme to control commercial activity and granting of licences for such activities (section 10).
- Issue of fixed penalty notices for certain offences, including offences under the byelaws (section 11).
- Power to require name and address of person where an authorised officer has reason to believe the person has committed an offence in the open space (section 12).
- Removal and disposal of unauthorised articles left in the open space (section 13).
- Power for authorised officers to represent the Corporation in legal proceedings in the Magistrates' Court (section 15).

The byelaws applicable to Hampstead Heath were originally made by the London County Council and approved by the Secretary of State in 1932. They now have effect as if made by the City of London Corporation under the provisions of the 1989 Order and Open Spaces Act 1906. The provisions of the byelaws are subservient to any relevant provisions in primary legislation in respect of the Heath.

The byelaws are enforced by the Hampstead Heath Constabulary and regulate matters such as:

- Causing damage or injury to property or vegetation.
- Trespass (e.g. camping without a permit).
- Erecting buildings or obstructions without or otherwise than in accordance with a permit.
- Traffic.
- Horses, dogs and other animals.
- Nuisances.
- Sale of articles, exhibition of advertisements, etc.
- Plying for hire.
- Public meetings.
- Music and singing.
- Soliciting or gathering money.
- Games, drilling etc.
- Obstructing officers of the council, constables etc.
- Offenders, penalties etc.

Appendix 3:

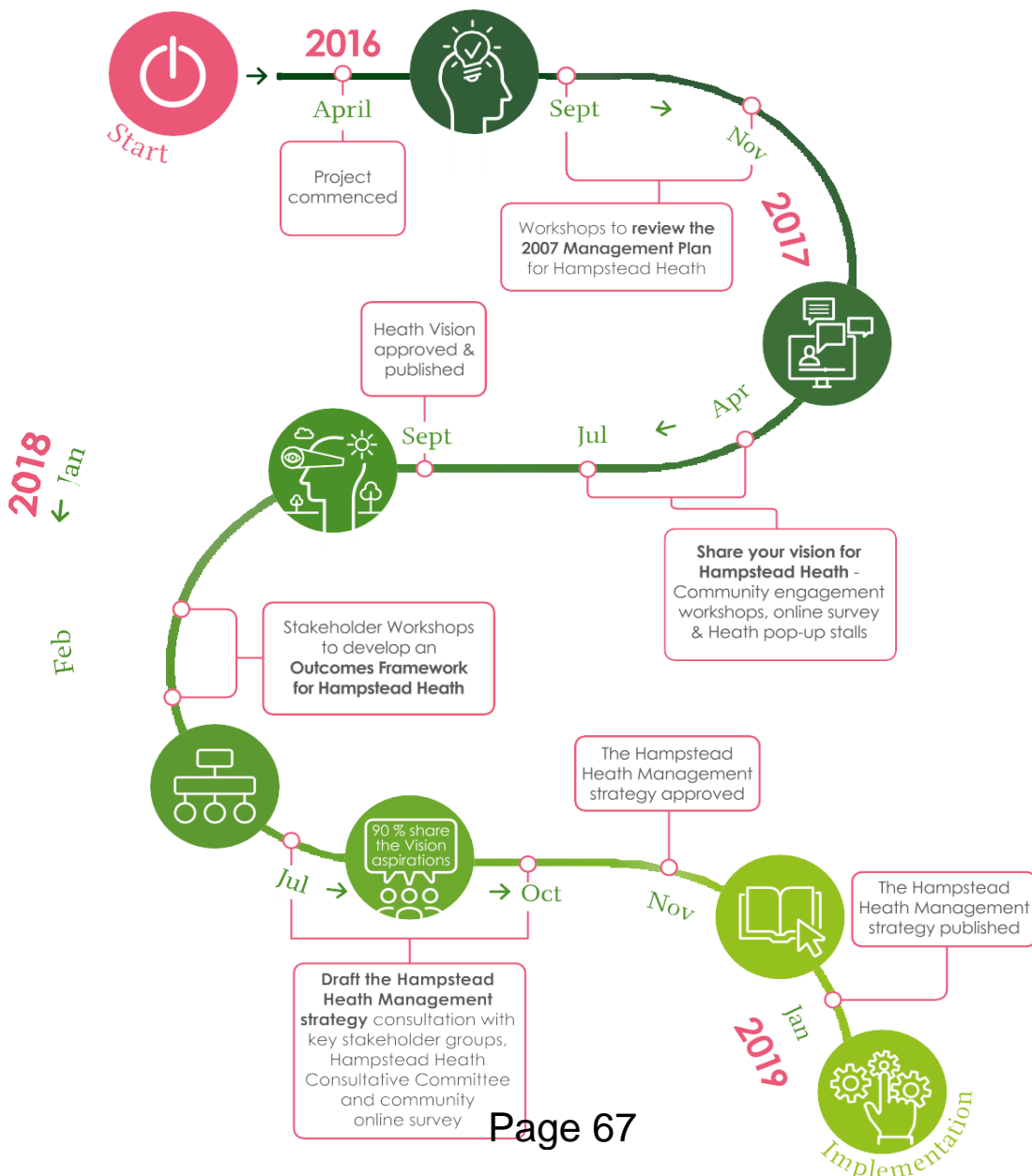
Developing the Strategy – a timeline

The timeline below summarises the key steps undertaken to develop this Strategy commencing in April 2016 with a consultative review of the Hampstead Heath Management Plan Part 1- Towards a Plan for the Heath 2007 – 2017.

Key learning and recommendations from the review emphasised the importance of a management framework to enable successful implementation and to measure progress and impact.

Extensive community engagement throughout 2017 saw the creation of the Heath Vision which set the direction for developing this Strategy.





This Interim review has been informed by consultation with the Hampstead Heath Working Group on behalf of the Hampstead Heath Consultative Committee and CoL Operations and Parks and Conservation Teams.



Appendix 4:

Transitioning from the 2007 Plan to this Strategy

The chart below sets out how the Heath Management Strategy relates to the Overriding Objectives of the 2007 Hampstead Heath Management Plan.

Hampstead Heath Management Plan 2007 - 2017			Hampstead Heath Management Strategy 2018 - 2028
Section	Ref	Overriding Objectives	Outcomes
History	H1	Protect and conserve the historic aspects of the Heath and take due account of the distinctive histories of its component parts.	 A. The Heath is maintained as a flourishing green space and historic landscape
Natural Landscape	NL1	Retain and enhance the Heath's habitats and natural resources to enable continued quiet enjoyment and appreciation of the natural world by its visitors.	
Hydrology	HY1	Manage the Heath's ponds and watercourses to enhance their nature conservation value, reduce flood risk and address water quality problems.	
Designed Landscape	D1	Conserve and enhance the historic and planned elements of the Heath's designed landscapes, while improving their appearance and public facilities.	
Built Environment	B1	Provide buildings that are fit for purpose and aesthetically pleasing, enhancing examples of good architecture and seeking to reduce the impact of those that are functional, but detract from the natural qualities of the Heath.	 B. Improved quality of life for Heath visitors
Informal Public Use	P1	Recognise that the Heath's main users are those who come for informal activity and manage informal recreational activities to ensure that as far as is reasonably practical they do not adversely affect others' enjoyment of or the natural aspect of the Heath.	
Sports	S1	Work collaboratively in maintaining and developing the existing sports facilities and activities in response to changing demands ensuring appropriate provision for all sections of the community.	
Access	A1	Recognise the need to be as inclusive as possible, increasing the Heath's availability to a diversity of users.	 C. The Heath is inclusive and welcoming to a diverse range of visitors
Education	E1	Develop the Heath's potential for education and interpretation.	 D. Greater number and diversity of people taking care of the Heath





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City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee(s): Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood, and Queen’s Park Committee	Dated: 3 December 2024
Subject: Update to Management Plans for Highgate Wood and Queen’s Park	Public report: For Decision
This proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Diverse Engaged Communities -Dynamic Economic Growth -Leading Sustainable Environment -Vibrant Thriving Destination -Providing Excellent Services -Flourishing Public Spaces
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	N/A
Report of:	Katie Stewart, Executive Director Environment
Report author:	Bill LoSasso, Assistant Director (Superintendent), North London Open Spaces

Summary

This report summarises the work done to update the management plans for both Highgate Wood and Queen’s Park, which are attached in near-final form as appendices, and seeks Committee approval to finalise the documents and prepare for layout and publication.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the provided reports and attached Highgate Wood Management Plan and Queen’s Park Management Plan.

- Authorise the Superintendent, in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chair, to finalise the update to the management plans for Highgate Wood and Queen's Park.

Main Report

Background

1. As previously reported to this Committee, officers are updating all four management plans for the four open spaces that NLOS is responsible for (Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood, Queen's Park, and West Ham Park). Officers have retained a consultant with extensive experience in developing management plans and strategies for open spaces to support in that effort (Land Management Services).
2. As part of that effort, officers are completing updates to the management plans for Highgate Wood and Queen's Park. In addition to both plans being due for review, this exercise was needed to ensure that both management plans remained aligned with recent strategies that have been developed across the City Corporation in recent years, including the new Corporate Plan (2024-2029), new Natural Environment Strategies (2024-2029), and Climate Action Strategy (2020-2027), as well as reflected world events, newly developed best practice, and experience gained in managing both spaces under the existing management plans.
3. While these new strategies and plans provide broad direction to NLOS in managing its sites and indeed will be furthered and delivered by our work at NLOS, the Highgate Wood Management Plan and Queen's Park Management Plan will remain the primary plans for the management of these spaces, respectively.

Consultation

4. The consultative groups that are made up of and represent local stakeholders for each space (Highgate Wood Consultative Group and Queen's Park Consultative Group, respectively) attended participatory engagement sessions during the development of the plans with officers, Land Management Services, and this committee's chairman. Contributions were incorporated into the plans. In addition, members of these respective consultative groups also provided additional written comments on circulated drafts of the plans while under development.

Finalisation of the Management Plans

5. Appendix 1 provides the current draft of the Highgate Wood Management Plan. Appendix 2 provides the current draft of the Queen's Park Management Plan.
6. These drafts are now in near-final form, subject to final comments of officers and this Committee and formal layout of the document for publication in alignment

with relevant standards. Land Management Services will provide a presentation and overview of each plan for Members at the meeting on 3 December 2024.

7. Members are asked to note the work done to date, review the near-final drafts, provide any final comments, and delegate to the Superintendent in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chair authorisation to finalise the management plans for Highgate Wood and Queen's Park and prepare them for publication.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Financial implications

8. None from these plans. Future projects and initiatives in furtherance of the plans will have to be delivered in alignment with funding constraints.

Resource implications

9. Delivery of the management plans will have to be delivered in alignment with funding constraints.

Legal implications

10. Highgate Wood and Queen's Park are separate open spaces administered under a single charity, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Kilburn (Charity Number 232986), with the City of London Corporation acting as the trustee. The City Corporation is responsible for ensuring that the charity fulfils its charitable purpose, which is "the preservation in perpetuity by the Corporation of London, of the open spaces known as Highgate Wood, Highgate and Queens Park, Kilburn as public parks or open spaces, for the perpetual use thereof by the public for exercise and recreation". Upon approval and implementation, the management plans will assist the trustee in discharging this duty in accordance with the charity's objectives.

Risk implications

11. Risks are identified, regularly reviewed, and managed through the Highgate Wood & Queen's Park Risk Registers.

Equalities implications

12. Inclusion is specifically incorporated into both management plans, with actions for officers to ensure and increase access and participation in both Highgate Wood and Queen's Park.

Climate implications

13. The management plans were developed in consideration of the City Corporation's Climate Action Strategy.

Security implications

14. Risks are identified, regularly reviewed, and managed through the Highgate Wood & Queen's Park Risk Registers.

Conclusion

15. The Highgate Wood Management Plan and Queen's Park Management Plan have been updated, in consultation as noted herein. The plans are now in near-final form, and authority is sought for the Superintendent, in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chair, to finalise and publish the documents.

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Highgate Wood Management Plan (2025 - 2035)
- Appendix 2: Queen's Park Management Plan (2025 - 2035)
- Appendix 3 (via hyperlink): City of London Corporation Corporate Plan (2024-2029)
 - [Our Corporate Plan 2024-29 - City of London](#)
- Appendix 4 (via hyperlink): Natural Environment strategies (2024-2029)
 - [Natural Environment - City of London](#)
- Appendix 5 (via hyperlink): Hampstead Heath Management Strategy (2018-2028)
 - [Hampstead Heath Management Strategy](#)

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Highgate
Wood

Registered Charity

City of London Corporation

Highgate Wood
Management Plan
(2025-2035)

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City of London Corporation
North London Open Spaces

Highgate Wood Management Plan (2025-2035)

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1.0 Foreword - Draft

This Management Plan states our commitment to realising the vision to protect and preserve Highgate Wood to ensure it continues to enrich the lives of current and future generations.

This Plan aligns with the City of London Corporation's Corporate Plan (2024-2029), which provides a framework with six strategic outcomes, to guide our efforts over the next five years. This Plan will be integrated at every level of our work, serving as the 'golden thread' that connects all activities across the organisation.

Additionally, it supports the City Corporation's broader goals of contributing to a flourishing society, shaping exceptional environments, and fostering a thriving economy.

The aims, objectives and actions set out in this Management Plan also contribute to overarching City Corporation strategies to address climate change and the management of all aspects of the natural environment within the City Corporation's North London Open Spaces, including Natural Environment Strategies for nature conservation and resilience, recreation and access, community engagement, and culture, heritage and learning.

This Management Plan is also being prepared in the context of a corporate review of the challenges facing our Natural Environment Charities to be completed in 2025. A key objective of the review is to look at opportunities to enable the charities to become more financially independent and provide a more secure and sustainable funding model for the future.

The Management Plan outlines the strategic Outcomes and Objectives that will guide management and ensure we remain on course over its ten-year duration, in accordance with the following five themes:

1. Sustainable Woodland Management: Implement the Woodland Management Plan which aligns conservation goals with community use, focusing on long-term ecological resilience and nature recovery, in particular threats posed by tree diseases.
2. Culture & Heritage: Preserve and interpret Highgate Wood's historical features, connecting its past with its future through meaningful experiences.
3. Facilities and Access: Maintain and upgrade visitor facilities with sustainable design principles and improve visitor accessibility while protecting the woodland's character.

4. Community & Education: Develop programmes that engage local schools, residents, and visitors in woodland management, promoting conservation through education and participation.
5. Climate Resilience: Adopt sustainable management practices that are adaptive to climate change and other environmental pressures, and able to mitigate impacts where possible to ensure that Highgate Wood remains a flourishing ecosystem and contributes to City Corporation strategic targets.

This plan establishes a framework for Highgate Wood's management and uses an outcomes-based approach. Identifying measures for success enable us to monitor progress and stay on track to realise the Highgate Wood Vision.

Preparation of this Plan has been informed by: the existing Highgate Wood Conservation Management Plan (2013) and Woodland Management Plan (2018-28); current policy and strategies within the City Corporation, and in a wider London and national policy context; and review of current projects and priorities for Highgate Wood. The Plan is the product of an evidence-based approach, using existing plans and surveys relating to the Wood, feedback from the Green Flag application process, and wider ecological and visitor surveys which illustrate the vital contribution of the Park to ecological networks and biodiversity and as an invaluable amenity and public open space for the local and wider area.

The views and aspirations of the Highgate Wood community and all those who love and care for the Wood have been fundamental in informing the Plan and the vision for the Park, including visitors, local residents' groups and volunteers, City Corporation Wood staff and maintenance teams, and wider stakeholders including the London Borough of Haringey. Their contributions have been fundamental in informing the Plan and the vision for the Wood, and the need to balance conservation and management of natural and heritage assets with the maintenance of an invaluable public amenity which meets the wide ranging needs of the Wood's diverse range of users.

William Upton

Chairman of Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood, and Queen's Park Committee

2.0 Introduction and Purpose of the Plan

Highgate Wood is a 28-hectare (70-acre) ancient woodland in the London Borough of Haringey, about 6 miles from the City of London. Its rich history, dating back to prehistoric era, and its diverse woodland habitat contribute to a unique and special atmosphere. These characteristics, along with more recent additions such as the playground, sports pitch and café, make the Wood a cherished and well-utilised open space for the local community and visitors alike. This Plan covers a ten-year period and sets out the vision, themes and outcomes which will inform Park management and maintenance.

Highgate Wood was acquired by the Corporation of London in 1886 from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners under the Highgate and Kilburn Open Spaces Act of that year. It was officially dedicated as "an open space forever" on October 30, 1886, by the Lord Mayor, Sir John Staples. Today, Highgate Wood remains under the ownership of the City of London Corporation and is managed through the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee.

The key purposes of the Plan are to:

- Inform stakeholders, users and visitors about the Wood and the aims and objectives of management in order to achieve the Wood's vision and to safeguard its assets, contribute to wider City Corporation strategies and policies and maintain the Wood's annual, well deserved Green Flag and Green Flag Heritage awards;
- Guide management and maintenance by describing the Wood's assets, features and facilities and their significance, the aims and objectives for their management; and by setting out the management structures and resources for the Wood's maintenance;
- Support applications to Green Flag and Green Flag Heritage and other initiatives, such as grant funding applications for facilities provision, improvement or heritage conservation.

Structure of the Management Plan

The Plan is set out under six main headings:

Management Context - a summary of the existing plans and wider strategies which will inform this Plan

Description of Highgate Wood - and its assets, facilities, attributes, heritage significance and contribution to amenity, recreation, biodiversity, heritage and community benefits; visitor numbers and customer survey feedback.

Green Flag and Green Flag Heritage awards and feedback

Community Engagement feedback

Vision for the Wood - including aims, objectives and outcomes

Management Structure - sets out the role of the City Corporation and Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Kilburn Charity in management of the site, the committees and consultation groups that help guide management, and the volunteer groups that make Highgate Wood a success.

Management Objectives and Outputs - set out by Green Flag criteria

Monitoring and Review- describes how progress will be assessed and recorded and key milestones at which this progress will be reviewed.

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3.0 Management Context

The purpose of this Management Plan is to ensure that the Vision for Highgate Wood is integrated at all levels. It allows for a step back from the daily operations of Highgate Wood to take a more strategic perspective, providing an opportunity to identify both opportunities and challenges that come with the growing pressures on the site.

This ten-year Plan is set within the context of wider City Corporation plans and strategies which address the delivery of the City Corporation's overall aims and objectives across key areas. Key among these are the new Corporate Plan (2024-2029), the Natural Environment Strategies (2024-2029), and the Climate Action Strategy (2020-2027), which set out the City Corporation's strategic approach to our managed open spaces, assets, and activities.

The Plan looks forward over the period to 2035, drawing on the vision and objectives, themes and policies set out in the 2024 Management Plan and wider City Corporation strategies, considering progress made in projects identified in previous Plans and identifying and prioritising the outcomes for the next ten years. The ten-year period provides a longer term framework appropriate to the achievement of wider strategic City Corporation aims, and to the delivery of Park-based projects over a longer time scale. The Plan will be subject to a five year review to monitor progress in the delivery of the Park vision.

The Covid pandemic has also changed our perception and understanding of the value of parks and open spaces to the health and well-being of local people. More and more people now regularly enjoy the benefits of parks and open spaces, which does bring with it added pressure to conserve and enhance the natural fabric of assets such as Highgate Wood.

The Management Plan for Highgate Wood continues to build on the roadmap laid out in the 2013 Conservation Management Plan. Other existing plans, surveys and studies have been used to inform the Plan including:

- Green Flag Feedback Report 2023
- Green Heritage Feedback Report 2023
- The Highgate Wood Heritage Assessment 2011
- Highgate Wood Management Plan 2018-2028
- A variety of wildlife and monitoring surveys carried out by City Corporation staff and other external specialists

The Highgate Wood Management Team, and the Superintendent of North London Open Spaces, have been actively involved in the preparation of this Plan.

As part of the process, the City Corporation held a consultation group meeting on Wednesday 21 August 2024, marking a key stage in the Management Plan's development. The workshop aimed to secure support and gather input from the Highgate Wood Consultative Group, which includes local specialists, representatives of community groups and organisations, and members of the Highgate Wood Management Team.

4.0 Policy Context

Highgate Wood is owned by the Mayor and Commonalty and Citizens of the City of London (also referred to as 'the City of London Corporation'), and run by it as one of its open spaces with charitable status. It remains part of the Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Kilburn Charity (reg. 232986), with the City of London Corporation as the trustee.

The Wood was acquired by the City of London Corporation along with Highgate Wood from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners under the Highgate and Kilburn Open Spaces Act 1886. The Highgate and Kilburn Open Spaces Act 1886 provides the primary legislation guiding the City Corporation's management of Highgate Wood. Section 4(1)(d) applies to the 2018 Act the key objectives and protections for Highgate Wood, namely section 2 of the Highgate and Kilburn Open Spaces Act 1886 which the preservation of the lands as public open space and the preservation of their natural aspect.

This Management Plan is set within the context of City Corporation policy and strategies which provide the framework for the delivery of the City Corporation's overarching aims and priorities. Underpinning all of these is the City of London Corporation's Corporate Plan, which sets out the vision and strategic outcomes to inform all of its work. Within this context, the City Corporation has developed targeted strategies to address key issues of climate change and management of the natural environment to enhance future resilience of its open spaces and the wide-ranging benefits they deliver for nature conservation and the community.

Wider London strategies provide additional context for the Site's SINC status and nature conservation significance. The Greater London Council (GLA) is currently preparing a Local Nature Recovery Strategy which will set out priorities for nature recovery across London as part of a linked biodiversity network.

City of London Corporate Plan (2024-2029)

The Corporate Plan is a tool to guide thinking, planning, decision-making and evaluation across the City Corporation and sets out the Strategic Outcomes to be delivered across the organisation over the period covered by the Plan. The Corporate Plan is a framework containing six strategic outcomes, which are

embedded at all levels of work and form the 'golden thread' across the organisation.



This Management Plan will guide the management of Highgate Wood to safeguard and enhance its role in the delivery of these outcomes, with particular reference to its contribution to community, environmental sustainability, and the provision of flourishing public spaces.

The inclusion of a specific outcome relating to Flourishing Public Spaces emphasises the importance attached to these areas to delivery of the wider strategic aims of the City Corporation.

Natural Environment Strategies (2024-2029)

The four Natural Environment Strategies align with the Corporate Plan and set out the City Corporation's strategic approach to managed open spaces, assets and activities. The Strategies cover four key areas which will inform the future management of all North London Open Spaces and other sites within the City Corporation's portfolio: Nature Conservation and Resilience; Access and Recreation; Culture, Heritage and Learning; and Community Engagement.

The Strategies describe our objectives for the natural environment and the measures by which we will assess our performance against these objectives. They will also inform our business plans and management plans and set out

how our activities will align with corporate priorities and policies. This Plan has been prepared within this wider context to ensure that Highgate Wood remains a key contributor to the delivery of the four Strategies.



City of London Climate Action Strategy (2020-2027)

This Strategy sets out the City Corporation's climate action commitments within the Square Mile and across all the City Corporation's wider assets, including open spaces.

The City Corporation will make major investments to achieve the following:

- Net zero by 2027 in the City Corporation's operations
- Net zero by 2040 across the City Corporation's full value chain
- Net zero by 2040 in the Square Mile
- Climate resilience in our buildings, public spaces and infrastructure

Among the key areas for investment, the Strategy highlights:

- Enhancing carbon removal in our open spaces
- Protecting our shared natural resources
- Integrating climate considerations into all our decisions

The City Corporation's parks and open spaces are central to the delivery of Net Zero by 2027. They are estimated to currently remove 16,000 tonnes of CO₂ per year. This is equivalent to 40% of the City Corporation's scope 1 and 2 emissions.

This Management Plan aligns with the aims of the Climate Action Strategy and the management aims and priorities for Highgate Wood underpin these key areas which are of particular relevance to the management of open spaces.

Natural Capital

In January 2024, the Wood was part of a wider baseline natural capital assessment of the City Corporation's open spaces¹ to map natural capital assets, biodiversity and ecosystem services baselines, to estimate their net natural capital value and to make recommendations for enhancing ecosystem service provision and biodiversity.

The findings highlight the value of the North London Open Spaces and the wider portfolio of City Corporation sites:

Highgate Woods had a high capacity for local climate regulation, noise regulation, air purification, carbon storage, water flow regulation and water quality regulation. This is due to the large areas of broadleaved woodland and mixed woodland throughout the site. Broadleaved woodland and mixed woodland have a moderate to high capacity for timber production, and broadleaved woodland and modified grassland has a moderate to low capacity for pollinator visitation.

The surrounding neighbourhoods of Muswell Hill and Highgate that border the site to the north and west, create demand for air pollution regulation (near the A1 in the south western edge of the site), noise regulation from the roads and train depot that borders the site in the same location. These communities have a moderate demand for accessible nature.

The net natural capital asset value of Highgate Wood is £167.7 million over 50 years. The site delivers a benefit to cost ratio of 16.5, which means that every £1 spent on maintenance delivers £16.50 in benefits.

Recommendations for enhancement include:

The current management plan to improve and manage the areas of ancient woodland by thinning, encouraging natural regeneration and wildflower meadows, and habitat improvements for bat species, will help increase this site's overall habitat condition and biodiversity score. Maintaining a good age structure within woodland habitat throughout the site will help maintain carbon sequestration into the future. Ecosystem service provision could be enhanced through transforming the amenity grassland to semi-natural grassland, if the amenity grassland is not required for practical reasons. This can increase carbon storage, pollination, water flow and quality regulation. Hedgerows and scrub could be introduced at the edge of, especially around the amenity grassland, garden and built up areas. This will also increase the pollinator service, sequester and store carbon, as well as taking up air pollutants, at the same time as enhancing biodiversity.

¹ Baseline natural capital assessment of the City of London Corporation's open spaces (Natural Capital Solutions Ltd, January 2024)

The management recommendations set out in this Plan embrace Queen's Park's critical function in contributing the key benefits delivered by North London Open Spaces as a whole, including, in particular, those relating to biodiversity, carbon sequestration and health and well-being.

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5.0 About Highgate Wood

Overview

Highgate Wood is a 28-hectare (70-acre) ancient woodland in the London Borough of Haringey. It was acquired by the City Corporation in 1886 from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and opened to the public a year later. Today it provides a safe and relaxing environment attracting over 1.3 million visits a year.

It boasts a rich history dating back to the pre-historic era and was once the centre of a small-scale pottery industry in the first century AD. The woodland is predominantly composed of hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) with English oak (*Quercus robur*) and sessile oak (*Quercus petraea*) standards but also features a variety of other species, including a notable presence of wild service trees (*Sorbus torminalis*), an indicator of ancient woodland.

The Wood provides diverse habitats for species found in very particular niches in ancient woodlands, including over 300 species of fungi. In addition to its ecological value, Highgate Wood is an important leisure and amenity resource, offering visitors a rare opportunity to experience a woodland environment that has preserved much of its historic character. The site provides a vital open space for recreation and leisure in a densely built-up area of London.

Visitors to the site can enjoy various recreational facilities, including a playing field, trim trail, cricket nets, a large children's playground, a café, and an information centre with booklets, newsletters, and trail guides. There are also maintained football and cricket pitches for regular weekend league clubs.

A Highgate Wood Site Plan is included in Appendix A of this Management Plan.

Natural Environment

Highgate Wood is designated as **Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW)** and forms part of a group of important woodland sites in North London. Ancient semi-natural woodland supports a large number of species, many of which are listed as vulnerable, particularly those which require stable, unchanging conditions to survive. The woodland contains many niche habitats which support a range of protected and UK Biodiversity Action Plan priority species including bats, birds, fungi and moths. The rich diversity of woodland within the Wood has been well-researched and, to date, the following species have been identified:

- over 900 invertebrate species
- 482 moth species

- Over 300 fungi species
- 70 bird species
- 7 bat species

As a result, Highgate Wood is designated as a **Site of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation** and considered to be of London-wide significance for nature conservation. Current management operations aim to conserve the diversity of the woodland through creation of individual 'conservation areas' whilst monitoring for pests and diseases such as Chronic Oak Decline and Oak Processionary Moth.

Together with Queen's Wood, Highgate Wood has been identified as a potential **Regionally Important Geological Site (RIGS)** by the London Geodiversity Partnership and is highlighted in "London's Foundations: Protecting the Geodiversity of the Capital" (London 2012, Mayor of London). Most of the wood is underlain by Claygate Beds, characterised by sandy clay soils that often lead to erosion and runoff during flooding. This specific geology makes the site particularly vulnerable to compaction and current management aims to encourage public access whilst preserving the health of the woodland.

Heritage

Highgate Wood has a rich history of use and development. Flint tools from the early Mesolithic period have been discovered on the site, indicating early human settlement. Although there is little evidence of occupation during the Roman period, archaeological records suggest that ten kilns once operated in Highgate Wood, with pottery production taking place from AD 43 until around AD 160. A restored Roman kiln uncovered during archaeological excavations is now on display in the education building at Highgate Wood. It is the most complete Roman pottery kiln found in Greater London.

For many centuries, Highgate Wood was managed for the commercial production of fuel wood through cyclical cutting of the hornbeam. Oak standards were likely planted as a long-term investment for eventual use in shipbuilding and construction, with the bark possibly serving as a valuable secondary crop for the tanning industry. The wood's role as a fuel resource declined in the 19th century with the increased availability of coal. However, the ancient coppice stools and mature oak standards still visible today provide a fascinating glimpse into the historical management practices used in the woodland.

In February 1885, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners offered Highgate Wood to the City Corporation as a gift, which was accepted in 1886 under the Highgate and Kilburn Open Spaces Act. The Wood was officially opened to the public on October 30th, 1886.

During the Second World War, the site was used to station barrage balloons to help defend London from low-level aircraft attacks. The concrete blocks to which the balloons were anchored can still be seen on the sports pitch during dry weather.

Recreation & Facilities

Highgate Wood is a welcoming and easily accessible green space with a unique atmosphere. It offers a safe environment with excellent facilities, along with educational and recreational activities suitable for all ages. The site attracts a diverse range of visitors, from early morning joggers and parents exploring the woodland with their young children, to dog walkers and walking groups.

The **playground** is a highly frequented facility, especially popular among younger children. It features a camera installed in a bird box, with a monitor situated in the adjacent building, offering visitors a chance to observe birds as they build nests and feed their young.

The **sports field**, located centrally in Highgate Wood, spans approximately 2.6 hectares (6.5 acres). This space is a favoured part of Highgate Wood, utilised year-round for informal games, picnics and walking. It includes two football pitches operational from September to April, and a cricket pitch used from April to September. These pitches are rented by local teams and are also used by schools for sports days and athletic events.

Changing facilities and showers are available in the building attached to the café, and a score hut is provided for cricket teams. The sport pitches are marked before each game, with goalposts, nets, and sightscreens set up as needed. There are two cricket practice nets in the south-western part of the field, accessible year-round. These nets, the only free ones in the London Borough of Haringey, are heavily utilised.

The **café** at Highgate Wood is a popular spot for visitors, offering a relaxed environment surrounded by the natural beauty of the Wood. It has a family-friendly atmosphere, with outdoor seating, making it an ideal spot for parents to relax while keeping an eye on their children. The café emphasises sustainable practices. It often uses eco-friendly materials for packaging and strives to reduce its environmental impact. The café is leased out to an external tenant and is open all year round. Public toilets are available in close proximity to the café.

Local primary schools frequently visit Highgate Wood as an educational resource, utilising the natural outdoor setting to teach subjects such as natural history and environmental studies. Children and young people have the opportunity to experience a true outdoor rural environment within walking

distance of their school. Additionally, staff are available to lead walk-and-talk sessions focused on nature and woodland species.

Community & Health

The Wood is a vital resource for the surrounding community, with many visitors coming daily for activities such as walking, dog walking, and jogging. The Highgate Wood team has successfully built long-standing relationships with local residents, creating a welcoming environment where people feel safe and secure.

Highgate Wood's ancient woodland and its wildlife offer numerous opportunities for local residents to engage with nature. The City Corporation, with the support of volunteers, organises a regular programme of events and activities at Highgate Wood, including walks and talks on cultural heritage and the natural environment.

Highgate Wood is an important local resource for promoting the health and well-being of local residents. It offers the opportunity to exercise and join sporting activities such as football or cricket. The sports field is especially popular for summer sports days, and schools without their own sports facilities are encouraged to use the field for both formal and informal activities. The Wood also supports two Forest School groups where children can benefit from education in a natural setting.

A free annual newsletter produced by the City Corporation is available at the education centre, which also provides trail guides and information on wildlife and history. The newly extended education centre features a Roman Kiln exhibition, developed with the Museum of London and Bruce Castle Museum.

The Heath Hands volunteer group assists with conservation efforts in the Wood, including coppicing hazel and holly, and clearing brambles and ivy. Queen's Wood is owned and managed by the London Borough of Haringey and supported by the Friends of Queen's Wood. They collaborate with Haringey's Conservation Officer to care for the site and secure funding for projects. The Friends hold monthly volunteer sessions focused on woodland management and have created new ponds to enhance habitat diversity. Some members of the Friends of Queen's Wood are also part of the Highgate Wood Consultative Committee, fostering valuable connections between the two sites.

Climate Resilience

Highgate Wood plays a crucial role in enhancing climate resilience in London by helping the city adapt to and mitigate the impacts of climate change. As an ancient woodland and a vital green space, it offers several ecosystem services that directly contribute to building resilience to climate-related challenges. These services include:

- **Carbon Sequestration**

Highgate Wood's trees, especially mature and veteran trees, capture and store carbon dioxide (CO₂) from the atmosphere, helping to reduce greenhouse gas concentrations. This process aids in mitigating climate change by lowering the overall carbon footprint of the area.

- **Urban Heat Island Effect Mitigation**

The dense canopy of Highgate Wood helps regulate local temperatures, particularly during heatwaves, which are expected to become more frequent with climate change. The trees provide shade and cool the surrounding environment, reducing the urban heat island effect, where cities experience significantly higher temperatures than rural areas due to human activities and infrastructure.

- **Flood Mitigation**

The woodland plays an essential role in absorbing rainwater and reducing surface runoff, which helps mitigate the risk of flooding. Highgate Wood's soil and vegetation act like a natural sponge, soaking up water during heavy rainfall and slowly releasing it, reducing runoff and helping to replenish groundwater levels. This natural water regulation is vital for flood prevention, especially in urban areas such as those surrounding Highgate Wood.

- **Air Quality Improvement**

The trees in Highgate Wood help filter out air pollutants, improving air quality and reducing the negative impacts of pollution, which are exacerbated by climate change. Better air quality enhances the overall resilience of the community by promoting public health, particularly during hot weather when pollution levels can spike.

Key attributes

- Highgate Wood is 28 hectares; equivalent to 70 acres or 44 football pitches
- It contains 24.6ha of remnant Ancient Woodland
- It is located just 8km north of Trafalgar Square
- Visitor Surveys indicated 1.3 million in 2022/23
- A children's playground
- A café that is open all year round
- 4 cricket teams training at cricket pitch
- Football pitch used by the local community
- 2 Forest School groups
- Several interpretation panels located throughout the woodland

- Over 1,000 oak standards present in the wood (counted in 2018) and around 1% decline/die on an annual basis.
- 25 breeding bird species
- 300 different fungi species recorded since 1994
- Regular moth trapping has identified 482 species since 1985
- Every £1 spent on maintenance of natural assets delivers £16.5 in benefits

6.0 Visitor Surveys & Feedback (including Green Flag)

A visitor survey conducted in 2022/23 revealed that Highgate Wood attracts more than 1.3 million visits annually.

Highgate Wood receives regular feedback from Green Flag and Green Heritage Award inspections which it takes into consideration for ongoing management. The last Green Flag Judges' feedback was provided on 25 April, 2023 with an overall result of Pass and some very favourable and congratulatory comments about the condition of the site and high standard of management.

General recommendations related to the existing CMP included a request for links to the Annual Work Programme/Maintenance Schedule so that these could be better understood, as well as information on residual waste and alternative fuels. The field assessment noted the play area equipment showing signs of wear and tear, with a recommendation to plan for upgrade.

Judges' feedback related to the Green Heritage Site was also last received in 2023. This mentioned the need to update the 2013 CMP, with a stronger focus on monitoring in order to reflect on the successes of community engagement and marketing. The field assessment prompted only positive feedback and praise for staff, with excitement about the planned Roman kiln upgrade.

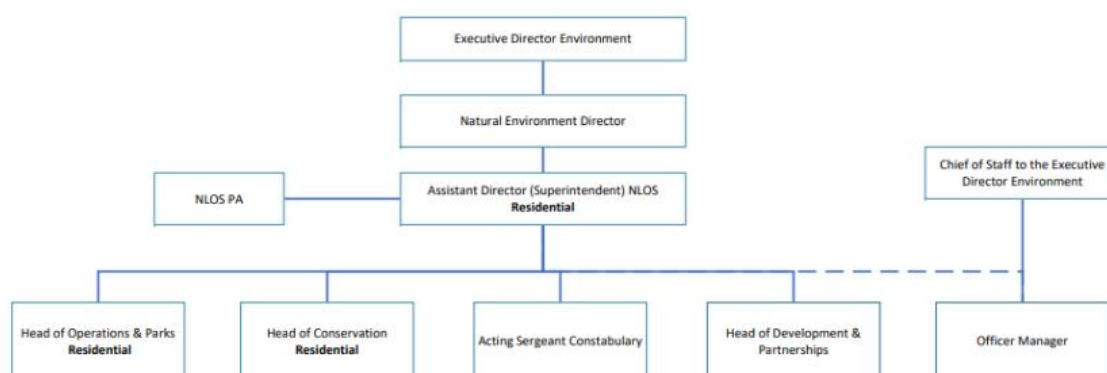
All the actions in this Plan are intended to deliver and achieve the Vision for the Wood.

7.0 How Highgate Wood is managed

Highgate Wood is one of the four spaces managed by North London Open Spaces, a sub-division of the City Corporation's Natural Environment Division. In addition to Highgate Wood, these include Hampstead Heath, Queen's Park, and West Ham Park. North London Open Spaces is led by the Assistant Director (Superintendent), who is responsible for the operation. NLOS comprises the equivalent of c. 125 full-time directly employed staff.

North London Open Spaces: Top Tier

26 July 202



Highgate Wood is a registered charity as part of the Highgate Wood and Queens Park Kilburn Charity (reg. 232986) and relies on funding from the City Corporation, along with revenue generated from services, grants and donations.

The Park is overseen by a management committee of the City of London Corporation, known as the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee, which is led by an elected Chair. The Park also has a Highgate Wood Consultative Group (HWCG) and is also led by the Chair of the above Committee and consists of local groups. It meets at least twice a year and provides further opportunity for local groups to provide input on the management of Highgate Wood.

The management team looking after Highgate Wood comprises five Rangers and Operative Rangers, who are managed by one Senior Ranger, who is in

turn managed by the Ranger Manager for Hampstead Heath and Highgate Wood. The Senior Ranger and one Ranger reside onsite. This resource provides an all-year-round service, including Christmas Day.

Highgate Wood Staffing structure

- Head of Conservation - responsible for Highgate Wood, West Heath, East Heath, Arboriculture, Ecology, Waste and Recycling.
- Ranger Manager - Responsible for Highgate Wood, West Heath, and East Heath
- Senior Ranger - Responsible for Highgate Wood's day-to-day management.
- Rangers (2 x)- Based at Highgate Wood, responsible for leading teams on the ground.
- The rest of the dedicated Highgate Wood team consists of 5 x Operative Rangers.
- Casual staff as and when required.
- Administrative support officers.

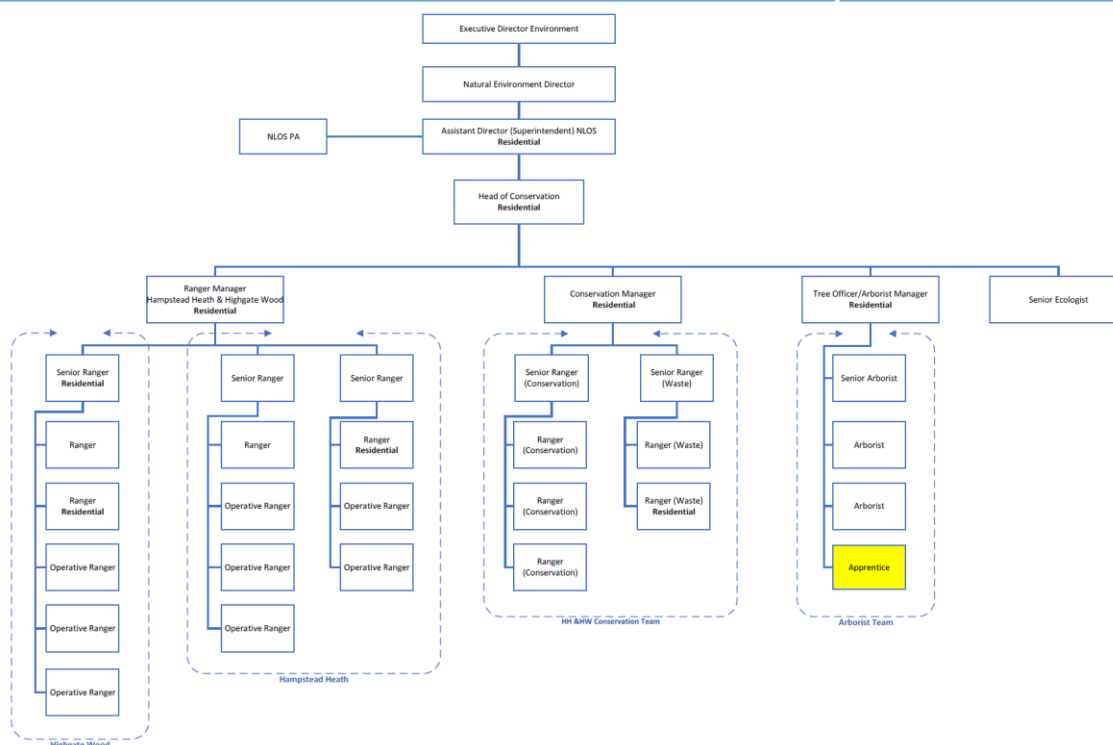
Highgate Wood is also supported by several staff that operate across other North London Open Spaces sites, including:

- Arboricultural Team
- Conservation Team
- Ecologist
- Fleet and Health & Safety Officer
- Mechanic
- Events Manager
- Communications Team
- Hampstead Heath Constabulary
- City Surveyor's Department

The staffing structure for Highgate Wood is outlined below:

North London Open Spaces: Conservation Hampstead Heath & Highgate Wood

26 July 2024



Staff training, learning and development

All staff have a Performance Development Approach (PDA) appraisal, which is conducted by their line manager and includes an individual learning and development plan and sets objectives to be met over the year. Objectives and development are set at the beginning of the year (April) and reviews made at mid-year and end of year. All staff have monthly local team meetings and individual monthly meetings with their line manager. Recent improvements in the organisation, booking, recording and evaluation of courses, have ensured that we continue to make progress in this important area. All staff receive a mid-term and an annual review to provide a dedicated opportunity to talk on a one-to-one basis with their line manager about a range of development issues, including personal objectives, competencies, and training. All staff are also required to undergo mandatory training that comprises a mixture of off-site and on-site operational training.

Highgate Wood Consultative Group (HWCG)

The HWCG includes a number of organisations dedicated to the protection and enhancement of the Wood, including councillors from Haringey Council, representatives from local groups and other volunteer groups.

Volunteers

Local community groups and organisations play a vital role in supporting the

management of Highgate Wood, collaborating closely with the City Corporation. For instance, Heath Hands has contributed to nature conservation efforts, such as looking after the conservation areas.

Other local groups include The Highgate Society, Highgate Conservation Area Advisory Committee, Highgate Neighbourhood Forum, Muswell Hill & Fortis Green Association, and Tree Trust for Haringey.

Local experts have assisted City Corporation staff in conducting surveys of the flora and fauna, yielding essential data for managing the site. Additionally, local specialists and educational groups have been instrumental in exploring the history of Highgate Wood.

Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Kilburn Charity

Highgate Wood is a registered charity as part of the Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Kilburn Charity (reg. 232986). The typical annual expenditure budget for the Wood is c. £1.5M which is shared with Queen's Park. The Wood receives this funding from the City of London Corporation and from the Wood's charitable activities. Annual income comes mainly from refreshment licenses and hire of sports facilities.

Throughout the life of this Plan, we will seek to maximise opportunities to deliver projects through external national and local funding. GiftAid for the Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Kilburn Charity was introduced in 2023 and has been successful in securing donations that have been reinvested back into the Wood.

8.0 Vision & Themes

The City Corporation welcomes and values its role as the custodian of Highgate Wood. We place great value on its stewardship for current and future generations and have collaboratively developed the following Vision Statement to guide its management.

Vision

The valuable ancient woodland habitat, biodiversity and remnant historic features of Highgate Wood are secured through resilient and adaptive management, informed by regular monitoring.

Protection of Highgate Wood's natural and cultural heritage assets is balanced against the provision of safe, inclusive, and welcoming visitor access and facilities, enriching health & well-being through recreation, education and community involvement.

Themes

The Vision provides the guiding principles for the five main themes which, in turn, show how it will deliver outcomes which contribute towards corporate and departmental objectives. Those themes are:

1. Sustainable Woodland Management: Implement the Woodland Management Plan which aligns conservation goals with community use, focusing on long-term ecological resilience and nature recovery, in particular threats posed by tree diseases.
2. Culture & Heritage: Preserve and interpret Highgate Wood's historical features, connecting its past with its future through meaningful experiences.
3. Facilities and Access: Maintain and upgrade visitor facilities with sustainable design principles and improve visitor accessibility while protecting the woodland's character.
4. Community & Education: Develop programmes that engage local schools, residents, and visitors in woodland management, promoting conservation through education and participation.
5. Climate Resilience: Adopt sustainable management practices that are adaptive to climate change and other environmental pressures, and able to mitigate impacts where possible to ensure that Highgate Wood remains a flourishing ecosystem and contributes to City Corporation strategic targets.

By embracing this Vision, Highgate Wood will continue to be a living testament to London's natural heritage - an irreplaceable green oasis where nature and community thrive together.

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Table 1: How Highgate Wood's Vision will be delivered, and its links to other key strategic documents

HIGHGATE WOOD THEMES					
	Sustainable Woodland Management	Culture & Heritage	Facilities & Access	Community & Education	Climate Resilience
CORPORATE PLAN	Leading Sustainable Environment Flourishing Public Spaces	Flourishing Public Spaces Diverse Engaged Communities	Providing Excellent Services Vibrant Thriving Destination	Diverse Engaged Communities	Leading Sustainable Environment Dynamic Economic Growth
CLIMATE STRATEGY	To champion sustainable growth	-	-	To build climate resilience	To support the achievement of Net Zero To build climate resilience To champion sustainable growth
NATURAL ENVIRONMENT STRATEGIES	Nature Conservation & Resilience Strategy 1. Biodiversity: To protect and enhance the biodiversity of our open spaces 2. Resilience & Adaptation: To increase the resilience of our open spaces within a wider, interconnected natural landscape. Culture, Heritage & Learning Strategy 1. Developing nature connection and pro-environmental behaviours Access & Recreation Strategy 1. Balance the needs of visitors with the requirements of protecting the natural and heritage assets of the open spaces	Community Engagement Strategy 4. Thriving Spaces; Creating spaces that attract people and improve their lives Culture, Heritage & Learning Strategy 2. Developing well-being through spending time in nature or through our heritage 5. Ensuring the effective care, management and promotion of our offer. Access & Recreation Strategy 1. Balance the needs of visitors with the requirements of protecting the natural and heritage assets of the open spaces	Community Engagement Strategy 2. Removing Barriers: Identifying and removing barriers to participation in our spaces and work 4. Thriving Spaces; Creating spaces that attract people and improve their lives Access & Recreation Strategy 2. Enable the best possible visitor journey, creating the right information from pre -visit to a stress-free and enjoyable on-site experience; 3. Provide welcoming places that visitors from all backgrounds and abilities are comfortable to explore	Community Engagement Strategy 3. Ownership: Cultivating a sense of deep pride in and attachment to our spaces amongst users 5. Knowledge exchange: Continuous transfer of information between the Corporation and its customers Culture, Heritage & Learning Strategy 1. Developing nature connection and pro-environmental behaviours 2. Developing well-being through spending time in nature or through our heritage 4. Developing greater engagement, confidence and enjoyment Access & Recreation Strategy 4. Build understanding and knowledge about the open spaces. Visitors will respect one another and will care for and advocate for the sites.	Nature Conservation & Resilience Strategy 2. Resilience & Adaptation: To increase the resilience of our open spaces within a wider, interconnected natural landscape. 3. Evidence: To establish a natural capital-based management approach across our open spaces.
	OUTCOME / PERFORMANCE MEASURE	Green Flag and Heritage Award Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation Adopted FC Woodland Management Plan	Green Flag and Heritage Award Heritage assets secured and protected Our practices are financially, socially, and environmentally sustainable	Green Flag and Heritage Award Improved playground & café facilities Measurable improvement in visitor accessibility Positive customer feedback	Full annual programme of well-attended events Increase in volunteering, through existing groups (i.e. Transition Town) or establishment of a new Friends of Highgate Wood group Reduction in incidences of site misuse

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9.0 Delivery of the Highgate Wood Vision

To deliver and achieve the Wood Vision through the five main themes below, a number of objectives have been developed in this Management Plan. To achieve this vision, we recognise the importance of working towards an agreed national standard for good practice in the management of parks and open spaces. The objectives will contribute towards the Green Flag Award criteria, the benchmark national standard for publicly accessible parks and green spaces in the United Kingdom.

Theme 1: Sustainable Woodland Management

Implement the Woodland Management Plan, which aligns conservation goals with community use, focusing on long-term ecological resilience and nature recovery, in particular threats posed by tree diseases.

To achieve this, we will:

- Preserve the woodland's character as a hornbeam coppice with oak standards while enhancing the variety of native trees and shrubs.
- Promote greater structural diversity within the woodland by fostering a broader age range of trees and coppice, a robust shrub layer, rich ground flora, and ample dead wood at both aerial and ground levels.
- Manage the ponds and meadow to provide additional, valuable wildlife habitats.
- Adapt management practices to strengthen resilience against current and emerging threats, such as tree diseases, invasive species, and climate change.
- Reduce damage from compaction and erosion while encouraging public access and enjoyment.
- Continue to survey birds, bats, and fungi; monitor oak standard and sapling populations; and document wildlife sightings.

The Woodland are under a great deal of pressure and the oak standards in particular are continuing to decline - about 12-13 trees are lost annually, or about 1% of the approximately 1154 oak standards in the Wood (as counted in 2018).

The arboricultural team conducts bi-annual surveys of oak trees for signs of Oak Processionary Moth (OPM) and Oak Decline. All high risk tree safety zones in Highgate Wood are inspected every twelve months by Professional Tree Inspection certificated City of London staff. Medium and low risk tree safety zones are inspected by the same staff on a twelve to twenty four months

cycle.'. Any necessary tree work is performed by the arboricultural team or, if required, an external contractor. Additional Tree Safety Inspections are carried out across Highgate Wood after events of high wind.

Ref	Objective	Timescale
1.1	Continue the programme of creating new Conservation Areas and creating new (or expanding existing) smaller canopy gaps.	Ongoing
1.2	Increase the diversity of native trees and shrubs and the structural diversity of the Wood through small quantities of annual planting.	Ongoing
1.3	Maintain the pond and meadow – mow meadow annually, relocate oak regeneration, monitor pond for over-shading	Ongoing
1.4	Managing and eradicating invasive species including Laurel and squirrels.	Ongoing
1.5	Mitigate visitor pressures (including dogs) on woodland habitats.	Short-term
1.6	Carry out Tree Safety Inspections and continue monitoring programmes for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Oak decline ▪ OPM ▪ Sweet Chestnut blight 	Ongoing
1.7	Renew Woodland Management Plan in 2028	Medium-Term

Theme 2: Culture & Heritage

Preserve and interpret Highgate Wood's historical features, connecting its past with its future through meaningful experiences.

To achieve this, we will:

- Preserve, manage and interpret for public understanding the significant heritage assets of Highgate Wood, including the earthworks, ancient woodland features, the Roman Kiln site, key developments from the Victorian era, and evidence of the Wood's wartime use.
- Work with the Friends of Highgate Roman Kiln to promote and utilise the restored Roman Kiln as an educational asset.
- Prevent damage to heritage assets as a result of visitor pressure and tree-related issues (addressed in actions 1.5 and 1.6 above)

Ref	Objective	Timescale
2.1	Develop a programme of heritage-themed events throughout the year, including the	Ongoing

Ref	Objective	Timescale
	restored Roman Kiln.	
2.2	Regularly review and update interpretative information within the education centre.	Short-term
2.3	Conserve all earthworks through gradual vegetation removal, fencing and interpretation. Ongoing maintenance of the earthworks will be required.	Ongoing
2.4	Maintain standards as set by site specification to achieve Green Flag Park and Green Heritage Award status.	Annual
2.5	Consider other potential heritage projects to build on the success of the Roman Kiln scheme.	Long-term

Theme 3: Facilities & Access

Maintain and upgrade visitor facilities with sustainable design principles and improve visitor accessibility while protecting the woodland's character.

To achieve this, we will:

- Identify key priorities for budget investment in order to secure required upgrades to built infrastructure. This includes both the playground and café facility.
- Improve site access arrangements in order to maintain a balance between providing DDA-compliant access for all abilities, whilst preventing/discouraging access to the site for bikes and motorbikes.
- Ensure all site infrastructure and furniture is maintained in good and serviceable condition, and replaced or upgraded where required.
- Review and update third-party contracts for concessions as required.

Ref	Objective	Timescale
3.1	Refurbish playground (to include securing internal funding).	Short-term
3.2	Re-tender cafe contract and upgrade facilities as required.	Short-term
3.3	Review site entrances and select key points for access upgrades; include for updating site signage/maps to identify accessible entrances and routes.	Short-term
3.4	Undertake a regular programme of path surfacing upgrades, in particular where impacted by flooding, and in connection to routes between key accessible entrances (as per 3.3)	Ongoing

Ref	Objective	Timescale
3.5	Review current rental/lease arrangements with sports clubs and refresh as required.	Short-term
3.6	Regular inspections of Highgate Wood's infrastructure and undertaking repairs/replacements as required.	Annual

Theme 4: Community & Education

Develop programmes that engage local schools, residents, and visitors in woodland management, promoting conservation through education and participation.

To achieve this, we will:

- Continue working closely with existing community groups and bodies, and seek to increase engagement and participation wherever possible;
- Deliver ongoing programmes of diverse and accessible events and activities, targeting a range of age groups and social backgrounds;
- Develop new ways in which the natural and cultural heritage of Highgate Wood can be best interpreted to site visitors;
- Increase visitor awareness of site sensitivity to help target issues from dogs (i.e. professional walkers, flea-treatment, etc) and other problems of misuse, in addition to Health & Safety issues related to trees and OPM.
- Continued professional development of Highgate Wood staff to ensure they have all the required knowledge and technical abilities to engage with and manage the general public.
- Work collaboratively with other open spaces, groups and organisations to consider how best to maximise opportunities and tackle issues.

Ref	Objective	Timescale
4.1	Re-explore the potential for creating a dedicated Friends of Highgate Wood volunteer group (potentially building upon the existing Friends of Highgate Roman Kiln).	Short-term
4.2	Set annual targets for events and activities and use these to develop a rich and diverse programme to benefit multiple groups.	Ongoing
4.3	Look into developing a QR-code trail for trees and other features around the site.	Medium-term
4.4	Temporary signage and/or a web page (QR-code) with guidance on professional dog	Short-term

Ref	Objective	Timescale
	walking and to educate about impact on ancient woodland habitat.	
4.5	Release annual guidance at certain times of year on seasonal issues, such as OPM.	Ongoing
4.6	Undertake regular consultation with other relevant groups and organisations in the locality to consider issues and opportunities that can best be approached through collaboration.	Ongoing
4.7	Provide any other necessary training for staff to deliver tasks safely and efficiently (as per training matrix).	Ongoing

Theme 5: Climate Resilience

Adopt sustainable management practices that are adaptive to climate change and other environmental pressures, and able to mitigate impacts where possible to ensure that Highgate Wood remains a flourishing ecosystem and contributes to City Corporation strategic targets.

To achieve this, we will:

- Continue managing Highgate Wood to ensure long-term viability of canopy cover and all of the environmental benefits this provides;
- Develop greater understanding about Highgate Wood's hydrological function in the area and whether there are any opportunities for increasing its flood alleviation role. Highgate Wood will aim to work closer with Queen's Wood, Friends of Queen's Wood and their experts in relation the flooding hydrology;
- Learn more about Highgate Wood's carbon storage and natural capital potential, and use results to inform management;
- Review current arrangements around management practices (i.e. waste and recycling), vehicles, equipment and buildings to understand carbon footprint and measures required to improve.

Ref	Objective	Timescale
5.1	Continue to work towards achieving the City of London Corporation Climate Action Strategy.	Ongoing
5.2	Understand more about Highgate Wood's hydrology in order to inform improved management and contribute to flood	Medium-term

Ref	Objective	Timescale
	alleviation.	
5.3	Review the Natural Capital/Carbon baseline for Highgate Wood and explore potential for improving/capitalising on asset.	Medium-term
5.4	Review/upgrade fleet to ensure compliance with ULEZ, and where possible a shift to electric vehicles.	Medium-term
5.5	Improve environmental performance of buildings throughout the site, eg, insulation of lodges, updating heating systems and photovoltaic installation.	Long-term
5.6	Review current waste and recycling arrangements and look to improve processes where possible.	Short-term

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10.0 Five-Year Action Plan

The following table sets out an Action Plan for Highgate Wood covering the next five years. It focusses primarily on capital projects aimed at delivering management objectives whilst the Annual Work Programme covers mostly operational, day-to-day maintenance. It is intended that a new Action Plan of capital items is produced at the end of the five-year review.

Ref	Project Detail	Responsibility	Target Year	Timing	Est. Cost	Mgt Obj.
AP1	Create new 'Conservation Areas' and/or expand existing ones within woodland; including for temporary fencing and signage.	Highgate Wood Management Team (HWMT)	3-4	n/a	TBC	1.1
AP2	Undertake small quantities of annual tree/shrub planting (average approx. 25 stems per year). Seek grant funding (i.e. Woodland Trust) for supply of trees.	HMWT	All	Nov - Feb	TBC	1.2
AP3	Undertake de-shading vegetation clearance works around the pond.	HMWT; volunteers	3	Sep - Feb	n/a	1.3
AP4	Volunteer task to carefully dig up oak regeneration from the meadow areas and move to more suitable locations (incl. for deer protection).	HMWT; volunteers	Any	Nov - Feb	n/a	1.3
AP5	Continued woodland management work to target invasive/dominant plant spaces, in particular laurel.	HMWT; volunteers	Any	Sep - Feb	n/a	1.4
AP6	Production of a new FC Woodland Management Plan for Highgate Wood; include for meetings with the FC Area Officer. Secure grant funding from the FC for plan production.	External Consultant (EC); HMWT	3-4	n/a	£2.5k	1.7
AP7	Devise, promote and deliver an annual programme of heritage-themed events and activities, including walks & talks.	HMWT; City Corporation; Friends of Highgate Roman Kiln (FHRK)	All	n/a	TBC	2.1; 4.2
AP8	Undertake a project to review the condition of the earthworks, to identify issues of vulnerability and damage, and prepare a detailed, costed work programme. Note: Survey work best undertaken over winter when ground flora is absent.	City of London Environment Department (City Corporation); EC	1-2	Nov - Feb	TBC	2.3
AP9	Update all interpretative material across the site, including within the education centre and on-site entrance signage; consider potential for new provision alongside these upgrades, such as a QR-code Tree Trail.	City Corporation; HMWT; FHRK	2-3	n/a	TBC	2.2; 4.3

Ref	Project Detail	Responsibility	Target Year	Timing	Est. Cost	Mgt Obj.
AP10	Undertake playground refurbishment project, to include public consultation, design stages, securing planning permission etc.	City Corporation	3-5	n/a	TBC	3.1
AP11	Re-tender café contract, to include for facility upgrades.	City Corporation	TBC	n/a	TBC	3.2
AP12	Consultation-led project to identify opportunities for upgrading site entrances and access routes to provide improved accessibility for different user groups.	City Corporation; HMWT	1-2	n/a	TBC	3.3; 3.4
AP13	Arrange an engagement event to generate interest in the possibility of forming a Friends of Highgate Wood group. Further action to be taken dependent upon outcome of event.	City Corporation; HMWT	1-2	n/a	n/a	4.1; 4.2; 4.6
AP14	Use of temporary signage, websites and/or newsletter communications to share information with visitors on seasonal and new issues, such as OPM, impact of dogs, events etc. Include for communicating with other sites/groups to coordinate approach where possible.	HMWT	All	n/a	TBC	4.4; 4.5; 4.6
AP15	Undertake consultation and engagement to inform the development of a licencing scheme for Professional Dog Walking.	City Corporation	TBC	n/a	TBC	4.4; 2.3; 1.5
AP16	Use dead-hedging and other natural barriers to establish path networks throughout the woodland and discourage free roaming.	HMWT; volunteers	All	Sep - Feb	n/a	1.5; 2.3
AP17	Commission a Hydrological Study (potentially in combination with Queen's Wood) to understand the woodland's role in flood alleviation and to suggest opportunities for enhancement.	EC	2-3	n/a	TBC	5.2
AP18	Build on the findings of the 2024 Natural Capital Baseline Assessment to look at Highgate Wood's current levels of carbon storage, and identify opportunities for improvement, and the potential to capitalise on assets.	EC; City Corporation	3-4	n/a	TBC	5.3
AP19	Assess current carbon footprint of all buildings, vehicles and machinery, and implement a programme of improvements to achieve tangible reductions.	City Corporation; EC	3-4	n/a	TBC	5.3; 5.4; 5.5; 5.6
AP20	Develop an event (or series of events) specifically looking at a 'Cultural Exchange' between groups/staff involved on different sites.	City Corporation; HMWT	1-2	n/a	n/a	4.6; 4.8
AP21	Develop a more varied and engaging programme of practical volunteer tasks, to be used as a basis for discussions around AP13.	HMWT; volunteers	All	n/a	n/a	4.1; 4.2

Ref	Project Detail	Responsibility	Target Year	Timing	Est. Cost	Mgt Obj.
AP22	Continue to implement pest control measures across the site to tackle problems with grey squirrel and rats. Include for public education/notification.	HWMT; Contractor (C)	All	n/a	TBC	1.4; 4.4

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11.0 Monitoring & Review

Implementation

The Highgate Wood Management Plan is set to continue the work of the 2013 Conservation Management Plan, with priority projects identified in a five-year Action Plan and cyclical activities implemented via the Annual Work Programme.

The implementation of this Management Plan will continue to be overseen by the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee and City Corporation Environment Department.

An annual review and update of the five-year Action Plan will be undertaken, and an annual Business Plan prepared. Resources will be allocated to priority projects on a five-year rolling basis, informed by the Outcomes and Priorities in this Management Plan and aligned with the City Corporation's business planning cycle.

At the end of the first five years, the Management Plan will be subject to a full review and update, and a new five-year Action Plan setting out priority projects will be produced.

Monitoring

Monitoring and tracking progress towards achieving the Outcomes will help us to understand the impact of our work, and to share and celebrate successes.

We will continue to monitor progress towards the Outcomes and Priorities set out in this Management Plan, and report back to the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queens Park Committee.

Learning and improving

Monitoring the changes or benefits that result from our activities provides insight into and understanding of the effectiveness of our actions and highlights where we can develop our work to make the biggest difference.

Evaluating effectiveness has enabled us to check our course and to make corrections in a timely manner, capturing learning and building in improvements as we proceed.

Communicating our impact

Each year, we will prepare an Annual Business Plan and Work Programmes for Highgate Wood which set out the priorities and how these deliver against the Themes and Outcomes described in both the City Corporation Strategies and this Management Plan.

12.0 References

Baseline natural capital assessment of the City of London Corporation's open spaces (Natural Capital Solutions January 2024)

Highgate and Kilburn Open Spaces Act 1886

City of London Corporation (Open Spaces) Act 2018

City of London Open Spaces Department Managing Tree Safety (2014)

City of London Café Review (July 2023)

City of London Corporate Plan (2024-2029)

City of London Climate Action Strategy (2020-2029)

City of London Tree Strategy (May 2012)

City of London Global City of Sport (2023-2030)

City of London Biodiversity Action Plan (2021-2026)

Highgate Wood Woodland Management Plan (2018-2028)

Highgate Wood Conservation Management Plan (January 2013)

Highgate Wood Heritage Assessment (April 2013)

Natural Environment Nature Conservation and Resilience Strategy (2024-2029)

Natural Environment Access and Recreation Strategy (2024-2029)

Natural Environment Community Engagement Strategy (2024-2029)

Natural Environment Culture Heritage and Learning Strategy (2024-2029)

Appendix A Highgate Wood Map



Highgate Wood

Registered Charity

MAP KEY

- Cricket pitch
- Football pitch
- Playground
- Bus route
- London Underground station
- Disabled parking

- Refreshments
- Toilet/disabled toilet
- Made footpaths
- Capital Ring route
- Gate
- Holly, Woodland and scrub

- Area where bluebells thrive
- Site of ancient pottery kilns AD 50-150
- Fenced-off conservation areas and the years they were enclosed
In all but the 1987 area, which is a permanent reserve, fences are removed after 10 years, to allow tree regeneration.

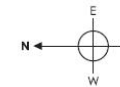
ACCESSIBILITY

- All gates are accessible to wheelchairs, EXCEPT Lodge Gate which has nine steps and New Gate which is located at the bottom of a steep slope.
- Mobility scooter access is via Onslow Gate only.
- Disabled parking access is via Onslow Gate; the disabled car park is near the café.



This is one of 14 green spaces managed by the City of London at little cost to the general public.

In an emergency contact the Highgate Wood Keepers
Tel: 07786 538932
www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/highgatewood





Queen's
Park

Registered Charity

City of London Corporation

Queen's Park
Management Plan
(2025-2035)

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City of London Corporation North London Open Spaces

Queen's Park Management Plan (2025-2035)

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1.0 Foreword - Draft

This Management Plan states our commitment to realising the vision to protect and conserve Queen's Park to ensure it continues to enrich the lives of current and future generations.

The Plan aligns with the City of London Corporation's Corporate Plan (2024-2029), which provides a framework with six strategic outcomes, to guide our efforts over the next five years. This Plan will be integrated at every level of our work, serving as the 'golden thread' that connects all activities across the organisation.

Additionally, it supports the City Corporation's broader goals of contributing to a flourishing society, shaping exceptional environments, and fostering a thriving economy.

The aims, objectives and actions set out in this Management Plan also contribute to overarching City Corporation strategies to address climate change and the management of all aspects of the natural environment within the City Corporation's North London Open Spaces, including Natural Environment Strategies for nature conservation and resilience, recreation and access, community engagement, and culture, heritage and learning.

This Management Plan is also being prepared in the context of a corporate review of the challenges facing our Natural Environment Charities to be completed in 2025. A key objective of the review is to look at opportunities to enable the charities to become more financially independent and provide a more secure and sustainable funding model for the future.

The Management Plan outlines the strategic Outcomes and Objectives that will guide management and ensure we remain on course over its ten-year duration, in accordance with the following four themes:

1. Caring: We care for the Park to ensure it continues to fulfil its many functions for the benefit of the community, heritage and the environment, now and for future generations.
2. Excellence: We maintain high environmental, conservation, heritage and horticultural standards.
3. Inclusion: We ensure that the Park and its facilities are inclusive, so that all can enjoy the benefits of enhanced physical and mental well-being.
4. Community: We engage visitors and the local community in understanding and caring for the Park.

This Plan establishes a framework for Queen's Park's management and uses an outcomes-based approach. Identifying measures for success will enable us to monitor progress and stay on track to realise the Queen's Park Vision.

Preparation of this Plan has been informed by: the existing Queen's Park Management Plan (2024); current policy and strategies within the City Corporation, and in a wider London and national policy context; and review of current projects and priorities for Queen's Park. The Plan is the product of an evidence-based approach, using existing plans and surveys relating to the Park, including the Conservation Management Plan (CMP) prepared in 2014, feedback from the Green Flag application process, and wider ecological and visitor surveys which illustrate the vital contribution of the Park to ecological networks and biodiversity and as an invaluable amenity and public open space for the local and wider area.

The views and aspirations of the Queen's Park community and all those who love and care for the Park have been fundamental in informing the Plan and the vision for the Park, including visitors, local residents' groups and volunteers, City Corporation Park staff and maintenance teams, and wider stakeholders including the London Borough of Brent. Their contributions have been invaluable in guiding the Plan and Park vision, and the need to balance conservation and management of natural and heritage assets with the maintenance of an invaluable public amenity which meets the wide ranging needs of the Park's diverse range of users.

William Upton

Chairman of Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood, and Queen's Park Committee

2.0 Introduction and Purpose of the Plan

Queen's Park is a 12-hectare (30-acre) public park in the London Borough of Brent. Recent surveys show that the Park attracts over 1.1 million visits every year, offering a valuable green space with a wide range of features and facilities. This Plan covers a ten-year period and sets out the vision, themes and outcomes which will inform Park management and maintenance.

Highgate Wood was acquired by the Corporation of London in 1886 from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners under the Highgate and Kilburn Open Spaces Act of that year. It was officially dedicated as "an open space forever" on October 30, 1886, by the Lord Mayor, Sir John Staples. Today, Highgate Wood remains under the ownership of the City of London Corporation and is managed through the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee.

The key purposes of the Plan are to:

- Inform stakeholders, users and visitors about the Park and the aims and objectives of management in order to achieve the Park vision and to safeguard its assets, contribute to wider City Corporation strategies and policies and maintain the Park's annual, well deserved Green Flag and Green Flag Heritage awards;
- Guide management and maintenance by: describing the Park's assets, features and facilities and their significance, the aims and objectives for their management; and by setting out the management structures and resources for Park maintenance;
- Support applications to Green Flag and Green Flag Heritage and other initiatives, such as grant funding applications for facilities provision, improvement or heritage conservation.

Structure of the Management Plan

The Plan is set out under six main headings:

Management context – a summary of the existing plans and wider strategies which will inform this Plan

Description of Queen's Park and its assets, facilities, attributes, heritage significance and contribution to amenity, recreation, biodiversity, heritage and community benefits; visit numbers and customer survey feedback

Green Flag and Green Flag Heritage awards and feedback

Community Engagement feedback

Vision for the Park, including aims, objectives and outcomes

Management structure: sets out the role of the City Corporation and Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Kilburn Charity in management of the site, the committees and consultation groups that help guide management, and the volunteer groups that make Queen's Park a success.

Management Objectives and Outputs set out by Green Flag criteria

Monitoring and Review- describes how progress will be assessed and recorded and key milestones at which this progress will be reviewed.

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3.0 Management Context

Historically, Queen's Park management and maintenance has been guided by five-year Management Plans. The most recent Plan ran from 2018-2023. The current Management Plan (2024) is a one-year interim Plan prepared in January 2024 to support the Park's annual application for Green Flag status, which it successfully retained. The Plan is supported by a detailed Annual Works Programme, which sets out specific projects for delivery within the Plan lifetime and annual cyclical works for the ongoing maintenance of the Park, including regular, year-round and seasonal tasks and allocation of management responsibility.

This ten-year Plan is set within the context of wider City Corporation plans and strategies which address the delivery of the City Corporation's overall aims and objectives across key areas. Key among these are the new Corporate Plan (2024-2029), the Natural Environment Strategies (2024-2029), and the Climate Action Strategy (2020-2027), which set out the City Corporation's strategic approach to our managed open spaces, assets, and activities.

The Plan looks forward over the period to 2035, drawing on the vision and objectives, themes and policies set out in the 2024 Management Plan and wider City Corporation strategies, considering progress made in projects identified in previous Plans and identifying and prioritising the outcomes for the next ten years. The ten-year period provides a longer term framework appropriate to the achievement of wider strategic City Corporation aims, and to the delivery of Park-based projects over a longer time scale. The Plan will be subject to a five year review to monitor progress in the delivery of the Park vision.

The Covid pandemic has also changed our perception and understanding of the value of parks and open spaces to the health and well-being of local people. More and more people now regularly enjoy the benefits of parks and open spaces, which does bring with it added pressure to conserve and enhance the natural fabric of assets such as Queen's Park.

The Queen's Park Conservation Management Plan (CMP) prepared in 2014 offers a comprehensive analysis of the Park's history and significance. The CMP continues to inform management of the Park, including current and future project proposals and funding applications, repair and conservation works, long term management and maintenance strategies and applications for Green Flag and Green Heritage status. This Management Plan has been prepared within the context of the CMP to ensure that future management and maintenance continue to conserve the Park's heritage significance and historic fabric.

The Queen's Park Management Team, and the Superintendent of North London Open Spaces, have been actively involved in the preparation of this Plan.

The Plan also draws on feedback from the Green Flag assessment process, which highlights areas in which the Park is delivering well, as well as aspects requiring improvement, and on extensive public feedback from the Queen's Park Community Engagement report (March 2023). The key points from these reports are included later in the Plan.

Preparation of the Plan has also been informed by consultation with key stakeholders. This includes an extensive submission from the Queen's Park Consultative Group.

4.0 Policy Context

Queen's Park is owned by the Mayor and Commonalty and Citizens of the City of London (also referred to as 'the City of London Corporation'), and run by it as one of its open spaces with charitable status. It remains part of the Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Kilburn Charity (reg. 232986), with the City of London Corporation as the trustee.

The Park was acquired by the City of London Corporation along with Highgate Wood from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners under the Highgate and Kilburn Open Spaces Act 1886. The Highgate and Kilburn Open Spaces Act 1886 provides the primary legislation guiding the City Corporation's management of Queen's Park. The City of London Corporation (Open Spaces) Act 2018 provides additional primary legislation for the management of the City Corporation's parks and open spaces.

This Management Plan is set within the context of City Corporation policy and strategies which provide the framework for the delivery of the City Corporation's overarching aims and priorities. Underpinning all of these is the City of London Corporation's Corporate Plan, which sets out the vision and strategic outcomes to inform all of its work. Within this context, the City Corporation has developed targeted strategies to address key issues of climate change and management of the natural environment to enhance future resilience of its open spaces and the wide-ranging benefits they deliver for nature conservation and the community.

Wider London strategies provide additional context for the Site's SINC status and nature conservation significance. The Greater London Council (GLA) is currently preparing a Local Nature Recovery Strategy which will set out priorities for nature recovery across London as part of a linked biodiversity network.

City of London Corporate Plan (2024-2029)

The Corporate Plan is a tool to guide thinking, planning, decision-making and evaluation across the City Corporation and sets out the Strategic Outcomes to be delivered across the organisation over the period covered by the Plan. The Corporate Plan is a framework containing six strategic outcomes, which are

embedded at all levels of work and form the 'golden thread' across the organisation.



This Management Plan will guide the management of Queen's Park to safeguard and enhance its role in the delivery of these outcomes, with particular reference to its contribution to community, environmental sustainability, and the provision of flourishing public spaces.

The inclusion of a specific outcome relating to Flourishing Public Spaces emphasises the importance attached to these areas to delivery of the wider strategic aims of the City Corporation.

Natural Environment Strategies (2024-2029)

The four Natural Environment Strategies align with the Corporate Plan and set out the City Corporation's strategic approach to managed open spaces, assets and activities. The Strategies cover four key areas which will inform the future management of all North London Open Spaces and other sites within the City Corporation's portfolio: Nature Conservation and Resilience; Access and Recreation; Culture, Heritage and Learning; and Community Engagement.

The Strategies describe our objectives for the natural environment and the measures by which we will assess our performance against these objectives. They will also

inform our business plans and management plans and set out how our activities will align with corporate priorities and policies. This Plan has been prepared within this wider context to ensure that Queen's Park remains a key contributor to the delivery of the four Strategies.



City of London Climate Action Strategy (2020-2027)

This Strategy sets out the City Corporation's climate action commitments within the Square Mile and across all the City Corporation's wider assets, including open spaces.

The City Corporation will make major investments to achieve the following:

- Net zero by 2027 in the City Corporation's operations
- Net zero by 2040 across the City Corporation's full value chain
- Net zero by 2040 in the Square Mile
- Climate resilience in our buildings, public spaces and infrastructure

Among the key areas for investment, the Strategy highlights:

- Enhancing carbon removal in our open spaces
- Protecting our shared natural resources
- Integrating climate considerations into all our decisions

The City Corporation's parks and open spaces are central to the delivery of Net Zero by 2027. They are estimated to currently remove 16,000 tonnes of CO₂ per year. This is equivalent to 40% of the City Corporation's scope 1 and 2 emissions.

This Management Plan aligns with the aims of the Climate Action Strategy. The management aims and priorities for Queen's Park underpin the climate action commitments which are of particular relevance to the management of open spaces.

Natural Capital

In January 2024, the Park was part of a wider baseline natural capital assessment of the City Corporation's open spaces¹ to map natural capital assets, biodiversity and ecosystem services baselines, to estimate their net natural capital value and to make recommendations for enhancing ecosystem service provision and biodiversity.

The findings highlight the value of the North London Open Spaces and the wider portfolio of City Corporation sites:

Queen's Park has a high capacity for carbon sequestration, air pollution regulation and water flow regulation, as the site is dominated by broadleaved woodland and parkland with trees. This site had a moderate capacity for pollinator visitation rates for both spring and summer (due to the grassland, woodland and garden areas), local climate regulation, and water quality regulation. The site has low accessible nature capacity, as although it is open to the public, it is not as accessible in terms of roads and footpaths as other greenspaces in that area.

There is no significant demand for the air and noise regulation services, but some demand for local climate regulation in the settlements around the site, along with a very high demand for access to nature.

The net natural capital asset value of Queen's Park is £110 million over 50 years. The site delivers a benefit to cost ratio of 12.1, which means that every £1 spent on maintenance delivers £12.1 in benefits.

Recommendations for enhancement include:

The goals of increasing woodland (by closing gaps in the existing canopy), creating ponds, and managing a woodland walk area will all help improve habitat condition, biodiversity and ecosystem service provision. This will also help improve natural capital asset value by promoting increases in carbon storage and sequestration, water flow and quality regulation, air purification, noise and local climate regulation, recreation, and health. The mowing regime and introduction of hedgerows should also increase some of these services along with pollination. If the amenity grassland area in the park is not required for specific recreational purposes, this could be either transformed into a semi-natural grassland or made into parkland with trees for further provision of benefits.

The management recommendations set out in this Plan embrace Queen's Park's critical function in contributing the key benefits delivered by North London Open Spaces as a whole, including, in particular, those relating to biodiversity, carbon sequestration and health and well-being.

¹ Baseline natural capital assessment of the City of London Corporation's open spaces (Natural Capital Solutions Ltd, January 2024)

5.0 About Queen's Park

Queen's Park is a 12-hectare (30-acre) public park situated in the London Borough of Brent in North London. It was acquired by the City Corporation in 1886 from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and opened to the public a year later. Today it provides a safe and relaxing environment attracting over 1.1 million visits a year.

The Park was originally designed by Alexander McKenzie, one of London's foremost park designers. McKenzie's plans and the Park's overall heritage significance are set out in the 2014 CMP. Although prepared over ten years ago, the CMP is key in understanding the significance of the Park and informing management and maintenance to ensure the conservation of historic assets.

Today, Queen's Park is a Victorian style urban park that contains a wide range of facilities which include open general amenity space comprising grassland, including wildflower areas, trees and an accessible path network, an ornamental garden known as the Quiet Garden, two playgrounds, a small urban farm, a nine-hole pitch and putt course, table tennis tables, six tennis courts, a listed bandstand built in 1891, a woodland walk at the north end of the Park and a small area of community allotments. At the centre of the Park there is a café with indoor and outdoor seating and toilets.

Natural Environment

Queen's Park includes important habitats, including woodland and wet grassland. The woodland walk and scattered mature trees, *including dead wood resources left in situ [have] the potential to support a range of bird, bat, invertebrate and fungi species. [..]. The wet grassland areas with an interesting mix of flowering plants which provide a good foraging habitat for birds and invertebrates².* These contribute to the Site's designation as a Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation.

Mature broadleaf trees are a defining characteristic of the Park, providing a sense of place, visual amenity, shade and shelter for visitors and habitat, foraging and nesting opportunities for birds, mammals and invertebrates. A number of the Park's 500+ trees, including a veteran oak, pre-date the Park. The Park also contributes to linkages with adjoining green spaces to benefit wildlife.

Since 2018, in partnership with Butterfly Conservation, new areas of habitat have been created to enhance climate resilience and enhance biodiversity, including 150m² of wildflower meadow. In 2023, a new 24m² area of scrub was created, including species such as hawthorn, common buckthorn, blackthorn and dogrose, to offer food sources for species such as brimstone butterfly and the vulnerable brown hairstreak. Since 2023, the Park has also relaxed mowing regimes across 0.8 hectares of amenity grassland, allowing reversion to meadow.

² CMP 2014

Park Designations

The Park carries heritage and nature conservation designations, including:

- Queen's Park Conservation Area: the Park is located in the central part of the Conservation Area, which includes the Park and surrounding residential roads bordered broadly by the overground railway line to the north, Salusbury Road to the east, Harvist Road to the south and Chamberlayne Road to the west. The Conservation Area is distinguished by the special character of its natural and built landscape. The open green setting of the Park contrasts with the rectangular and relatively regular street pattern around it and is intrinsic to the setting of the surrounding residential housing.
- Grade II listed bandstand, dating from 1891.
- The Lych Gate is a heritage structure identified by the City Corporation Heritage Estates Section, but has no formal listing.
- The Park is a Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation, a non-statutory, local designation.

Heritage

McKenzie's design is a high-quality example of Victorian public park design using a more natural informal layout than the traditional, more formal design of the time. The Park's overall historic layout largely remains today, although over the years it has been altered to some degree by the introduction of new facilities and has lost some of its historic shrub and ornamental planting. However, it does retain some extant scattered trees planted to hide and reveal views and emphasise informality. It also retains its four original entrances (although the Lych Gate no longer functions as such) and a number of other historic features including the bandstand, Lych Gate and tennis courts.

The Park was laid out some 10 years before the start of housing development immediately around it and is illustrative of the history of the development of public parks and a *growing understanding and social ideals of the time that open spaces had the ability to calm social tensions, promote health and offer opportunities for financial investment and that an appropriate balance between housing and green space needed to be achieved*³.

During World War II, the Park functioned as a site of key importance for defence, with the construction of air raid shelters, army huts, a barrage balloon site and the location of anti-aircraft guns. 'Dig for Victory' allotments were also introduced.

Recreation and Facilities

³ CMP 2014

Queen's Park offers a safe and welcoming place for active and quiet recreation, with a range of community and sports facilities for all ages, including families, school groups, dog walkers, commuters and office workers and sports enthusiasts. The Park is also used by schools groups, for events such as film screenings and sports coaching and celebratory events such as the Queen's Park Day.

As such, the Park continues to fulfil its original function to provide a *public space for recreation and leisure for the benefit of the local community and to offer a diverse range of passive and active recreational pursuits, open to all at nil or very low cost*⁴.

The CMP highlighted a number of consultation findings which illustrate the importance of the Park to its users, including the *variety of amenities, open space/openness and naturalness/access to nature which Queen Park offers within a historic designed landscape*⁵. This Management Plan includes updated information about Park usage, responses to public consultation and feedback from visitors and Green Flag applications.

The key features and facilities include:

⁴ CMP 2014

⁵ CMP 2014

Parkland and paths

The open grassland areas provide opportunities for general recreation, including walking and exercising, sitting, picnics and informal games. Defined areas are sown with a wildflower mix to create seasonal areas of meadow to enhance visual amenity and biodiversity. Parkland trees and shrubs provide shade and shelter, create visual and seasonal diversity, define spaces within the Park and offer opportunities for wildlife.

The path network largely retains the figure of 8 layout of the original McKenzie design, but has been modified in the northern part of the Park with construction of the Pitch & Putt course.

The woodland walk offers a feature walk through an area of mature broadleaved woodland in the northern part of the Park. There is potentially scope to extend the walk, and this is currently under review.

The south eastern part of the Park includes the Quiet Garden, which features areas of ornamental planting set within lawn. Low railings are designed to discourage access into these areas. In recent years, traditional seasonal bedding schemes in the garden have been largely replaced by more sustainable perennial planting. The transition was delayed during the Covid pandemic and remains work in progress.

The Park includes over 100 benches.

Play facilities

Playgrounds/Sandpit

The western side of the park features a range of play facilities, including a large play area with bespoke timber equipment encouraging adventure play. The equipment is designed to have a 10-15 year lifespan. The bespoke nature of the play elements is such that replacement parts have to be imported from manufacturer and repairs can therefore be slow. Some structures may need a design review within the next five years.

The sandpit, designed specifically for children under 12, was opened in June 2024 following complete refurbishment at a cost of £130,000, funded in collaboration with partners including the London Borough of Brent, local organisations and donors.

Paddling pool

The paddling pool is currently closed but historically is a very popular feature. Issues remain unresolved at present, and a review was carried out in April 2024.

Bandstand

The bandstand is located in parkland in the north of the park and is part of the Park's Victorian heritage, constructed in 1891 and now a Grade II listed building. The bandstand offers free entertainment events and can be hired for private parties.

Urban farm

The farm is located in the east of the Park. Opened in the 1990s, it operates as an idealised smallholding and is an important contributor to the Park's popularity, attracting an estimated 80,000 visitors annually. The farm is open daily until 2 hours before Park closing time and has a dedicated entrance within the Park which is locked at night. Entry is free, but donations are requested via a cash box. The farm attracts families and children and is also used by school groups for whom both guided and self guided visits are available. The farm has a small collection including sheep, pygmy goats, chickens and ducks. Quail, bred in house, are a recent introduction. The collection has developed ad hoc over a number of years and includes animals from other facilities needing homes. The farm manager and City Corporation are currently reviewing the collection with a view to phasing out non-UK native species through natural wastage and creating a more sustainable collection through a ten-year stock planning programme. The possibility of a breeding programme is also under consideration. The plan also seeks to identify income generation options to support future plans, for example through adoption schemes, and a facility for card payment for donations. The farm underwent refurbishment in 2017, but requires further investment in the fabric, including replacement of fencing and the pump for the pond. Overall management focuses on sustainability and reuse of materials and equipment where possible. All farm waste is taken off site.

Sports and active recreation

The pitch and putt course which occupies an area in the north of the Park is the only such nine hole course in inner London. The course is open daily from 11am until 2 hours before Park closing. A charge is made for usage. Maintenance requires a level of specialist expertise in greenkeeping skills and a more intensive regime than for the wider amenity grassland areas in order to maintain a safe, good quality surface fit for purpose. Admission fees contribute to the additional maintenance costs. The course has an underground irrigation system which operates as necessary during the summer months.

There are six hard surfaced tennis courts located at the centre of the Park close to the café. Open all year round, these are very popular. Courts can be booked for a fee for casual use or through an annual membership scheme. The courts are adjacent to mature trees and there are surface issues with root heave affecting one of the courts.

The Park has two free-to-use permanent table tennis tables located close to the café and tennis courts.

Although the Park has no formal facilities or fixtures for team sports, including football and rugby, the Park is widely used by the local community on an informal basis for training and tag rugby. There is a weekly 5km Sunday Park Run for juniors.

The Trim Trail includes a variety of equipment including pull up bars, parallel bars and sit up benches located around the Park. These are widely used and there is scope to extend the offer and review the overall layout.

Café and toilets

The café is open daily and is located at the centre of the Park in an attractive setting with both indoor and outdoor seating, offering a relaxed, family-style atmosphere for visitors. The café is leased to an external tenant.

Toilets are located at the café and close to the children's play areas. The play area toilets have been refurbished.

The Park has no car parking facilities. Cycle parking is located close to the café.

Allotments and beehive

A small area of community allotments is located close to the café. These are let under a licence scheme to Transition Town gardening club, which operates them on a free to use, but waiting list, basis. A local beekeeper manages a hive located close to the Quiet Garden on an informal basis.

Community Engagement, Health and Well-being

The Park offers multiple benefits for physical and mental health and well-being through outdoor recreation, formal and informal sports and exercise for all ages, opportunities to meet friends and family and build community cohesion. The Park invites engagement with nature and heritage, education and learning, and caring for the Park through volunteering and engagement with Park management.

The London Borough of Brent, in which the Park is located, contains nine of the most deprived neighbourhoods in England and is the second most culturally diverse community in England, with a mix of different ethnicities and nearly one hundred and fifty languages spoken. The local ward councillors are members of the Consultative Group.

Brent is the second most least active borough in London, where obesity remains high and is significant, and has some of the highest childhood obesity rates in London. Access to quality public green space is a priority for residents in Brent if we are to reduce inequality of access to physical activity and help improve people's well-being.

Consultation shows that Park users also come from the wider area beyond Brent. Queen's Park is a vital asset to the borough and to the wider community in this context and offers an environment and facilities which encourage engagement with the outdoors and opportunities for exercise and active recreation.

The locality includes ten schools within walking distance which regularly use the Park for outdoor classroom activities, sports and sports days, and engage with opportunities to volunteer and work with the Parks team for activities such as bulb planting or work experience on the farm.

The Queen's Park Area Residents Association (QPARA) has been an active contributor to park management since its establishment in 1973. QPARA also provides visitor feedback, and ideas, initiatives and projects to enhance the Park's fabric, facilities and heritage, including the annual Queen's Park Day, which allows local businesses and groups to showcase their talents and products to the community and attracts 10,000-15,000 people. Additionally, the Park benefits from the interest, active engagement and contributions of the Kensal Rise Residents Association.

Climate Change Mitigation

The Park has an important role within the context of mitigating the impacts of climate change and enhancing resilience.

Trees and woodland canopy create a microclimate which helps to offset urban temperatures and reduce the urban heat island effect. These also provide shade for park users and carbon sequestration to contribute to City Corporation's climate action aims, and by absorbing pollutants also help to improve air quality for visitors and the wider local area.

The permeable surface of parkland and woodland absorbs surface water and helps alleviate issues of run-off and flooding. However, there are soil compaction issues in the southern part of the Park which reduce permeability. This part of the Park, including the Lych gate, paths and south eastern boundary area, is subject to flooding after heavy rainfall, which also causes run off into Harvist Road. Management of flood events is time consuming for the grounds team. The woodland area in the north of the Park is affected by erosion and compaction. These issues could be addressed through reinstatement of planted areas. There is, however, a longer-term wider project under review to potentially extend the woodland walk, which could offer benefits for soil health and condition as well as general amenity and biodiversity.

The Park's habitats, including trees, woodland and shrubs, grassland and wildflower areas, also form part of the wider ecological network and contribute to habitat

linkages in the surrounding area for the benefit of local wildlife including birds, mammals and invertebrates.

Queen's Park



Over **80,000**
Visitors to the farm

1.1 million Visits
Over **200,000** Visits to the
playground



Over
200,000
pitch and putt users

**150m2 of
wildflower
meadow**
created since 2018



Several school sports
days and over 50
school visits to the
farm

Since 2023, relaxed
mowing regime to
create

**0.8 ha of
meadow**

**24m² of new
scrub**

created in 2023 to
support butterflies

Every **£1** spent on
maintenance of
natural assets delivers
£12.1
in benefits.

6.0 Visitor numbers and surveys

A visitor survey conducted in 2022/23 revealed that Queen's Park attracts over 1.1 million visits a year, including 200,000 visits to the playground. The busiest months are March-October.

The 2014 CMP highlighted the importance of the Park to the community, for active and quiet recreation, for its flowers, trees and greenery, farm and play facilities. The CMP identified a strong sense of ownership, attachment and connection among local residents to the Park and a high level of community involvement in relation to the management of the Park. This remains true today, evidenced by the close involvement of residents' associations and volunteer groups.

In 2022, City Corporation commissioned a Community Engagement report⁶ primarily to assess opinion on potential projects and how the overall user experience might be improved.

The report offers a picture of public opinion about the Park and the priorities for users and visitors. The report found overall support for the proposals to expand the woodland walk into the pitch and putt area (which would be reduced in size) and creation of an accessible boardwalk and pond in the woodland area. The woodland walk proposal remains under review.

Additional areas highlighted through the consultation process include:

- Remove or replace the existing paddling pool (currently not in use) with a splash pad
- Improve the toilet block (these works have been completed)
- Update the play offer to create more opportunities for older children (adventure play installations including incidental play in the woodland)
- Update café building and patio
- Dogs to remain on leads (use pitch and putt for off-lead in off-season)

⁶ Queen's Park Community Engagement Report (Arkwood, 6th March 2023)

- Re-open the Lych Gate
- Reinststate the drinking fountain

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7.0 Achievement of Green Flag and Green Heritage Awards

Green Flag

Since 1996, Queen's Park has retained its Green Flag status. It is one of only four parks to have flown the Green Flag every year since it was introduced. The scheme is the benchmark national standard for parks and green spaces.

The 2024 judging process identified many strengths from the desk assessment across all Green Flag criteria. Among its recommendations was, in summary, information on:

- Additional information in the Management Plan to show the Park's ecological and historical context
- On site composting facilities and reuse of green waste
- Reference the Conservation Management Plan (CMP) within overall objectives
- Understanding of species diversity in the Park and habitat management
- Management of vandalism and graffiti
- Use of Irrigation, selection of drought tolerant planting, reduced chemical and peat usage, plans for green electricity generation
- Management of the Park within the context of the CMP
- Horticultural management

The field assessment identified numerous strengths, concluding:

A very well-deserved Green Flag Award and all credit to the staff and supporting community for managing and maintaining this gem of a park to such a high standard.

The horticultural displays are particularly lovely and the quiet garden a delightful space that really reflects a bygone age complementing the heritage landscape of the park. The park is very clean including the park furniture which so often gets neglected in other parks. It is also very welcoming with some excellent facilities for everyone to access and enjoy.

Recommended areas for attention included:

- Vegetation management obscuring signage
- Refurbishment of toilet block (completed 2024)
- Erosion around the woodland walk
- Paddling pool

- Drainage and flooding issues
- Potential for usage of pitch and putt in inclement weather
- Opportunities for environmental management enhancements, eg solar power, water butts
- Repainting of bandstand
- Wildlife monitoring
- Replace temporary fencing around meadow
- Wider interpretation to illustrate Park's heritage
- Further opportunities to engage with less able groups

Green Heritage

Queen's Park first received Green Heritage Site accreditation in 2015, meeting the required standard in the management and interpretation of the Park's historic importance. This award has been retained ever since.

In the 2024 assessment, the Park was complimented on the quality of the CMP and associated strategies, which have informed its development, on community involvement represented by the Queen's Park Consultative Group, and on the integration into overall Park management of management of its heritage aspects.

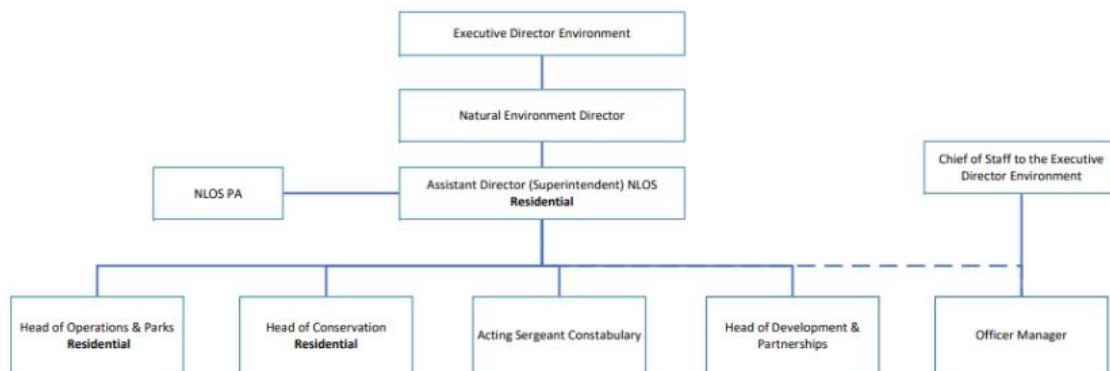
The Green Heritage judges made a number of recommendations. These included a review of the 2014 CMP, updates to the extent and nature of community engagement in the heritage aspects of the Park, and interpretation, referencing the challenges of conserving heritage assets alongside the provision of a popular community asset attracting high visitor numbers. The judges also recommended improvements to the fabric of the Park such as repainting of the bandstand and enhancing heritage interpretation.

A number of the 2024 Green Flag recommendations are already being addressed by the Park team as part of ongoing management or as projects for specific attention which will require dedicated time and resources. This Management Plan has been informed by a review of the CMP and the recommendations to conserve, enhance and manage the historic fabric of the Park. It sets out the priorities and proposed timescales for delivery of these and wider enhancements to ensure not only that Green Flag status is retained but that the Park's assets, features and qualities are conserved and enhanced to maintain its invaluable long term contribution to the community. These priorities will be reviewed as part of the Plan's interim review to assess achievements and progress towards the fulfilment of the ten-year Vision and aims.

8.0 How Queen's Park is managed

Queen's Park is one of the four spaces managed by North London Open Spaces, a sub-division of the City Corporation's Natural Environment Division. In addition to Queen's Park, these include Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood, and West Ham Park. North London Open Spaces is led by the Assistant Director (Superintendent), who is responsible for the operation. NLOS comprises the equivalent of c. 125 full-time directly employed staff.

North London Open Spaces: Top Tier 26 July 2024



Queen's Park is a registered charity as part of the Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Kilburn Charity (reg. 232986) and relies on funding from the City Corporation, along with revenue generated from services, grants and donations.

The Park is overseen by a management committee of the City of London Corporation, known as the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee, which is led by an elected Chair. The Park also has a Queen's Park Consultative Group (QPCG) which was formed in 1986 and is also led by the Chair of the above Committee and consists of local groups. It meets at least twice a year and provides further opportunity for local groups to provide input on the management of Queen's Park.

The management team looking after Queen's Park comprises six Rangers and Operative Rangers and two Gardeners, who are managed by one Senior Ranger, who is in turn managed by the Formal Parks Manager. The Senior Ranger resides onsite. This resource provides an all-year-round service, including Christmas Day.

Queen's Park Staffing structure

- Head of Parks and Operations - responsible for Queen's Park, Golders Hill Park, Parliament Hill, West Ham Park, swimming facilities, fleet, and Health and Safety operations.
- Formal Parks Manager - Responsible for Queen's Park, Golders Hill Park, and West Ham Park.
- Senior Ranger - Responsible for Queen's Park's day-to-day management.
- Head Gardener and Ranger - Based at Queen's Park, both roles responsible for leading teams on the ground.
- The rest of the dedicated Queen's Park team consists of 1 x Gardener and 5 x Operative Rangers.
- Casual staff as and when required.
- Administrative support officers.

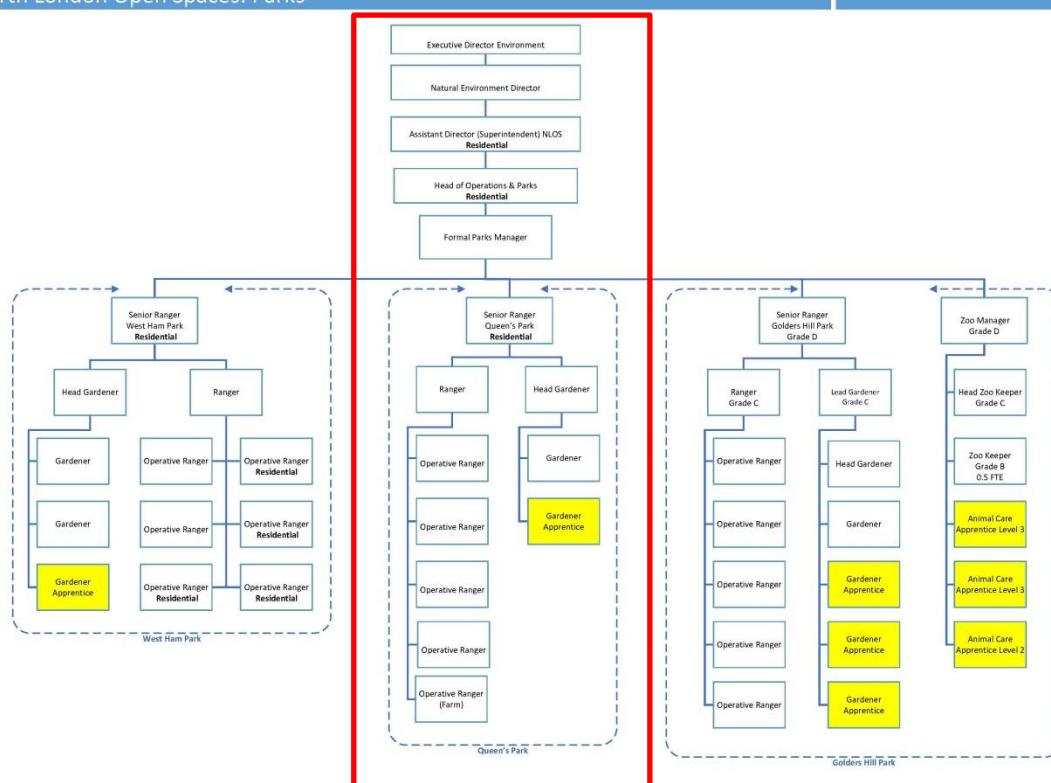
Queen's Park is also supported by several staff who operate across other North London Open Spaces, including:

- Arboricultural Team
- Conservation Team
- Ecologist
- Fleet and Health & Safety Officer
- Mechanic
- Zoo and Farm Manager
- Events Manager
- Communications Team
- Hampstead Heath Constabulary
- Learning and Development Team
- City Surveyor's Department

Apprenticeship

The Park supports a horticulture apprenticeship programme that will provide apprentices with a good technical knowledge base of the sector, combined with practical work experience, proven competency in the workplace and the development of transferable skills. The Park supports level 2 and level 3 apprentices.

The staffing structure for Queen's Park is outlined below.



Staff training, learning and development

All staff have a Performance Development Approach (PDA) appraisal, which is conducted by their line manager and includes an individual learning and development plan and sets objectives to be met over the year. Objectives and development are set at the beginning of the year (April) and reviews made at mid-year and end of year. All staff have monthly local team meetings and individual monthly meetings with their line manager. Recent improvements in the organisation, booking, recording and evaluation of courses, have ensured that we continue to make progress in this important area. All staff receive amid-term and an annual review to provide a dedicated opportunity to talk on a one-to-one basis with their line manager about a range of development issues, including personal objectives, competencies, and training. All staff are also required to undergo mandatory training that comprises a mixture of off-site and on-site operational training.

Queen's Park Consultative Group (QPCG)

The QPCG includes a number of organisations dedicated to the protection and enhancement of the Park, including councillors from Brent Council, representatives of the Kensal Rise Resident's Association, Queen's Park Area Residents Association (QPARA), and local groups and volunteer groups.

Volunteers

Residents associations and volunteer groups provide valuable practical support for the grounds team in the Park. Volunteers are engaged with ongoing maintenance tasks such as leaf clearance, hedge management and a range of projects to enhance the Park environment, nature conservation and biodiversity within the Park, including surveys. Enhanced volunteering opportunities with local groups such as Transition Town and working with Heath Hands are being explored.

Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Kilburn Charity

Queen's Park is a registered charity as part of the Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Kilburn Charity (reg. 232986). The typical annual expenditure budget for the Park is c. £1.5M which is shared with Highgate Wood. The Park receives this funding from the City of London Corporation and from the Park's charitable activities. Annual income comes mainly from refreshment licenses and hire of sports facilities. The Park has also received grant funding from organisations including Brent Council NCIL Programme and local donations, including GiftAid.

Throughout the life of this Plan, we will seek to maximise opportunities to deliver projects through external national and local funding. GiftAid for the Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Kilburn and Highgate Wood charity was introduced in 2023 and has been successful in securing donations that have been reinvested back into the Park.

9.0 Vision and Themes

The City Corporation welcomes and values its role as the custodian of Queen's Park. We place great value on its stewardship for current and future generations and have collaboratively developed the following Vision Statement to guide its management.

Vision


Queen's Park is a resilient and inclusive community open space that supports the natural world, promotes personal enrichment and well-being, is an exemplar for heritage and horticulture, and reflects excellence in park management.

Themes

The Vision provides the guiding principles for the four main themes which, in turn, show how it will deliver outcomes which contribute towards corporate and departmental objectives. Those themes are:

1. Caring: We care for the Park to ensure it continues to fulfil its many functions for the benefit of the community, heritage and the environment, now and for future generations.
2. Excellence: We maintain high environmental, conservation, heritage and horticultural standards.
3. Inclusion: We ensure that the Park and its facilities are inclusive, so that all can enjoy the benefits of enhanced physical and mental well-being.
4. Community: We engage visitors and the local community in understanding and caring for the Park.

<p>THEMES</p>	<p><u>Caring:</u> We care for the Park to ensure it continues to fulfil its many functions for the benefit of the community, heritage and the environment, now and for future generations.</p>	<p><u>Excellence:</u> We maintain high environmental, conservation, heritage and horticultural standards</p>	<p><u>Inclusion:</u> We ensure that the Park and its facilities are inclusive, so that all can enjoy the benefits of enhanced physical and mental well-being</p>	<p><u>Community:</u> We engage visitors and the local community in understanding and caring for the Park</p>
<p>CORPORATE PLAN 2024-2029 OUTCOMES</p>	<p>Leading Sustainable Environment</p> <p>Flourishing Public Spaces</p> <p>Vibrant Thriving Destination</p> <p>Providing Excellent Services</p>	<p>Flourishing Public Spaces</p> <p>Vibrant Thriving Destination</p> <p>Providing Excellent Services</p>	<p>Diverse Engaged Communities</p> <p>Providing Excellent Services</p>	<p>Diverse Engaged Communities</p> <p>Flourishing Public Spaces</p> <p>Providing Excellent Services</p>
<p>CLIMATE ACTION STRATEGY 2020-2027 AIMS</p>	<p>To support the achievement of net zero</p> <p>To build climate resilience</p> <p>To champion sustainable growth</p>	<p>To support the achievement of net zero</p> <p>To build climate resilience</p> <p>To champion sustainable growth</p>		<p>To support the achievement of net zero</p> <p>To build climate resilience</p> <p>To champion sustainable growth</p>
<p>NATURAL ENVIRONMENT STRATEGIES</p>	<p>Nature Conservation And Resilience Strategy</p> <p>Culture, Heritage and Learning Strategy</p> <p>Access and Recreation Strategy</p> <p>Community Engagement Strategy</p>	<p>Nature Conservation And Resilience Strategy</p> <p>Culture, Heritage and Learning Strategy</p>	<p>Access and Recreation Strategy</p> <p>Community Engagement Strategy</p>	<p>Community Engagement Strategy</p>

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">OUTCOME</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management balances needs of visitors with requirement to protect natural and heritage assets • Management issues around facilities and condition of the Park, for example toilet block refurbishment and flood management, are addressed • Natural assets, trees and priority habitats are healthy and well-maintained • Projects and initiatives for improvement, protection and enhancement of Park heritage and natural assets and enjoyment of the Park balance the interests of all stakeholders and contribute to City Corporation wider strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Flag, Heritage Award and London in Bloom Award • Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation • Enhanced biodiversity, resilience to climate change and contribution to interconnected spaces through appropriate Park management and maintenance practices • Our practices are financially, socially, and environmentally sustainable • Heritage assets are conserved • Sustainable practices minimise waste, optimise recycling of green and non green waste and encourage responsible recycling of waste by Park users 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced visitor experience through provision of excellent facilities and infrastructure, • Improved sports provision • All are able to access the Park's variety of facilities and enjoy the benefits of enhanced physical and mental well-being • Partnership with local residents and volunteer groups informs management and optimizes promotion of the Park and events, and volunteer engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walks, talks and events offer enhanced learning and skills, knowledge and skills and help to foster emotional attachment to the Park and inspire a desire to care for the Park • Partnership working with a wide range of local residents groups and volunteer groups • Enhanced volunteering through local groups • Park community has a wider understanding of the Park's significance through events, engagement and appropriate interpretation • Continued public consultation and engagement in caring for and enjoyment of the Park • Improved health and well-being for Park community
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OBJECTIVES	Objective 1: Well managed Park	Objective 1: Well managed Park	Objective 5: Welcoming Park	Objective 8: Park where community involvement is encouraged. Objective 9: Healthy and active Park
	Objective 2: Well maintained and clean Park	Objective 2: Well maintained and clean Park	Objective 6: Safe and secure Park	
	Objective 3: Sustainable Park	Objective 3: Sustainable Park	Objective 7: Well marketed and promoted Park.	
	Objective 4: Park that addresses conservation and heritage	Objective 4: Park that addresses conservation and heritage		

Table 1: How the Park vision will be delivered and its links to other key strategic documents

10. Delivery of the Queen's Park Vision

To deliver and achieve the Park Vision through the four main themes as shown in Table 1, nine objectives have been developed in this Management Plan. To achieve this vision, we recognise the importance of working towards an agreed national standard for good practice in the management of parks and open spaces. The objectives will contribute towards the Green Flag Award criteria, the benchmark national standard for publicly accessible parks and green spaces in the United Kingdom:

Objective 1: Well managed Park

Objective 2: Well maintained and clean Park

Objective 3: Sustainable Park

Objective 4: Park that addresses conservation and heritage.

Objective 5: Welcoming Park

Objective 6: Safe and secure Park

Objective 7: Well marketed and promoted Park

Objective 8: Park where community involvement is encouraged.

Objective 9: Healthy and active Park

This Plan sets out the nine objectives and the associated tasks and projects through which delivery of the Park Vision will be achieved in the ten-year period to 2035.

10.1 Park Vision Theme:

We care for the Park to ensure it continues to fulfil its many functions for the benefit of the community, heritage and the environment, now and for future generations.

Objective 1: Well managed Park

- The Management Plan balances community use and enjoyment of the Park with the protection and enhancement of the Park's character, natural and heritage assets and contribution to nature conservation and environmental sustainability

Objective 2: Well maintained and clean Park

- The fabric, infrastructure and facilities within the Park are kept in good order to maintain public access and enjoyment

Objective 3: Sustainable park

- The Park's contribution to the City Corporation's Natural Environment and Climate Action strategies is optimised

Objective 4: Park that addresses conservation and heritage

- Manage the protection and enhancement of natural and heritage assets, informed by the CMP, to safeguard their significance and to further public understanding and enjoyment

To achieve this, we will:

Action	Timescale
Facilities and infrastructure – repairs and refurbishment	
Refurbishment of the toilet block	2024
Repairs to tennis court surfacing affected by root heave	2025
Repair/replacement of fencing (park-wide and farm). Consider options to discourage incursion into wildflower meadow areas or control access eg through mown paths.	Ongoing
Park depot and office above cafe – review of layout and usage	2025/26
Sustainability	
Continue to implement sustainable management practices in all Park operations wherever possible	Ongoing
Park usage	
Paddling pool: develop strategy for the future of the paddling pool	2025/26
Pitch and putt: ongoing review of usage to streamline service for users	Ongoing
Café: introduce a retendering programme	2025
Flood alleviation	
Develop strategy for improved drainage and flood alleviation to	2025

reduce the number and scale of flood events in the Park which currently impact public access, Park fabric, planting and landscape and increase demands on the Park management team	
Conservation and heritage	
Woodland walk: potential scope to extend, but would impact the pitch and putt area – ongoing consideration	Under review
Bandstand: renovation and repainting	2025

10.2 Park Vision Theme:

We maintain high environmental, conservation, heritage and horticultural standards

Objective 1: Well managed Park

- Park retains Green Flag, Green Heritage, and London in Bloom awards

Objective 2: Well maintained and clean Park

- Horticultural displays and all areas of planting, parkland and woodland are visually attractive
- Park is tidy and litter free, furniture and equipment is clean and fit for use

Objective 3: Sustainable Park

- Maintain and implement sustainable management practices in all Park operations, where possible.
- Park's natural assets and planting are managed within the context of sustainability and climate change mitigation

Objective 4: Park that addresses conservation and heritage

- Management ensures ongoing protection and conservation of heritage assets, including the Park's historic design and distinctive mature woodland and tree cover

To achieve this, we will:

Action	Timescale
Green Flag / Green Heritage / London in Bloom	
Continue to secure annual Green Flag, Green Heritage, and London in Bloom awards	Annual
Review allotment usage and management to discourage neglected/disused plots	2025
Sustainable Park management	
Continue to implement sustainable management practices in all Park operations wherever possible, including transition to non-petrol powered machinery and equipment, waste management and recycling (including café, provision for bins), water	Ongoing

management and avoidance of chemicals; encourage visitors to recycle waste through appropriate on site provision	
Park-wide: Achieve a balance in soft landscape management between access and amenity requirements for general recreation, and nature conservation, for example in management of grassland and hedgerows, including ongoing review of the location and extent of wildflower meadow.	Ongoing
Reinstate, or review options for, areas subject to wear, erosion or other damage from footfall, dogs or bicycles, particularly within the woodland area or other areas where planting fails to thrive	Ongoing
Continue to develop more sustainable planting to the Quiet Garden to enhance biodiversity while maintaining an attractive visual amenity for visitors and retaining historic character	Ongoing
Farm	
Continue to work towards a more sustainable species collection cared for at the Farm	Ongoing
Conservation and heritage	
Trees and woodland: develop tree succession plan to safeguard the Park's distinctive tree and woodland cover in the longer term and their contribution to nature conservation and climate mitigation. Consider species selection plan to balance replanting of Park's historic tree species with choice of species likely to be more resilient to climate change	2025/26
Continue to develop measures for the monitoring and management of tree pests and diseases such as <i>Massaria</i> , ash dieback and Oak Processionary Moth	Ongoing
Continue to work with partners such as Butterfly Conservation, to monitor and enhance the Park's biodiversity	Ongoing

10.3 Park Vision Theme:

We ensure that the Park and its facilities are inclusive, so that all can enjoy the benefits of enhanced physical and mental well-being

Objective 5: Welcoming Park

- All visitors feel welcome in the Park and able freely to explore and enjoy its features and facilities
- Information about and within the Park, welcome signs at entrances, bylaws, directional signage, interpretation and events notices on site are well located, clear, unobstructed and accessible to all
- Whole Park and its facilities are accessible to all

Objective 6: Safe and secure Park

- Visitors and staff feel safe in all areas of the Park
- All facilities are maintained in a safe condition, fit for purpose

Objective 7: Well marketed and promoted Park.

- Local residents and Park visitors have access to information and events; forthcoming events are effectively communicated
- Visitors understand the quality of the Park recognised in Green Flag and other awards

To achieve this, we will:

Action	Timescale
Consider opportunities for volunteer wardens to provide an informal on site presence, welcome and engage with visitors and answer queries	Ongoing
Review dog walking provision and requirements/regulations to ensure that dogs are controlled and that all visitors feel safe	Ongoing
Work with a range of partner organisations to create opportunities for engagement, learning, volunteering and activities for all.	Ongoing
Work with partners to promote events and activities in the Park through a range of media and on site.	Ongoing
Continue to support partners in promoting and holding events in the Park, such as the Queen's Park Day and the Book Festival	Ongoing
Continue to review, and where appropriate update or enhance, signage and interpretation in the Park	Ongoing

10.4 Park Vision Theme:

We engage visitors and the local community in understanding and caring for the Park

Objective 8: Park where community involvement is encouraged

- Park enjoys the benefit of active public engagement with all stakeholders in the ongoing management of the Park and the decision-making process for proposed projects and initiatives
- Community and volunteers benefit from a deeper understanding of the Park, development of learning and skills, and enhanced mental and physical health through a wide range of voluntary activities, and experiences which engender and deepen their attachment to and interest in caring for the Park

Objective 9: Healthy and active Park

- Visitors of all ages, backgrounds and abilities enjoy a range of options for enhancement of health and well-being, including walking, running, use of formal sports facilities and informal exercise

To achieve this, we will

Action	Timescale
Community involvement	
Retain and develop engagement and partnerships with residents associations and volunteer groups.	Ongoing
Maintain and develop programme of walks and talks to enhance understanding of the Park's heritage and nature conservation significance and Park management.	Ongoing
Widen volunteer engagement in all aspects of Park management, including practical maintenance, surveys such as wildlife monitoring, and biodiversity.	Ongoing
Retain and develop engagement with local schools and children's groups to provide opportunities for learning about the Park, heritage and nature conservation, the Farm and its work through guided visits, walks, talks and activities, and experiences such as bulb planting and wildlife monitoring.	Ongoing
Develop our engagement with local stakeholders to ensure all communities benefit from the Park.	Ongoing
Healthy active Park	
Seek opportunities to widen visitor engagement with sports and active recreation; consider extension of the Trim Trail, which is heavily used.	2025
Park Run: continue to promote and support.	Ongoing
Paddling Pool: Review options to reintroduce appropriate water play facility for children.	2025

11. Monitoring & Review

Implementation

The Queen's Park Management Plan identifies priority projects and activities implemented via the Annual Work Programme.

The implementation of this Management Plan will continue to be overseen by the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee and City Corporation Environment Department.

An annual review and update of the work programme will be undertaken, and an annual Business Plan prepared. Resources will be allocated to priority projects on a five-year rolling basis, informed by the Outcomes and Priorities in this Management Plan and aligned with the City Corporation's business planning cycle.

At the end of the first five years, the Management Plan will be subject to a full review and update.

Monitoring

Monitoring and tracking progress towards achieving the Outcomes will help us to understand the impact of our work, and to share and celebrate successes.

We will continue to monitor progress towards the Outcomes and Priorities set out in this Management Plan, and report back to the Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood and Queen's Park Committee.

Learning and improving

Monitoring the changes or benefits that result from our activities provides insight into and understanding of the effectiveness of our actions and highlights where we can develop our work to make the biggest difference.

Evaluating effectiveness has enabled us to check our course and to make corrections in a timely manner, capturing learning and building in improvements as we proceed.

Communicating our impact

Each year, we will prepare an annual Business Plan and Annual Work Programmes for Queen's Park which set out the priorities and how these deliver against the Themes and Outcomes described in both the City Corporation Strategies and this Management Plan.

References

Baseline natural capital assessment of the City of London Corporation's open spaces (Natural Capital Solutions January 2024)

Highgate and Kilburn Open Spaces Act 1886

City of London Corporation (Open Spaces) Act 2018

City of London Open Spaces Department Managing Tree Safety (2014)

City of London Café Review (July 2023)

City of London Corporate Plan (2024-2029)

City of London Climate Action Strategy (2020-2029)

City of London Tree Strategy (May 2012)

City of London Global City of Sport (2023-2030)

City of London Biodiversity Action Plan (2021-2026)

Queen's Park Management Plan (2024)

Queen's Park Conservation Management Plan (2014)

Queen's Park Community Engagement Report (Arkwood, March 2023)

Natural Environment Nature Conservation and Resilience Strategy (2024-2029)

Natural Environment Access and Recreation Strategy (2024-2029)

Natural Environment Community Engagement Strategy (2024-2029)

Natural Environment Culture Heritage and Learning Strategy (2024-2029)

Appendix A Site Plan



Queen's Park

Registered Charity



- KEY**
- Footpath
 - Road
 - Queens Park
 - Garden
 - Raised area with wild flowers
 - Toilet
 - Office and Staff yard
 - Accessible toilets
 - Recycling
 - Refreshments
 - Baby changing facilities
 - First Aid Post
 - Petanque Rink
 - Tennis Court
 - Pitch and Putt
 - Play area
 - Trim Trail
 - Cycle parking
 - Gate

The City of London provides 14 green spaces in and around London for the benefit of local communities. Most are registered charities operating at little cost to the general public.

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