

## **HIGHGATE WOOD CONSULTATIVE GROUP**

Tuesday 13 November 2023, 1:00pm  
Heathfield House, 432 Archway Road, N6 4JH / MS Teams

<b>Members:</b>	William Upton KC CC (Chair) Jason Groves CC	Chair, Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood, and Queen's Park Committee Hampstead Heath, Highgate Wood, and Queen's Park Committee
<b>Co-Optees:</b>	Stephanie Beer Alison Watson Michael Hammerson Laura Dekker	Muswell Hill & Fortis Green Association Friends of Queen's Wood (meeting only) Highgate Society Friends of Queen's Wood (walk only)
<b>Officers:</b>	Bill LoSasso Declan O'Brien Cindy Blaney	Superintendent, North London Open Spaces Ranger Manager, Hampstead Heath & Highgate Wood Senior Ranger (walk only)

### **1. Apologies**

Lucy Roots; Jonathan Meares

### **2. Approval of previous minutes**

- a. MH noted that the moth survey was now in its 37<sup>th</sup> year.

### **3. Assistant Director's update**

BL and DO'B provided an update for the Consultative Group based on the provided Assistant Director's report and as outlined below.

#### **a. Staff recruitment**

BL provided an overview of the current staffing structure and recruitment activities.

#### **b. Nature recovery work and volunteer**

- i. MH asked that the minutes be updated to reflect that the moth survey was now in its 37<sup>th</sup> year.

#### **c. Impact of the Target Operating Model (TOM) restructure on the Highgate Wood team.**

- i. BL provided an overview of how the recent reorganisation affected staffing in the Wood.

#### **d. New Conservation Management Plan for Highgate Wood**

- i. BL noted that the Conservation Management Plan would be updated in alignment with the other strategies under development at the Corporation.
- e. **Events and activities**
  - i. DO'B noted that the Community Heritage Day attracted approximately 3,000 people.
  - ii. It was agreed that marketing and communications for all event would be revisited to ensure that as broad an audience as possible in engage.  
**ACTION (BL): Work with the Events and Communications Officers to expand engagement on events in the Wood.**
  - iii. MH suggested that the re-enactors be brought back if possible.
- f. **Roman Kiln update**
  - i. BL noted that the opening of the Roman Kiln would also be used to highlight the presence and offer of the information hut more generally.
  - ii. MH suggested that the Highgate booklet could be updated, and WU supported updating it in digital form. BL agreed to explore the feasibility and staff capacity to do so.  
**ACTION (BL): Enquire with Heritage Officer as to capacity to work on an updated Highgate booklet.**
  - iii. BL agreed to report on major Roman Kiln project milestones at the next Consultative Group meeting.  
**ACTION (BL): Report major milestones at the next Consultative Group meeting.**
- g. **Extreme weather protocol**
  - i. It was clarified that the threshold applies to average wind speeds, and not wind gusts.
  - ii. DO'B clarified that while there was previous discussion regarding lowering the wind threshold to 37 mph, it has not been decided or implemented.
  - iii. DO'B clarified that when Highgate Wood is closed due to high winds, the decision on whether to close for the whole day depends on the time of the closure.
  - iv. DO'B noted that physical signage is hung on all gates of Highgate Wood when a closure occurs.
  - v. The Consultative Group supported the new threshold unanimously.
- h. **Tree management**
  - i. DO'B provided an update on tree management activities in the Wood.
- i. **Sports field and play area**
  - i. DO'B provided an update on sport field usage and efforts to maintain the play area.
- j. **Awards**
  - i. It was clarified that both the Green Flag and Green Heritage awards have been achieved for each year that the respective schemes have been in

effect.

**k. Artificial Cricket pitch**

- i. BL noted that the artificial pitch would not be installed due to a conflict with the football pitch and a perceived lack of demand.

**l. AOB**

**i. Café retendering**

1. BL provided a update on the retendering of the café. It was noted that the division was beginning the process of retendering the café, working with the City Surveyor's Department. No decisions had yet been made, but multiple options will be considered. The division will complete a community consultation to inform the retendering, which will be an important step in the retendering process.
2. It was noted that the inside of the building has a limited amount of space for indoor seating, and that the overall use of the building should be maximised.

**ii. Dog walking**

1. MH noted that there appeared to be an increase in dog walking in the Wood since the dog licensing scheme had been introduced on Hampstead Heath.
2. AW noted that Queen's Wood could potentially see an increase in dog walking as licensing schemes increase elsewhere.
3. It was noted that enforcement of the scheme on the Heath was a challenge, and that would likely be a challenge in the Wood as well.