

Committee(s)	Dated:
Epping Forest and Commons	18012021
Subject: Epping Forest - Superintendent's Update for October to November 2020 (SEF 01/21)	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	2, 5, 11 & 12
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	City's Cash Local Risk
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N
Report of: Director of Open Spaces	For Information
Report author: Paul Thomson – Epping Forest	

Summary

This purpose of this report is to summarise the Epping Forest Division's activities across October to November 2020.

While all work continued to be dominated by COVID-19 restrictions, of particular note was the ever highest recorded October rainfall for the north of the Forest, aided by Storms Alex and Aiden; funded proposals adopted by the Resource Allocation Sub-Committee to see Climate Action Strategy projects at Epping Forest; initial works to restore the Temporary Mortuary Facility at Manor Flats; continued negotiations on the Countryside Stewardship Scheme application; a review by the Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS), concerning its review of Archaeological Protection Areas (APAs) in the London Borough of Waltham forest affecting some Forest sites; together with further responses to Local Plans documents published by both Epping Forest District and the London Borough of Waltham Forest.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Staff and Volunteers

1. A Forest Keeper and Support Services Officer retired during November, after 31 and 21 years of service.
2. A Business Administration Apprentice has been recruited as the replacement Support Services Officer.
3. At end of November, two-thirds through the financial year, spend is at 67% of total budget. Due to protracted negotiations with the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) grant income for this year has not yet been finalised and may vary significantly from the amount factored during budget setting. Activity, including a stop on all non-essential spending, to address COVID-19 shortfalls, has reduced the anticipated budget deficit to approximately £200,000, with work continuing to further reduce the deficit.

Weather

4. October 2020 was the wettest October ever recorded at High Beach, with 180.4 mm of rainfall, the average rainfall for this month is 60.58mm. (Records began 1979) There was a total of 27 days of rainfall. The 2nd and 3rd of October were particularly wet, with a total of 70.6mm of rain falling over two days.
5. Conversely, November's 2020 rainfall total of 52.4mm was below the average for this time of year which is 76.86mm of rainfall. There was a total of 22 days of rain with the 14th being the wettest day, seeing 18.8mm of rainfall.
6. Storm Alex, 2 – 4 October, marked an emphatic transition to unsettled autumnal weather across the UK. Alex brought stormy conditions with strong winds to the southern half of the UK and the Channel Islands on 2 October 2020, with associated fronts bringing prolonged and widespread heavy rain on 3rd to 4th. Parts of central southern England and eastern Scotland recorded totals of 100mm or more in the first four days of the month, and on 3 October many weather stations recorded their wettest October day on record. The extensive nature of the rain resulted in the UK receiving 31.7mm as an area-average for the rain-day 3 October 2020, making this the UK's wettest day on record in a daily series back to 1891.
7. Storm Aiden, 31 October, brought strong winds and heavy rain to the UK on 31 October 2020. The storm was part of a spell of turbulent, wet and very windy weather from late October to early November as a succession of deep Atlantic low-pressure systems, associated with a powerful jet stream, crossed the UK. 50 to 100mm of rain fell across western upland parts of the UK, and winds in exposed locations gusted at over 60Kt (69mph). This was a fairly typical spell of stormy weather for the time of year.

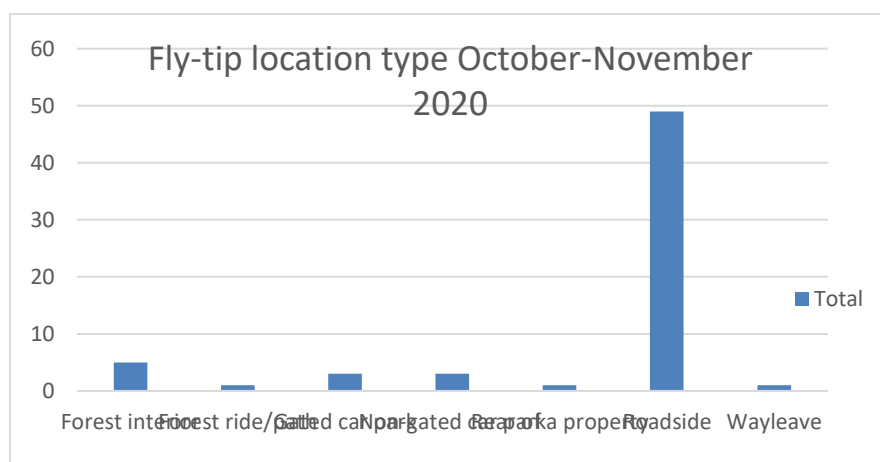
Project Golf Welfare

8. The Construction phase of the Golf Welfare unit at Jubilee Yard is complete, with some delays to the final fit due to changing COVID-19 conditions.

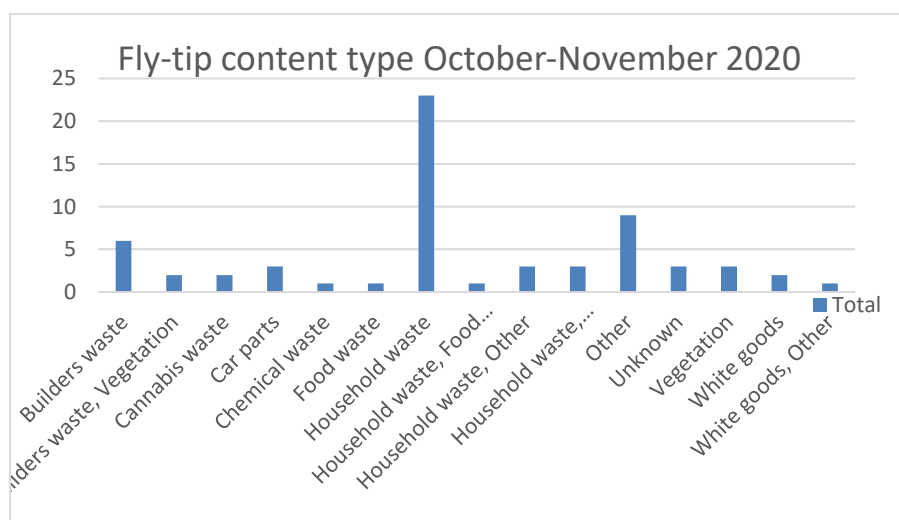
Forest Services

Fly-tipping

9. There were a total of 63 fly-tips recorded over the period of October-November 2020, this is a 17% increase over the same period in 2019.

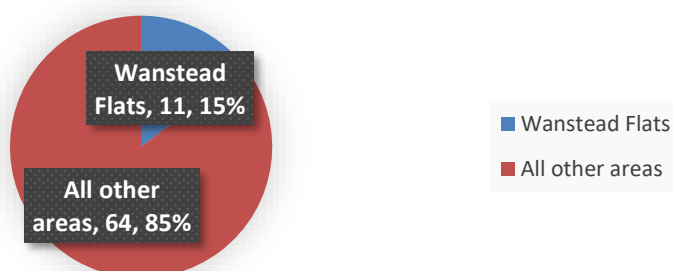


10. Roadside locations represented 78% of the tip locations over the period.



11. Household waste, consisting of 4 categories - mixed waste/food/vegetation/other, represented the largest category of items tipped over the period at 30 (48%). Builders waste, consisting of 2 categories – general waste and mixed waste with vegetation, represented 8 tips (13%).

Fly-tip in Wanstead Flats area: October-November 2020



12. There were 11 fly-tips in the Wanstead Flats area over the period which represents 15% of all tips. Four of these tips were on Forest Land adjacent to Highway Land on Centre Road and two on Capel Road.

Enforcement Activity

13. One EPA prosecution and one EPA conditional caution were undertaken through the courts. Furthermore, nine Byelaw 3 (4) 'Taking anything from the Forest' prosecutions, associated with fungi-picking, were also heard at magistrate's court. A further six Fungi Picking Offences were discharged through the use of Fixed Penalty Notices. A single written warning was issued for a minor fly tipping matter.

Date	Defendant Name	Offence Accepted 33:Deposit 34:Duty of Care	Court Name	Outcome	Costs Recovered
11.11.2020	MARKU	EPA S33	Southend	Guilty	£880
05.11.2020	Not for disclosure	EPA CC	N/A	Guilty	£275
02.10.2020	PREISOGOLAVICIENE	Byelaw 3 (4)	Southend	Guilty	£132
02.10.2020	DRABACICIUS	Byelaw 3 (4)	Southend	Guilty	£132
02.10.2020	KRUSZEWSKA	Byelaw 3 (4)	Southend	Guilty	£252
02.10.2020	MICHNACK	Byelaw 3 (4)	Southend	Guilty	£252

02.10.2020	DRABIK	Byelaw 3 (4)	Southend	Guilty	£232
02.10.2020	RUDAMINSKI	Byelaw 3 (4)	Southend	Guilty	£332
02.10.2020	BARUTIS	Byelaw 3 (4)	Southend	Guilty	£212
02.10.2020	M SABU	Byelaw 3 (4)	Southend	Guilty	£132
02.10.2020	E SABU	Byelaw 3 (4)	Southend	Guilty	£132
17.10.2020	Not for disclosure	FPN	N/A		£50
17.10.2020	Not for disclosure	FPN	N/A		£50
17.10.2020	Not for disclosure	FPN	N/A		£50
17.10.2020	Not for disclosure	FPN	N/A		£50
25.10.2020	Not for disclosure	FPN	N/A		£160
25.10.2020	Not for disclosure	FPN	N/A		£160
10.10.20	Not for disclosure	Written Warning – fly tipping	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total Costs Awarded to Epping Forest (Including Compensation)			£3483		
Total			£3483		

Licences

14. A total of 33 licences for events were issued during the months being reported, which yielded an income of £52,766.60 plus VAT which reflects the impact of COVID-19 restrictions. 44 licences were issued during the same period in 2018/19 (income of £28,039.15).

Unexplained Deaths

15. There have been no unexplained deaths over the reporting period.

Rough Sleepers

16. There were two rough sleeper camps located during the reporting period which have been managed in line with No Second Night Out (NSNO) guidance but appeared to be abandoned and both have been removed.

- 100m from Centre Rd Car Park
- Wanstead Flats, Dell area

Unauthorised Occupations

17. There have been no traveller incursions over this reporting period.

18. There have been 10 Spontaneous Social Gatherings and three Unlicensed Music Events on Forest Land, which were addressed by Forest Keepers with, where necessary, excellent support from local Police Forces.

Dog Incidents

19. There have been no recorded dog related incidents during this reporting period.

Deer Vehicle Collisions

20. Epping Forest staff dealt with a total of 8 deer vehicle collisions (DVC) during this reporting period.

- 5 Deer between Warren and The Bell Hotel
- 1 Deer between Wake Arms Roundabout and Jack's Hill Car Park
- 1 Deer Long Street Upshire
- 1 Deer Coopersale

Heritage; Landscape and Nature Conservation

Climate Action Strategy

21. The City of London Corporation adopted an ambitious Climate Action Strategy (CAS) in October 2020. The Strategy outlines how the organisation will achieve net zero in carbon emissions, build climate resilience and champion sustainable growth. The Open Space charities are charged with an important part in the Strategy and will be contributing to the City's target of net zero carbon emissions by 2027 from its own operations.

22. Epping Forest and the Buffer Lands will be the focus of these activities for the Open Spaces, at least in the first few years, and works will focus on enhancing carbon sequestration, ecosystem services and biodiversity through activities such as arable reversion to wood pasture, meadows and woodland, management of pollards, wood pasture and woodlands. A draft plan was produced by deadline in early December and will be worked on further in early 2021.

23. In addition, two studies will be commissioned in 2021. One will increase the understanding of the potential of different land management activities to sequester carbon, enhance the "services" that these ecosystem services provide (such as flood water storage, temperature regulation, air purification by trees), and increase biodiversity, which is vitally important at this time when there are

twin crises for biodiversity and climate. The other study will be looking at how carbon can be captured in wood products arising from land management and what the best use of these are to maximise this carbon capture.

Biodiversity

24. The restoration of the **Temporary Mortuary Facility** (TMF) (1.67ha) on Manor Park Flats in Wanstead Flats (Forest Compartment 38) progressed well during this period. The grass and wildflower seed mixes, including the 25% of seed harvested from the Forest, had germinated fully by November following the consistent rains during October. The site had greened up well and the fence line remained undamaged and in good repair throughout. In addition, a new poster explaining more about the seed mixture and the wildflowers was put up on the two site noticeboards to inform visitors about the restoration of the site.
25. The **Cow Pond** (Leyton Flats) restoration funded by *Froglife*, which was reported on in the last Superintendent's report, also has benefited from the heavy rain throughout this autumn period and filled well. This restoration will provide an open water habitat for Toads other amphibians in spring 2021, although it will take a number of years for the full range of aquatic and marginal vegetation to colonise.
26. The wood pasture, grassland and heathland sites continue to be maintained by the in-house Operations and Grazing Teams whilst the application with the Countryside Stewardship Scheme is processed. At one of the most successful wood-pasture restoration sites, **Pear-tree Plain** in Bury Wood, flowering **Lousewort** and **Tormentil** plants were recorded well into November, a very late date for flowering of normal spring/early summer-flowering species. This is a likely result of the unusual combination of weather conditions this year including the drought in early spring 2021 followed by the record rainfall in August and a warm wet autumn. There are many other reports around the UK of similar late or second flowering amongst many wildflower species populations.
27. Other notable wildlife during this period was the presence of two **Short-eared Owls** at Trueloves and Fernhills (Forest Compartment 17). This is one of the few birds of prey that is in significant decline in Europe and the UK. It is an upland species in the UK in the main, but over-winters on the coast and on expansive inland grasslands.
28. The latter habitat is now very scarce outside protected areas. It is, therefore, a testament to the importance of Epping Forest's grasslands and their close links to important rough grassland at the neighbouring Lea Valley Gunpowder Park, that this area could sustain these two birds throughout most of this autumn period. One Forest officer even observed one of the owls trying to capture feeding bats on a site adjacent to Fernhills, an observation only rarely made.

Agri-environment Schemes

29. The Conservation Team, along with the Director of Open Spaces and the Superintendent of Epping Forest, have been working to resolve the on-going issue with the 2019 Countryside Stewardship Scheme grant application. These actions included a letter from the Director to the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) and a detailed briefing note, on the delay in the determination of the grant award,

to Natural England, the Stewardship application advisers. The RPA responded with the offer of a meeting and it is hoped that this will now take place before mid-January 2021 to resolve the issues and allow the Stewardship agreement to commence on the Forest.

Grazing

30. The Grazing and Landscape Project Officer and Head of Conservation hosted a visit with Sir Charles Burrell and members of the Knepp Estate's Grazing team. The visit focused on our experiences of using GPS-based 'NoFence' invisible fence technology and the benefits of grazing for wood pasture ecology. The discussions on the day were productive and a return visit to the Forest is now planned with Sir Charles Burrell and several senior Defra officials in January 2021.
31. In addition, a national on-line workshop on GPS-based Invisible fencing will be held in December 2020 to be hosted by Knepp Estate officers and with Epping Forest officers making a presentation and taking part in a Q&A from interested land-owners and other NGOs. There is also a follow-up visit to an RSPB site planned to allow further discussions about developing the GPS-based system for conservation and for sharing monitoring methods and data.
32. The Epping Forest Conservation Team has also been invited to participate in a workshop at Salisbury Plain later in 2021 to assist the MoD and its tenants in better understanding the uses of Invisible fencing (IF) for conservation grazing. This will come 14 years after your Superintendent and Head of Conservation contributed the first IF workshop in the UK hosted by the MoD at Salisbury Plain.
33. Cattle were returned to Great Gregories towards the end of October with most of the herd fully housed by mid-November. Calving started on 8th October and to date there have been 29 calves: 10 bull calves and 19 heifers.
34. Two animals were taken to the abattoir for meat production. They have been sold locally via a box scheme from The Warren with good uptake. Beef will be available from the Visitor Centre on a click-and-collect basis when the Centre re-opens in December.

Heritage

35. Ongoing work on The View (Epping Forest Collection) via Epping Forest's e-hive catalogue continues to make the collection available to the public and has prompted several queries regarding museum objects. Photographs of museum objects are in the process of being uploaded to iBase, the Open Spaces digital asset management application, making them available internally to staff.
36. An excellent and comprehensive Appraisal report was received in November from the London Borough of Waltham Forest (LBWF), prepared by the Greater London Archaeological Advisory Service (GLAAS), concerning its review of Archaeological Protection Areas (APAs) in the Borough (Nov 2020).
37. Of particular note in the Appraisal was the proposed expansion of the boundary around the APA (APA 1.1) centred on the Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge and the Forest grass-scrub mosaic at Dannett's Hill, Chingford Plain. This expansion

to 12 hectares will see a greater area of below ground archaeology recognised and protected, including Bronze Age burnt flint mounds to the north of the Lodge. This APA is one of only two Tier 1 APAs in the Borough, emphasising the importance of the Forest in the protection of archaeological heritage.

38. Another report from LBWF was also received in November concerning the review of the Conservation Area at Chingford Green, which is centred around Epping Forest Land (Chingford Green Conservation Area (CA) Appraisal and Management Plan (Nov 2020)). The report confirmed that the CA at Chingford Green remained largely unchanged in character since the last review in 2010. It also emphasised its uniqueness as the only site remaining in the Borough with the full range of elements of an early-modern human settlement dating back to its origin in the Forest over 300 years ago.
39. On the horizon, though, for this CA will be the challenge posed by the intended re-development of the North Chingford Library and Assembly Hall (see Planning below).

Forest Protection and planning matters

Town & Country Planning

40. **Government Planning White Paper - *Planning for the Future*:** Epping Forest staff contributed to a detailed submission was made by the Remembrancer to this important Government White Paper, which proposes splitting the country into three types of planning zone. The area around the Forest is likely to be within a so-called *Protected Zone* because of its SAC status, but the City Corporation's response also highlighted the importance of Metropolitan Open Land designations and additional levels of landscape and wildlife protections that currently cover Epping Forest Land and other Open Spaces.
41. **Submission of Evidence to the Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (EFRA) Select Committee:** your officers were in the process of compiling further information for a detailed response on the **England Tree Strategy** for submission by the Remembrancer in early December to the EFRA Parliamentary Select Committee.
42. **Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) Local Plan:** EFDC consultations with your officers and Natural England continued throughout this period on a strategy for alternative visitor destinations outside the Forest (SANGS) and on an air pollution mitigation strategy (APMS). This latter document was approved by Natural England in the last week of November following submissions by your officers and NE for changes to the main protection Policy for the Forest, Policy DM2. Further information is awaited on a SANGS Strategy
43. **London Borough of Waltham Forest (LBWF)** published the second of its consultations on its Local Plan, which in this case was the main Submission Local Plan (Regulation 19 consultation) with accompanying Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) and Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy. These documents are the subject of a separate report from the Town Clerk because a response had

to be made by 14th December 2020 under urgency proceedings, delegated to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman.

44. **Chingford Green hub proposals:** LBWF officers held a public consultation on the proposals for the re-development of the Chingford Assembly Hall and North Chingford Library complex, which lies adjacent to Chingford Green and Epping Forest land. At the public consultation held on-line via *Zoom* on 5th November officers revealed proposals for a possible 6-storey residential, assembly hall and library building to replace the existing two-storey complex. As mentioned earlier in this report, such a large new building adjacent to Forest Land poses a challenge to this important Conservation Area. This proposal is due to be subject to a further public consultation from February 2021 with a planning application likely in May 2021.

Town & Country Planning – Development Control

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

- Cornerstone (Infrastructure Services Company) applied a second time to place a 5G mast at the bottom of Warren Hill, Loughton. Despite being on Forest Land and having been previously refused by EFDC.
- The Area Planning Sub-Committee West of EFDC voted in favour of a development for 8 dwellings at the former Duke of Wellington Pub in High Beach. The City Corporation was represented at the relevant Committee, but unfortunately calls for a full Habitat Regulation Assessment for the development, were not taken into account.
- A planning application for the former Rising Sun PH on Woodford New Rd, was objected to due to its vicinity to the SSSI and SAC.
- 89 The Avenue, was a flat complex of 5 units next to the Forest.
- Santa Maria Nursery objected to development of 2 new properties in replacement of 1. Objected to on grounds of being in Greenbelt.

Land Registration and Access Audit

46. The first stage of the Grassland Gazetteer database was completed by the GIS Officer by the end of November. Over 1,200 parcels of Forest grassland have been logged on the system as part of this work.
47. Also, using the latest aerial photography taken in 2019 (purchased by Corporate GIS Section for the Epping Forest Charity in 2020) this work has yielded new data on frontage management and also on encroachments that appear to have taken place from neighbouring properties during 2019.

Visitor Services

Events

48. Ticketed Ambresbury Banks walks continued in October and sessions booked up to take place during Lockdown. Two were re-scheduled or refunded. These walks for a group of up to 6 people provide both an opportunity for us to spread the word about the heritage importance of the Forest's Iron Age camps, the threat to them from erosion and how we are managing them to balance heritage and conservation concerns. Tickets sell very fast and feedback is both positive and

useful in helping us understand public perception of the site, and what themes will most engage people as we draft interpretation boards.

49. Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge ticketed tours continued to be offered via Eventbrite online booking prompting half term family interest in October before having to be temporarily closed during Lockdown #2. These sessions are proving less popular than the Ambresbury Banks tours but do provide a COVID-19-safe means of the public enjoying the Hunting Lodge should they wish to do so.

Learning and Education

50. The learning team launched a COVID-19-safe onsite offer at the beginning of the autumn term, reorganising the programme to take place entirely outdoors. They also developed two new programmes for delivery in schools – a 'Nature and Wellbeing' workshop designed in response to concerns over the impact of COVID-19 on mental health, and a 'Habitats and Minibeasts' session designed to help students to discover more within the school grounds. Although it has been challenging to engage schools during the pandemic, the workshops have been well received. The team were able to take workshops to schools who were unable to visit us, and feedback was very positive:

51.

"The session was great for the children who really enjoyed it... It linked well into our work on food chains today with several children making connections in class. Many children also said they were less scared of insects afterwards which I really wanted them to be." Teacher, in-school workshop.

The team ran a half-term family learning programme designed to boost wellbeing. Families were able to spend time together in nature, learn new skills and create something new. Again, feedback was very positive:

"Just wanted to say thanks again for such a brilliant session earlier. (My daughter) really, really enjoyed it and is still talking about everything we did....Some lovely new ideas for us and future forest adventures. Hoping to come to some more sessions in the future."

52. The team have also been running regular weekly sessions for students from White Trees School – a specialist school for young people who experience behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The young people have benefitted from a varied programme designed to build confidence and connection with nature. The group spent time in the forest, learnt new skills such as orienteering and wood carving, and contributed through activities such as litter picking.

Chingford Golf Course

53. Chingford Golf Course continued to be very busy until the second national lockdown meant a second closure between 5 November and 2 December.

54. The golf course continued to be very busy up until the second national lockdown on 5 November. Tee time intervals remained slightly higher than normal to help avoid any congestion out on the golf course and help increase social distancing between groups. Ditch clearance work to help improve the course drainage was carried out, along with all drains being cleared of debris and rodded to help the water flow. A new ditch was installed in between the 2nd & 8th green to help reduce the amount of water sitting in this area which was having a negative impact on the putting surfaces. A new drain was installed on the 6th green.
55. Winter tees were built in the lockdown period and introduced onto the golf course to help protect the playing surface for next year due to the increase in footfall in the winter months. All greens were treated with 'phines' which is a product to stop turf disease.
56. Total revenue from online sales this period is £21,872, total revenue from reception was £36,483.59 broken down into:

Breakdown of figures from Reception for October & November 2020			
	2020/21	2019/20	Difference (+/-)
Green fees:	£22,862.80	£26,298.03	-£3,455.23
Drinks:	£425.80	£688.40	-£262.60
Hire Equipment:	£3,054.50	£2,006.50	£1,048.00
Shop Sales:	£1,300.45	£1,843.50	-£543.05
Wanstead:	£6,026.18	£2,314.00	£3,712.18
Horse Riding:	£753.86	£460.42	£293.44
Forest Licences*:	£2060.00	NA	£2060.00

**Forest licences taken from Caddie House due to The Warren office staff working from home.*

57. Online bookings for the same period last year were £2,731 compared to £21,872 this year, an increase of £19,141 (700%). All bookings continue to be pre-booking over the phone or online. Total income from reception last year was £33,610.85. Overall income for this period last year amounted to £36,341.85 compared to £58,355.59 this year, which is an increase of £22,013.74 (61%). Under COVID-19 guidance the golf course was closed from 5 November till 2 December due to lockdown #2.

58.

Wanstead Flats

59. Football season re-opened in September and continued throughout October until the lockdown #2 suspended play in November. The number of teams playing has marginally reduced since last season but with the second Church league starting play in October. All leagues/clubs have been working with CoL staff to ensure social distancing measures are followed by their visitors. Litter picking duties continue to be high over on the flats. Staff have been carrying out weekly pitch markings, goal mouths maintenance work and weekly deep cleaning of the toilets to ensure safe for football visitors. Changing rooms remain closed with only COVID-19-secure access to toilets.

60. Work was done at Harrow Road to upgrade and improve the ground source heat pump when the building was constructed. To bring this into useful service it was necessary to install a further series of ground loops in the area behind the pavilion which required the digging of a series of trenches 100m in length.

61. Parkrun is still not in operation due to COVID-19.

Visitor Numbers

62. Visitor numbers remain low due to ongoing capacity restrictions. Opening hours at visitor centres have been reduced at low usage times to reduce costs.

63. Visitor centres were closed to the public throughout November in accordance with government guidance. A 'click & collect' offer was operated through the visitor centre at Chingford had limited take up, however it allowed for continued retail of shorter lifespan products, such as beef, to continue. Keeping the building staffed meant that the toilets could remain open for public use and customer queries answered via phone.

64. The Temple and Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge remained closed to general visiting during these months. The Lodge was open for pre-booked tours during October.

65. The visitor services team installed a small amount of exterior lights to the View courtyard and balcony with accompanying foliage (kindly provided by the arborist team) to create a festive air to the visitor centre.

66. The View shop was emptied and cleaned during the period of closure in November and the displays re-arranged for the Christmas period.

Visitor Numbers	QEHL 2020	2019	View 2020	2019	Temple 2020	2019	High Beach2020	2019	Total	Total 2019
October	0	1899	1239	3604	0	58	901	xx	2140	5561
November	0	1488	0	3539	0	67	0	xx	0	5094

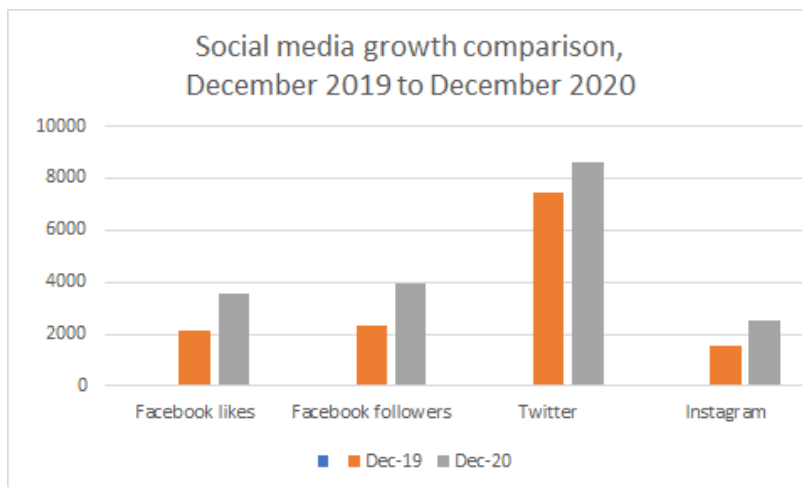
Communication and Information

67. As of 9 December 2020, our social media following is:

- Twitter followers: 8,619, an increase of 16%
- Facebook likes: 3,563, an increase of 66%
- Facebook followers: 3,945, an increase of 69%
- Instagram followers: 2,524, an increase of 64%

Perhaps unsurprisingly, November 2020 saw an increased social media activity during the second lockdown period.

68. Please find below comparison spreadsheet for social media followings:



69. The top tweet for October with 6,842 engagements related to the grazing trial in Wanstead Park.

This heat map highlights the grazing areas favoured by Quinine, Nina & Nuru in **#WansteadPark** **#EppingForest** The cattle have settled in well with the fantastic support from volunteers, helping ensure that this has been a safe and exciting trial for everyone, not least for the cows.

pic.twitter.com/wyWiQv3wwz



3 27 107

70. The top tweet for November with 10.7k engagements related to a call for people to vote for Epping Forest in the People's Choice, Green Flag Awards.

Has [#EppingForest](#) helped to get you through the lockdown this year? If so, could you take a moment of your time to give something back to this ancient woodland & vote for us in the Green Flag Award People's Choice Award? Please vote & share! Thank you! 🙏
greenflagaward.org/park-summary/?...
pic.twitter.com/K0NiWPGjsV



🔄 14 🗨️ 49 ❤️ 81

71. The top Facebook post in October 2020 with a reach of 10,170 was a request for people to avoid disposing of pumpkins in the Forest after Halloween.

**Epping Forest City of London**
Published by Yvette Woodhouse · 30 October · 🌐

A plea from [#EppingForest](#) this [#Halloween](#)...Please don't dump your discarded pumpkins here. The seeds & plant material they contain may harbour common diseases which can be harmful to the special ancient woodland habitat, much of which is protected as a SSSI / SAC. Thank you 🍂



10,170
People reached

630
Engagements

Boost Post

   47

6 comments 94 shares

72. The top Facebook post in November 2020 with a reach of 17,443, related to lost property of two cuddly toys lost in the Forest, which received 245 shares!



73. The top Instagram post for October 2020 with 143 likes was an autumn scene in High Beach, Epping Forest.



74. The top Instagram post for November 2020 with 224 likes was an autumn photograph of trees at Loughton Camp.



75. We continue to deliver monthly, seasonal updates via Mailchimp in place of the quarterly, printed Forest Focus publications, due to COVID 19. These are being very well received and we are able to effectively respond to the rapidly changing messaging required around COVID as well as keeping the content seasonal and up to date.

76. The new interpretation signs at Hollow Pond are now installed, giving an effective sense of arrival and identity at this most visited spot of Epping Forest.



77. A member of the public reported finding an unusual fungi in the Forest via Facebook, and the Communications Officer was able to find the location and get some good photographs of the rarely found coral tooth fungi, which was in the High Beach area in November.



Major incidents

COVID-19 National Health Emergency

78. The reporting period saw a series of changes to the COVID-19 restrictions across the elements of the Forest in London and Essex. London moved from Tier 1 'Medium Alert' to Tier 2 'High Alert' on midnight 16 October. A second National Lockdown was imposed between 12.01am 5 November to 12.01am Wednesday 2 December. London and Epping Forest District remained in Tier 2 'High Alert' following the second national lockdown. Planning is well advanced for managing the Forest under the current Tier system.

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