

Progress against the Natural Environment Strategy Action Plans and Business Plan objectives

Quarter 2, 2024-25 (July, August, and September)

1 Nature Conservation & Resilience				
	Theme	Objective	Progress	Also contributes to
1.1	Protect and enhance the biodiversity of our open spaces	<p>Management plans are in place to ensure that their biodiversity and natural assets are conserved, engaged with stakeholders, and are implemented</p> <p>Species records and other biological data are regularly gathered and professionally managed</p> <p>Community support and engagement in the conservation of our open spaces is increased</p>	<p>Hampstead Heath Management Strategy is in the process of being reviewed and updated to be approved by Management Committee in late October in time for 2025 Green Flag and Green Heritage applications.</p> <p>Data from hedgehog surveys earlier this summer across Hampstead Heath and surrounding areas now being analysed by Zoological Society of London (ZSL) for report to be published later this year. This will continue Hampstead Heath involvement in the National Hedgehog Monitoring Programme.</p> <p>Heath Hands volunteers have been carrying out butterfly transects surveys alongside Conservation Team. Other ecological surveys have been carried out with support from volunteers including amphibians, grass snakes and invertebrates.</p> <p>As above comment states, ecological monitoring is supported significantly by</p>	<p>Community Engagement</p> <p>Access and Education</p> <p>Learning and Education</p>

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			<p>volunteers from Heath Hands and other local community groups.</p> <p>In September, the Heath and Hampstead Society, with the Conservation Team and Heath Hands coordinated and managed another grazing visit from a small flock of rare breed sheep from Mud Shute Farm in East London.</p>	
1.2	Increase the resilience of our open spaces within a wider, interconnected natural landscape	<p>Greater and more effective engagement with the planning system to influence the protection of our open spaces in the most relevant way</p> <p>Landscape connectivity around our open spaces is enhanced through collaboration with other organisations and stakeholders.</p>	<p>The NLOS Senior Management Team are exploring commissioning a planning consultancy to carry out a monitoring role of all planning applications submitted near our four NLOS spaces.</p> <p>Connectivity and wildlife corridors are being reviewed as part of the ZSL hedgehog survey where the Hampstead Heath population can act as reservoir to colonise other nearby sites including SINC sites south of the Hampstead Heath. This work coincides with the GLA's forthcoming Nature Recovery Strategy for London and collaboration with London Borough of Camden and the Heath and Hampstead Society.</p> <p>Landscape connectivity and creation of wildlife corridors are being supported by</p>	<p>Community Engagement</p> <p>Access and Education</p> <p>Learning and Education</p>

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		<p>Landscape connectivity around our open spaces is enhanced through collaboration with other organisations and stakeholders.</p> <p>Reduced visitor impact on priority habitats and other important sites through sustainable visitor and mitigation strategies being in place and implemented</p> <p>Damaging introduced species monitored and kept under control</p>	<p>from Heath Hands, London Natural History Society, ZSL, London Borough of Camden, and Heath and Hampstead Society.</p> <p>The NLOS Senior Management Team are working with a mobile phone data analysis consultancy to establish where the visitor pressure points are on Hampstead Heath. This information will be incorporated in the revised Hampstead Heath Management Strategy due to be finalised later this month.</p> <p>The Tree Team have continued their Nature Based Solution (NBS) approach to managing oak processionary moth (OPM) across NLOS sites monitoring OPM-parasitoid populations and their impact on OPM nests. This work has been extended to other Natural Environment sites and is an important move away from non-target based biochemical control.</p>	
1.3	Establish a natural capital-based management process across our open spaces.	Baseline natural capital valuation for NED undertaken	The natural capital audit has been completed and is being reviewed for opportunities of expansion of benefit at Hampstead Heath. Headline figures from the report will be referenced in the	<p>Community Engagement</p> <p>Access and Education</p> <p>Learning and Education</p>

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		The City of London Corporation's Climate Action Strategy goals are met for the open spaces	<p>reviewed and updated Hampstead Heath Management Strategy.</p> <p>The Carbon Removals Manager and Project Officer visited Hampstead Heath in early September to review reductions in amenity grassland cutting to increase meadow habitat, proposed areas for the installation of leaky dams and additional small ponds. These will all increase the resilience of the site and provide additional storage of water further up the pond chains and reduce flooding downstream.</p>	

2 Community Engagement				
	Theme	Objective	Progress	Also contributes to
2.1	Partnership: Creating meaningful and lasting partnerships	Cultivate and support successful partner organisations that support us in mission delivery	Officers continue to work with external groups and partners to engage them in caring for the Heath. We recently (September) finalised a new 5-year agreement with Heath Hands, which will ensure continued delivery of value-added volunteering and community engagement activities on the Heath. NLOS continues to partner with the Learning Team to deliver value-added learning and play activities on the Heath.	Learning, Heritage, and Recreation

Appendix 1

		Implement a holistic approach to community engagement that encourages active participation	Officers continue to work with multiple organisations and hundreds of volunteers as per above.	
2.2	Removing barriers: Identifying and removing barriers to participation in our spaces and work	Create physical spaces that are as accessible as possible to as many people as possible.	The Ponds Access Project was completed, which expands accessibility at the swimming ponds on the Heath.	
2.3	Ownership: Cultivating a sense of deep pride in and attachment to our spaces amongst users	Facilitate a deep sense of pride in and attachment to our open spaces among user groups and communities Create opportunities for user groups and communities to provide additional resource to the Corporation to support mission delivery	The Learning Team continues to engage young people and children in activities that are conceived to develop lasting connections with nature/Heath. As above with the work of Heath Hands.	Learning, Heritage, and Recreation
2.4	Thriving spaces: Creating spaces that attract people and improve their lives	Improve health and wellbeing through our open spaces through successful and effective community engagement Deliver well-managed spaces that are widely understood as destinations for improved health and wellbeing.	We have been working with the Hampstead Heath Management Strategy Working Group in August and September to review the Management Strategy for the Heath. Attainment of Green Flag award in July 2024 demonstrates the best practice management.	

		<p>Create spaces where formative experiences occur.</p>	<p>Ongoing volunteer activities connect volunteers and members of the public closely with the Heath. Repairs to playgrounds this summer have ensured that children have access to facilities to create memories.</p>	
<p>2.5</p>	<p>Knowledge exchange: Continuous transfer of information between the Corporation and its customers</p>	<p>Ensure easy access to information about the Corporation, its open spaces, and our management practices.</p> <p>Catalyse improved behaviours in our spaces where needed. -and- Ensure greater understanding among members of the public of the Corporation's efforts to preserve and care for our spaces</p>	<p>Officers are performing an audit of all NLOS webpages on the corporate website. While NLOS does not have control over the website, we are ensuring that information available is as accurate and as accessible as possible in the absence of a modern website being created by the City Corporation.</p> <p>Officers have been communicating positive behaviours in an effort to reinforce them amidst significantly increased ASB in the Heath. Officers have further developed an internal NLOS Communications Group to regularly inform our Communications Team of positive behaviours needed/to be promoted in all NLOS spaces, and problematic behaviours to message against.</p>	

		Improve service delivery by the Corporation at its open spaces through information exchange	Engagement with stakeholders in creation of the management strategy will ensure that local feedback is considered and incorporated.	
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3 Access and Recreation				
	Theme	Objective	Progress	Also contributes to
3.1	Balance the needs of visitors with the requirements of protecting the natural and heritage assets of the open spaces	<p>Manage visitors to protect vulnerable areas.</p> <p>Plan for increased visitor numbers and improve durability of honeypot locations</p> <p>Reduced visitor impact on priority habitats and other important sites through sustainable visitor and mitigation strategies being in place and implemented.</p>	<p>The NLOS Senior Management Team are working with a mobile phone data analysis consultancy to establish where the visitor pressure points are on Hampstead Heath. This information will be incorporated in the revised Hampstead Heath Management Strategy due to finalised later this month.</p> <p>Officers are updating the management plan for the Heath, which will be presented to this committee at the December 2024 meeting. A consultant has been retained to support that effort. Visitor numbers are tracked by a paid service that tracks mobile phone presence in the park. In addition, our communications efforts to influence behaviours furthers this objective.</p> <p>Management plan creation as per above. In addition, our communications efforts to influence behaviours furthers this objective.</p>	<p>Community Engagement</p> <p>Learning and Education</p>

3 Access and Recreation				
	Theme	Objective	Progress	Also contributes to
3.2	Enable the best possible visitor journey, creating the right information from pre-visit to a stress-free and enjoyable on-site experience	<p>Provide clearly branded and accessible on-site wayfinding, interpretation and information.</p> <p>Provide easily accessible, clear and exemplary pre-visit information through digital platforms.</p> <p>Make improvements to both informal and formal recreational facilities.</p>	<p>Officers are completing an audit of signage the second half of this year to inform future work to achieve this objective.</p> <p>Completion of audit of website as per above, and communications via social media supports the pre-visit journey.</p> <p>Completion of the Ponds Access Project.</p>	<p>Community Engagement</p> <p>Learning and Education</p>
3.3	Provide welcoming places that visitors from all backgrounds and abilities are comfortable to explore	<p>Work with partners to develop outreach to ensure wider audiences or are aware of and able to access sites</p> <p>Provide easily accessible, clear and exemplary pre-visit information through digital platforms.</p>	<p>Our partnerships with the Natural Environment Division Learning Team expands the total number and overall quality of activities and opportunities for engagement in the park</p> <p>Audit of website as per above, and communications via social media supports the pre-visit journey.</p>	<p>Community Engagement</p> <p>Learning and Education</p>

3 Access and Recreation				
	Theme	Objective	Progress	Also contributes to
3.4	Build understanding and knowledge about the open spaces. Visitors will respect one another and will care for and advocate for the sites.	Respectful use of facilities and sites will be encouraged through engagement and instruction Key messages are delivered through layered and targeted campaigns	The Communication of positive behaviours and work of on-site team further this objective. Retention of Parkguard to provide a supplemental enforcement and security presence in the park is necessary to support appropriate behaviours. The Communication of positive behaviours and work of on-site team further this objective. Retention of Parkguard to provide a supplemental enforcement and security presence in the park is necessary to support appropriate behaviours.	

4 Learning and Heritage				
Progress in the performance and delivery of this strategy will be reported by the Culture & Projects Team of the Natural Environment Division.				